



1. Habit in cultivation. 2. Main trunk with smooth greyish bark. 3. Flower with several elongated petals. 4. Large leaves with wavy margins.



Golden Champaca (*Magnolia champaca*)

Introduced

Not Declared

Golden Champaca is an attractive tree that is thought to have originated in India. It is also known as Fragrant Champaca and is widespread in south-eastern Asia, but may have been spread to these areas by humans in ancient times. Recently, it has been cultivated in the tropical and sub-tropical regions of Australia as an ornamental species.

Distribution

During the last four years, Golden Champaca is reported to have become naturalised in several areas on the Atherton Tableland in northern Queensland. It has been recorded from disturbed rainforest in conservation areas, including Malanda Falls Conservation Park and the Lake Eacham section of the Crater Lakes National Park. Several plants were also recorded adjacent to the Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve near Maleny in 2008, suggesting that it may have the potential to become naturalised in rainforests throughout the tropical and sub-tropical regions of eastern Australia.

Description

A tree that can reach 30-50m in height when growing in the canopy of tropical forests in its native range. However, it usually only grows as a small to medium-sized tree (about 10m tall) when present in cultivation in cooler regions. Its bark is relatively smooth and grey to greyish-white in colour. The alternately arranged leaves are relatively large (10-30 cm long and 5-10 cm wide) and borne on stalks 2-4 cm long. These leaves are often slightly curved with wavy margins, pointed tips and paler undersides.

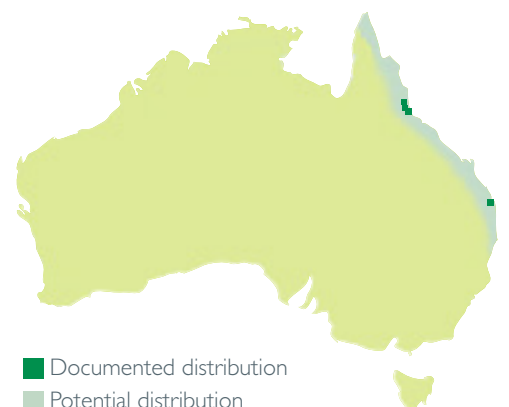
The large and showy flowers are usually bright yellow in colour, but darken to mustard yellow or orange as they age. They are fragrant and have 6-20 'petals' that are somewhat elongated in shape (2-4 cm long and 4-5 mm wide). Large numbers of stamens are present in the centre of the flower, and are directly below a group of small ovaries arranged in a dense elongated cluster. The flowers are produced during summer and autumn and are borne on short stalks in the leaf forks. Once the petals are shed, the central stalk of the flower elongates and bears several developing fruit along it. Each of these fruit is egg-shaped (10-25 mm long) and covered with tiny whitish pustules. When mature, each of these fruit splits open to reveal 2-4 reddish-orange coloured seeds.

Quick Facts

- > A tree usually growing to about 10m tall
- > Large alternating leaves that are slightly curved
- > Showy bright yellow flowers with 6-20 'petals'
- > Each flower produces several fruit covered with tiny whitish pustules

Habitat

A potential weed of wetter forests, riparian vegetation, urban bushland and forest margins in tropical and sub-tropical regions. To date it has usually been recorded from disturbed rainforests or along rainforest margins.





1. Fruit covered in small whitish pustules. 2. Old flowers with fruit beginning to develop.

Reproduction and Dispersal

This species reproduces by seed, which are covered in a brightly coloured aril that is highly attractive to fruit-eating birds. Hence, the seeds are probably dispersed into bushland after being consumed by birds and other animals.

Why is it an Emerging Threat?

Golden Champaca is beginning to spread into bushland in Queensland, and has the potential to compete with and replace native rainforest species. While not currently regarded as a serious weed anywhere in the world, it is quite widely naturalised on Mauritius and is escaping from cultivation and spreading into riverine forest in Zimbabwe.

Control Methods

Seedlings and young plants can be removed manually, while larger trees may require treatment with herbicide. No herbicides are specifically registered for the control of Golden Champaca in Australia. However woody environmental weeds may be controlled in Queensland with some herbicides as outlined in APVMA off-label Permit 11463 (see <http://permits.apvma.gov.au/PER11463.PDF>). For example, some formulations of glyphosate and triclopyr + picloram can be applied as a cut stump or basal bark application. Please read the off-label permit carefully for the exact products and rates to use and, unless otherwise stated in the permit, the use of any of these herbicides must be in accordance with the instructions on their labels. Within other state boundaries, it is recommended that any relevant permits or government legislation applicable to the region be consulted.

Look a-likes

Golden Champaca is quite distinctive, especially when in flower; and is rarely confused with native species. However, a hybrid between *Magnolia champaca* and *Magnolia montana* known as White Champaca (*Magnolia* × *alba*) can be easily confused with Golden Champaca. This plant has white flowers and its leaves are usually broader and shinier in appearance.



Top. Flowers and leaves of White Champaca.

Bottom. Close-up of white flower.

The control methods referred to in Weed Watch™ should be used in accordance with the restrictions (federal and state legislation and local government laws) directly or indirectly related to each control method. These restrictions may prevent the utilisation of one or more of the methods referred to, depending on individual circumstances. While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this information, Technigro does not invite reliance upon it, nor accept responsibility for any loss or damage caused by actions based on it.

This information has been developed with the assistance of Dr Sheldon Navie. Photographs are also courtesy of Dr Sheldon Navie and Forest & Kim Starr, USGS. © Technigro Australia Pty Ltd 2012