

## *Mesua ferrea*

**Botanical name:** *Mesua ferrea*

**Common name:** Ceylon ironwood, Indian rose chestnut

### **Morphological characters:**

The tree can grow over 30 meters tall, often buttressed at the base with a trunk up to 2 meters in diameter. The bark of younger trees has an ash grey color with flaky peelings, while of old trees the bark is dark ash-grey with a red-brown blaze. It has simple, opposite, narrow, oblong to lanceolate, blue-grey to dark green leaves that are 7–15 cm long and 1.5–3.5 cm wide, with a whitish underside. The emerging young leaves are red to yellowish pink and drooping. The branches are slender, terete and glabrous. The bisexual flowers are 4–7.5 cm in diameter, with four white petals and a center of numerous orange yellow stamens. The fruit is an ovoid to globose capsule with 1 to 2 seeds.



### **Growing season and type:**

1. It flowers during the dry season and flushes of new leaves are produced just after flowering at the start of the rainy season.
2. The bisexual flowers open for one day, between 3 and 4 a.m. and closing around sunset.
3. Thrips sp. and *T. hawaiiensis* visit the flowers oftenly and breed within the young inflorescences.



1

1. Flower of *Mesua ferrea*



2

2. Leaf of *Mesua ferrea*



3

3. *Mesua ferrea* tree

Source: <http://www.flowersofindia.net/catalog/slides/Nag%20Kesar.html>