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### *Toona ciliata*

[Synonyms : *Cedrela australis*, *Cedrela febrifuga*, *Cedrela toona*, *Toona australis*]

**AUSTRALIAN RED CEDAR** is a deciduous tree. Native to Australasia, India and Malaysia, it has honey-scented pinkish-white flowers.

It is also known as *Australisches Mahagoni* (German), *Australisches Zeder* (German), Burma cedar, *Cèdre rouge* (French), *Cèdre rouge d'Australie* (French), *Cedro-australiano* (Portuguese), Indian mahogany, *Khusing* (Punjabi), *Kunant* (Marathi), *Malar-veppu* (Malayalam), Moulmein cedar, *Nandi* (Telugu), *Nandivriksha* (Bengali, Sanskrit), *Neem* (Marathi), *Nim* (Marathi), Red cedar of New South Wales, Red cedar of Queensland, *Sisiet om* (Thai), *Thitkado* (Burmese), Toon tree, *Tun* (Bengali, Hindi, Marathi), *Tun-ka-jhar* (Hindi), and *Tun-maram* (Tamil).

The resin is known as Cedar Gum.

*Ciliata* is derived from Latin *cilum* (eyelash, eyelid) meaning 'edged with hairs or fringed with fine hairs'.

In India the flowers are harvested to obtain a yellowish-brown or red dye according to the processing.

Leaves and seeds provide local cattle fodder.

This scented attractively marked wood has been and is used for building interiors and furniture especially in Australia. Unfortunately easily accessible Australian trees are now rare because of indiscriminate felling when it was particularly fashionable there. In India the lightweight reddish wood has long been popular in Madras on the south-eastern coast for making insectproof cigar boxes, and to the far north east in the state of Assam for tea boxes. Then in Kerala State on the southern tip of India the wood is still valued for making oil casks. This wood is soft and fairly durable so it is hardly surprising to learn that these trees have provided material for dug-out canoes and that the wood has also been used for building sampans. And last but by no means least Australian red cedar has been chosen for musical instruments and lends itself to carving. It is also used for constructing buildings.

Medicinally, in India the bark and flowers have been used in internal treatment of dysentery in children and have been applied externally on ulcers.