

# Erythrina xsykesii

## COMMON NAME

coral tree, flame tree

## FAMILY

Fabaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Erythrina xsykesii* Barneby & Kukoff

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## HABITAT

Terrestrial.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Deciduous tree up to 12–(18)m high; trunks with stout prickles; twigs round, smooth, clothed in short hairs when young but becoming glabrous, armed with prickles; prickles stout-based, scattered, 5–10 mm long. Leaves densely clothed with short medifixed hairs when young, becoming +/- glabrous; leaflets broadly ovate to deltoid, +/- acuminate, obtuse to truncate at base, entire (7)–10–20 cm long; lateral leaflets somewhat smaller than terminal; stipules lanceolate, 5–10 mm long, caducous; stipels c. 1 mm long. Inflorescences axillary, clustered at tips of branches, clothed in brown medifixed hairs when young; flowers numerous, shortly pedicellate, subtended by caducous bracteoles. Calyx spathe-like, bilbiate, or irregularly shallowly toothed. Standard scarlet, c. 50–60 mm long, wings and keel c. 1/2 length of standard, orange to pale orange; filaments mauve. Pods not formed. (Webb et al 1988).

## SIMILAR TAXA

Can be distinguished from *E. crista-galli* by the axillary inflorescences clothed in brown hairs, the keel roughly 1/2 the length of the standard, and the leaves broadly ovate to deltoid (hairy when young).

## FLOWERING

August, September, October.

## FLOWER COLOURS

Orange, Red/Pink

## YEAR NATURALISED

1986

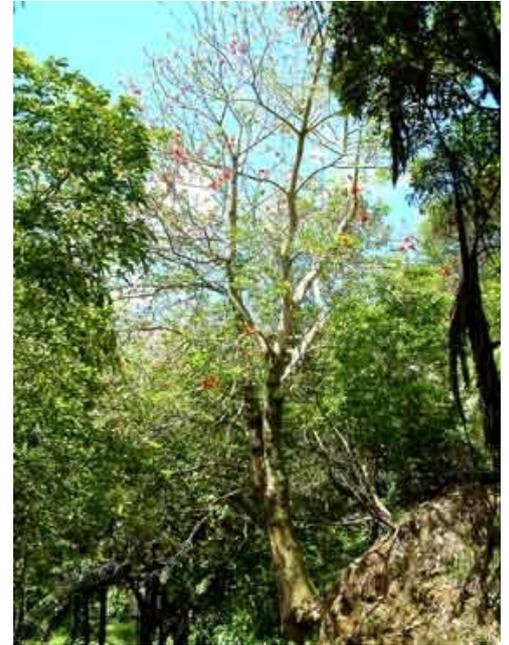
## ORIGIN

Australia (parents from N. America and Africa)

## ETYMOLOGY

**erythrina:** From the Greek erythros 'red', referring to the colour of the flowers

**sykesii:** Named after William Russell Sykes (1927–2018) an English born botanist who emigrated to New Zealand in the late 1960s and worked for the DSIR Botany Division and DSIR Land Resources. Sykes specialised in the taxonomy of cultivated plants, naturalised plants and made studies of the South Pacific Islands, especially the Kermadec and Cook Island groups.



Coromandel, November. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



At the Coromandel, November. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

## LIFE CYCLE COMMENTS

Perennial.

## REPRODUCTION

Cuttings and dropped branches take root easily.

## SEED

Not seen as this is a sterile hybrid (Likely parents are *E. coralloides* and *E. lysistemon*)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Gardner, R. 1992. Coral trees *Erythrina* Papilionaceae of Auckland. Auckland Botanical Society Journal, 47: 32-35.

Gardner, R.O. 1997. *Erythrina* x *sykesii*. Auckland Botanical Society Journal, 52: 39-42.

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/erythrina-sykesii/>