Tecomaria capensis

LOCAL NAMES
Afrikaans (kaapse kanferfoelie); English (tecoma, kaffir honeysuckle, cape honeysuckle); Xhosa (icakatha); Zulu (uminyane, ugcangca, uchacha)

BOTANIC DESCRIPTION
Tecomaria capensis is an evergreen scrambler to small tree with a roundish crown. Bark pale brown, lenticelled with longitudinal furrows on old stems.

Leaves opposite, unevenly compound, up to 13 cm long, with 2-5 pairs of leaflets, terminal leaflet largest, margins coarsely toothed, glossy green above.

Fruit a narrow, flat pod-like capsule up to 13 cm long.

Seeds with large papery wings.

There are 3 garden cultivars; “coccinea” with light red flowers on a bushy plant, “lutea” with bright yellow flowers on a spreading bush and “salmonii” with salmon-coloured flowers. The genus Tecomaria is monotypic and has affinities with Tecoma.

BIOLOGY
The cape honeysuckle is dioecious and evergreen; usually flowering after rains from June-November and fruiting from October-February. Pollinated by birds and insects.

A yellow variety of Tecomaria capensis. Popular garden plant. Indigenous to South Africa. (Botha R)
**Tecomaria capensis**

*(Thunb.)* Spach

**Bignoniaceae**

**ECOLOGY**

*T. capensis* occurs on forest margins but more commonly along drainage lines in dense woodland. Grows well in moist areas and in dry scrub and woodland.

**BIOPHYSICAL LIMITS**

- Altitude: 0-1 200 m
- Mean annual temperature: 22-26 deg.C
- Mean annual rainfall: 750-1 750 mm

Soil type: Grows in a variety of soils types.

**DOCUMENTED SPECIES DISTRIBUTION**

**Native:** Lesotho, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania

**Exotic:** India, Kenya, Singapore, Spain, United Kingdom

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The map above shows countries where the species has been planted. It does neither suggest that the species can be planted in every ecological zone within that country, nor that the species can not be planted in other countries than those depicted. Since some tree species are invasive, you need to follow biosafety procedures that apply to your planting site.
**Tecomaria capensis**

_**(Thunb.) Spach**

_Bignoniaceae_ (Thunb.) Spach

The map above shows countries where the species has been planted. It does neither suggest that the species can be planted nor does it indicate that it will be well adapted. Since some tree species are invasive, you need to follow biosafety procedures that apply to your planting site.

**PRODUCTS**

**Fodder:** Foliage readily browsed by stock and game.

**Apiculture:** The flowers are rich in nectar thus attract a number of pollinators especially sunbirds and bees.

**Fuel:** The plant can be used as firewood.

**Medicine:** Powdered bark used for treatment of fever, pneumonia and stomach troubles, also rubbed on bleeding gums to promote blood clotting. Leaf decoction used for diarrhoea and for intestinal inflammation. Believed to ease pain and produce sleep.

**SERVICES**

**Erosion control:** The cape honeysuckle protects surrounding soil from erosion.

**Apiculture:** The Cape honeysuckle is a rich source of sugar.

**Shade or shelter:** Unpruned trees provide adequate shade.

**Soil improver:** The leaf litter on decomposition improves soil fertility.

**Ornamental:** A prized ornamental with a showy and profuse bloom, cultivated in several gardens, parks and arboreta.

**Boundary or barrier or support:** The cape honeysuckle is a wonderful fencing plant with good regrowth ability after pruning and normally dense and colourful foliage over a long time.
Tecomaria capensis (Thunb.) Spach
Bignoniaceae

TREE MANAGEMENT
The cape honeysuckle must be pruned, to stay attractive in gardens and enhance flowering. The plant grows fast usually flowering in the second year. Growing should be done in semi shade or full sun conditions. The plant is frost tender and should be protected during the first two winters.

GERmplasm MANAGEMENT
Seed wings removal must be done before planting.

PESTs and DISEASES
The pathogenic fungus Phytophthora palmivora has been detected on T. capensis leaves.
Tecomaria capensis  (Thunb.) Spach
Bignoniaceae

FURTHER READING

SUGGESTED CITATION