

## Native Plant of the Month

### *Thespesia populnea*



*Thespesia populnea* (Tulip Tree) is a small tree or leafy shrub in the Malvaceae family. It is also known by the common names Indian Tulip Tree, Pacific Rosewood or Portia Tree. It occurs in many Pacific countries, and is found in NT, WA & Qld in this country. It has large solitary pale-yellow flowers that are very showy and appear from summer to winter. The fruit is a capsule that turns from green to yellow, and then brown, anytime from winter to summer.

The Tulip Tree reaches a height of 6 to 10 metres, and favours coastal environments. It will grow in a wide range of soils, and can be propagated from seed or cuttings. The wood was used by the early Tamil people to make instruments, and is used these days to make furniture, as it is easy to carve.

For more information: Plants of Capricornia (Melzer & Plumb) p 175.