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2022 trees of the year



Dais cotinifolia

Family: Thymelaeaceae **National tree number**: 521
Common name: pompontree



A single or multi-stemmed shrub or small tree with a rounded crown, up to 13 m high. Bark is smooth, grey, with corky streaks; branches tend to be flattened at nodes. Leaves are simple, opposite, olive- to bluish-green above, lighter below, with translucent veins. Flowers are small, trumpet-shaped, in dense round clusters, pink to mauve. Fruits are very small, reddish-brown nutlets in dry calyx tubes and bracts.



Peltophorum africanum

Family: Fabaceae **National tree number**: 215
Common name: African-wattle



A generally deciduous tree with spreading crown, up to about 15 m high. Bark is longitudinally fissured, grey to brown; branches with lenticels and reddish-brown hairs. Leaves are alternate, double compound, hairy, dull green, with 8–22 pairs of leaflets per pinna and each pinna ending in two leaflets. Flowers are bright yellow and sweet-scented. Fruits are clustered, flat, leathery, greyish to dark brown pods.

Aloidendron dichotomum

Family: Asphodelaceae **National tree number**: 29
Common name: quivertree



A distinctive tree aloe with massive stem, rounded crown, up to 9 m high. Bark is smooth, pale, flaking into streaks with sharp edges. Leaves are simple, succulent and spear-shaped with tiny yellow spines on margins. Flowers are cylindrical, bright yellow, tubular, borne in racemes on branched panicles. Fruits are woody capsules; seeds are cylindrical and winged.



Aloidendron pillansii

Family: Asphodelaceae **National tree number**: 30
Common name: giant quivertree



A tree aloe, up to 10 m high. Bark is fissured, peeling off stems. Branches grow equally in pairs, resembling a fork shape, young stems are covered in white powder. Leaves are pale grey- to brownish-green, wide and recurved. Flowers are yellow, below the canopy. Fruits split open with three slits; seeds are papery.



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Attracts birds · Attracts insects · Beautiful flowers · Frost-resistant · Requires full sun · Semi shade · Drought-resistant · Moderate water · Evergreen · Deciduous · Medicinal use · Protected · Useful wood

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Dais cotinifolia L.

Common names: pompontree; kannabas (Afrikaans); intozane (isiXhosa); intozwane emnyama (isiZulu)

An attractive single or multi-stemmed shrub or small tree with rounded crown, 7–13 m high. Bark smooth grey, with corky streaks; branches somewhat flattened at nodes. Leaves often crowded near ends of branches, smooth, simple, olive- to bluish-green above, lighter below, veins translucent yellow. Flowers small, trumpet-shaped, in dense round clusters, whitish-pink to mauve. Flowering time: November to February. Fruits very small, reddish-brown, nutlets enclosed in persistent calyx tubes and dry bracts.

Distribution and habitat
Occurs in the Eastern Cape, from East London northwards to KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. Pompontrees grow along cooler forest margins, on wooded slopes and on rocky mountainsides.

Meaning of name
Dais (Greek), meaning 'torch', in reference to the floral stalks and bracts resembling a torch to be lit. Leaves resemble those of the genus *Cotinus*.

Ecology and uses
- Flowers attract many insects, including butterflies and honeybees.
- Bark was used by European settlers (cultivated since 1757) for tanning leather; fibres are used to make ropes, whips, binding and to tie thatch for huts.
- Leaf infusions are used to treat stomach cramps and pains.

As a garden tree
Widely cultivated for gardens and streets. Cultivated in Europe since 1764. A fast-growing tree, may take 4–5 years to reach maximum height. It grows best in full sun, some shade is tolerated and can be grown as a container plant. To propagate, plant seeds in trays filled with well-drained loamy sandy soil. Mulching is necessary to suppress weeds and retain nutrients from being washed away in rainy seasons. Trim the main branch for a bushy appearance.

Peltophorum africanum Sond.

Common names: African-wattle; huilboom (Afrikaans); mosehla (Sepedi); mosêtlha (Setswana); musese (Tshivenda); ndzedze (Xitsonga); umsehle (isiZulu)

Deciduous or semi-deciduous multi-stemmed tree, up to 15 m high. Branches grey-brown, often 2–3 stemmed. Leaves bipinnate, hairy, with 8–22 pairs of leaflets per pinna; leaflets oblong with an asymmetric base and round apex. Flowers crinkled, scented, bright yellow in erect terminal racemes at ends of branches. Flowering time: September to April. Fruits flat, winged, leathery pods. Seeds 1 or 2 per pod, ovoid, compressed, slightly winged. Fruiting time: February to June.

Distribution and habitat
Occurs in Free State, north to KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Gauteng and Northwest provinces; in wooded grasslands, bushveld and along vlei margins.

Meaning of name
Peltophorum means 'shield-shaped', in reference to the stigma's shape. The specific epithet, *africanum* means 'from Africa' and it's the only *Peltophorum* species in South Africa.

Ecology and uses
- Flowers attract many insects, including spittlebug nymphs (*Ptyelus grossus*) that encase themselves in a protective foam-like substance from where they bite into the wood, suck the sap and eject a liquid that drips to the ground. Trees appear to be 'raining' or 'weeping'. Butterfly larvae feed on leaves. A valuable tree for beekeeping.
- Kudu, giraffe and elephant browse the leaves; black rhinos feed on the bark.
- Stems are good quality timber used for furniture.
- Bark is chewed to relieve colic. Roots used to relieve sore throats, stomach disorders and remove intestinal parasites. Decoctions of bark and leaves relieve stomach disorders. Leaves are boiled and the steam used for toothache.

As a garden tree
A good shade and drought-resistant tree. Soak seeds in hot water overnight, sow in flat trays. Germination takes 3–10 days. After the first two years, trees will withstand frost and grow up to 1.5 m per year.

Aloidendron dichotomum (Masson) Klopper & Gideon F.Sm.

Common names: quivertree; kokerboom (Afrikaans)

A distinctive tree aloe with massive stem, dense rounded crown, 7–9 m high. Trunk often covered with a thin, pale whitish-grey powder layer; bark initially smooth, flaking off in golden brown streaks with sharp edges. Leaves simple, narrow, succulent, blue-green with tiny yellow spines along margins that decrease with age; mature plants have leaves arranged in spiralled terminal rosettes, young plants have leaves in vertical rows. Flowers cylindrical, bright yellow, tubular, borne in racemes on branched panicles. Fruits woody capsules, splitting open to release winged seeds.

Distribution and habitat
Indigenous to arid, winter-rainfall regions of the Western and Northern Cape provinces and Namibia. Quivertrees occur in rocky areas.

Meaning of name
Aloidendron combines *Aloe* (original genus name which means 'bitter sap') and *dendron*, meaning 'tree-like aloe'. The specific epithet, *dichotomum*, is in reference to the repeated dichotomous branching of stems. The common name is a translation of the Afrikaans *kokerboom*, translated as 'quiver tree', as the hollowed stems were used as quivers for arrows.

Ecology and uses
- Flowers produce nectar that attracts insects, birds and baboons.
- Sociable Weavers commonly nest in branches; Acacia Pied Barbets often nest in stems.
- Roots are used to treat tuberculosis and asthma.
- Trunks contain fibrous tissue that have a cooling effect as air passes through it and can be used as natural fridges.

As a garden plant
Often grown for ornamental purposes, quivertrees are challenging to propagate. To cultivate, dry seeds for three weeks or more and plant in autumn in a tray of well-drained compost or coarse river sand to prevent rotting. It may be grown as a container plant that drains well. If grown in ground, plant in direct sunlight in a dry rock garden. Dry out between waterings.

Aloidendron pillansii (L.Guthrie) Klopper & Gideon F.Sm.

Common names: giant quivertree; reusekokerboom (Afrikaans)

A distinctive tree aloe, up to 10 m high. Bark pale grey, whitish, or creamy brown, broad and coarse near base, smooth higher up. Branches equally in pairs; young stems covered in white powder. Leaves smooth, wide, stem-clasping, grey- to brownish-green, with sharp points along margins; arranged in rosettes at tips of branches. Inflorescences panicles, emerge horizontally or angled down below leaves. Flowers cylindrical, swollen in the middle, yellow tinged green at segment tips. Flowering time: late spring to December. Fruits split open to release papery seeds. Fruiting time: December.

Distribution and habitat
Indigenous to remote northwestern parts of the Northern Cape Province and southwestern Namibia in the Succulent Karoo.

Meaning of name
Aloidendron: see *A. dichotomum*. The specific epithet, *pillansii*, honours N.S. Pillans (1884–1964) who first discovered this species in 1924. Common name: see *A. dichotomum*.

Ecology and uses
- Flowers produce nectar that is harvested by sugarbirds and ants.
- The thick green leaves and fibrous stems act as a water reservoirs.
- The powdery substance around the trunk reflects light away from the trunk keeping the inner part cool.
- Giant quivertrees are protected by law, as their populations are decreasing due to overgrazing, mining, climate change, over-collection, with excessive droughts exacerbating the situation.

As a garden plant
Giant quivertrees don't flourish outside of their natural habitat. To cultivate, germinate seeds (germination takes up to three weeks), plant in well-drained rocky soils and keep in very dry conditions. In the first 3–5 years plants can be irrigated. Plants grow slowly and can be grown in containers or as a focal point in arid gardens.

- **ovary**: that part of the pistil (the usually enlarged base) which contains the ovules and eventually becomes the fruit.
- **ovate**: with the outline of an egg; scarcely twice as long as broad, with the broader end below the middle.
- **ovoid**: solid shape of ovate outline.
- **ovule**: the immature seed in the ovary before fertilisation.
- **panicle** (*adj.*: paniculate): a compound raceme; an indeterminate inflorescence in which the flowers are borne on branches of the main axis or on further branches of these.
- **pedicel** (adj. pedicellate/pedicelled): the stalk of an individual flower.
- **peduncle** (*adj.* pedunculate/pedunculed/peduncular): the stalk of an inflorescence; the common stalk (rachis or axis) of several pedicellate or sessile flowers.
- **pinna** (*pl.* pinnae): a primary division of a pinnate leaf.
- **pinnate**: like a feather in appearance; (of a compound leaf): with the leaflets arranged along each side of a common rachis.
- **pistil**: see gynoecium.
- **raceme** (*adj.* racemose): an indeterminate inflorescence in which the flowers are borne on pedicels along an unbranched axis or peduncle, the terminal flowers being the youngest and last to open (centripetal development).
- **rachis** (*pl.* rachises or rachides) (= rhachis): (1) the axis of an inflorescence in which flower stalks occur at short intervals from each other, (2) the axis of a pinnately compound leaf, corresponding to the midrib of a simple leaf.
- **rosette**: a crowded, circular cluster of leaves or other organs.
- **sepal**: one of the parts forming the outer part of a flower that surround the petals and are usually small and green. Collectively called a calyx.
- **sessile**: without a stalk.
- **stigma** (*adj.*: stigmatic/stigmatose): the point or surface of the pistil which receives the pollen.
- **style**: narrow upper part of an ovary supporting the stigma.

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Although great care has been taken regarding accuracy of the information, SANBI does not assume responsibility for any harm resulting from the medicinal use of any trees described in this poster.

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- **calyx** (*pl.* calyces): the outer envelope of the flower, consisting of free or united sepals.
- **capsule**: a dry fruit composed of two or more united carpels and either splitting when ripe into flaps called valves, or opening by slits or pores.
- **carpel**: an organ (generally believed to be a modified foliar unit) at the centre of a flower, bearing one or more ovules and having its margins fused together or fused with other carpels to enclose the ovule(s) in an ovary, and consisting also of a stigma and usually a style.
- **cyme** (*adj.* cymose): a determinate inflorescence in which each flower, in turn, is formed at the tip of a growing axis, and further flowers are formed on branches arising below it (compare indeterminate inflorescence).
- **bipinnate**: when the primary divisions (pinnae) of a pinnate leaf are themselves pinnate.
- **bract**: a leaf-like structure, different in form from the foliage leaves and without an axillary bud, associated with a flower.
- **deciduous**: falling off at the end of the season of growth.
- **gynoecium** (*pl.* gynoecia): the female part of the flower, consisting, when complete, of ovary, style and stigma; also called pistil.
- **inflorescence**: the arrangement of the flowers.
- **indeterminate**: (of an inflorescence): the lateral or lower flowers mature first while the primary axis continues to grow, hence the terminal flower is the last to open, therefore a racemose inflorescence (compare cymose).
- **leaflet**: the ultimate member of a compound leaf.
- **lenticels** (*adj.* lenticellate): corky spots on the bark through which gaseous exchange occurs.
- **node**: the point on the stem at which a leaf or leaves and accompanying organs arise.
- **nutlet**: a little nut.