

The taxonomy of *Mimosa pigra* L.

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Scientific name: *Mimosa pigra* L.

Mimosa pigra was first described by Linnaeus (1759), who also named a separate species, *M. asperata*. They were united as varieties *pigra* and *berlandieri* of *M. pigra* (Bentham 1875, Turner 1959). Bässler (1985) restored them to specific rank. Barneby (1989, 1991) agreed but proposed *M. pellita* as the correct name for *M. pigra* var. *pigra*. Verdcourt (1989) proposed to conserve *M. pigra* using the criterion that it is “widely and persistently employed in a sense excluding its type”. This was recommended by the International Committee on Botanical Nomenclature (Nicolson 1993). It is only the former species, *M. pigra* (= *M. pigra* var. *pigra*), that is now a pest in many tropical countries.

Common names

Mimosa, or giant sensitive plant, or giant sensitive tree

Note that these common names are confusing in that *M. diplotricha* C. Wright ex Sauvalle (syn. *M. invisa* Mart.) is also referred to as giant sensitive plant, and mimosa bush is a common name for *Acacia farnesiana* (L.) Willd.

To avoid confusion **mimosa** has been used in this publication.

Many other common names are used in other parts of the world, including the following:

- English: thorny sensitive plant, giant mimosa, black mimosa, catclaw mimosa, bashful plant
- Spanish: espina de vaca, zaraz, zarza, uña de gato, dormilona, dormilona grande, jiquiri grande, pingahuisacha, trupilla, guri, bambuco, carpinchera

- Portuguese: jiquiri grande, jíguri, júgueri
- French: amourette, amourette violet, amourette riviere
- Thai: mai yah raap yak, maiyarap ton, chi yop luang
- Indonesian: putri malu
- Malaysian: kembang gajah, semalu gajah
- Vietnamese: trinh nu nhon.

Family

Mimosaceae (or Leguminosae: Subfamily Mimosoideae).

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