



Tithonia diversifolia

DAISY FAMILY

Asteraceae

COMMON NAMES

English: Mexican sunflower, shrub sunflower, tree marigold

Cambodia: chhouk roth japon

Indonesia: keladi-keladian

Vietnam: dâ quy



DESCRIPTION

Annual or evergreen herbaceous shrub, woody at the base [2–3 (–5) m high]; stems slightly ridged and hairy when young.

Leaves: Greyish-green, finely hairy on underside giving a grey appearance, simple (6–33 cm long and 5–22 cm wide) with 3–5 (–7) pointed lobes, margins with a series of curved projections or teeth; held opposite or alternately on stem.

Flowers: Bright yellow, daisy or sunflower-like (up to 10 cm across), held on long and swollen stalks (7–30 cm long) which are velvety below the flowerhead.

Fruits: Achenes (small, dry, one-seeded fruits that don't open at maturity), brown (4–8 mm long), in a spiky mass.

ORIGIN

Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama.

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Fodder, medicine, mulch, soil improvement, hedge/barrier and ornament.

INVADES

Roadsides, disturbed sites, wastelands, urban open space, fallow land, savannah, lowlands and riparian vegetation.

IMPACTS

Forms dense stands displacing native plant species and the animals associated with them. *T. diversifolia* is displacing native species in the wetlands of the Apete River, Eleyele Lake and Oba Dam in Ibadan, Nigeria, including the invasive and aggressive shrub *Chromolaena odorata* (Oluode *et al.*, 2011), and is now considered to be one of the most invasive species in Nigeria (Borokini, 2011). Mexican sunflower has the ability to compete with agricultural crops (Ilori *et al.*, 2007) and is contributing to the extinction of local species, including important medicinal plants (Oludare and Muoghalu, 2014). According to reports, it is leading to the abandonment of farms in the Copperbelt region of Zambia.



Tithonia diversifolia (Hemsl.) Gray

