

Lantana camara

Scientific classification 

Kingdom : Plantae
Clade : Angiosperms
Order : Asterids
Family : Verbenaceae
Genus : *Lantana*
Species : *L. camara*



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Description:

Lantana camara is a small perennial shrub which can grow to around 2 m tall and form dense thickets in a variety of environments. Due to extensive selective breeding throughout the 17th and 18th Centuries for use as an ornamental plant, there are now many different *L. camara* cultivars.

L. camara has small tubular shaped flowers, which each have four petals and are arranged in clusters in terminal areas stems. Flowers come in many different colours, including red, yellow, white, pink and orange, which differ depending on location in inflorescences, age, and maturity. The flower has a tutti frutti smell with a peppery undertone. After pollination occurs the colour of the flowers changes (typically from yellow to orangish, pinkish, or reddish); this is believed to be a signal to pollinators that the pre-change colour contains a reward as well as being sexually viable, thus increasing pollination efficiency.

Medicinal uses:

Antimicrobial, fungicidal and insecticidal properties. *L. camara* has also been used in traditional herbal medicines for treating a variety of ailments, including cancer, **skin** itches, leprosy, chicken pox, measles, asthma and ulcers.