



**Informationen zur Umwelt und für Naturreisende auf Kreta:**  
Information about the Environment and for travellers in Crete:

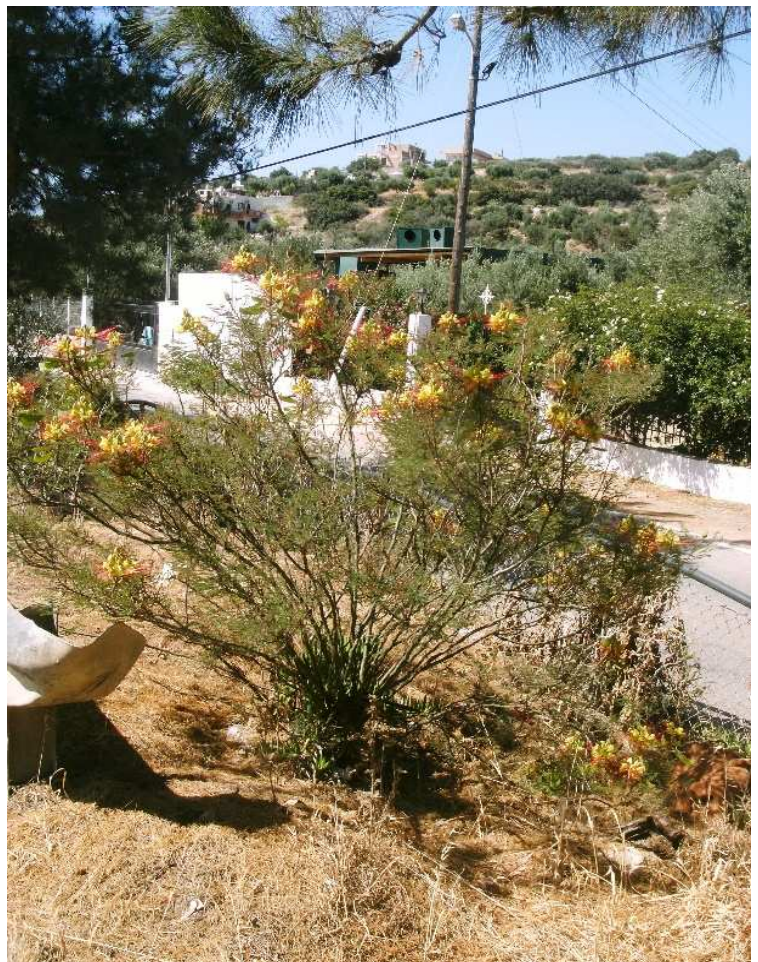
## **Bird of paradise (*Caesalpinia gilliesii*)**

### **An exotic on Crete's roadsides**

Originally located in tropical America, especially in Argentina, you will find the bird of paradise Bush increasingly to Crete roadsides. Most often on the route *Agios Nikolaos - Sitia* (shortly after the city output crossing), often together with young rosewood trees; therefore see our info leaflet at: [[http://www.kreta-umweltforum.de/Merkblaetter\\_en/330-10E.pdf](http://www.kreta-umweltforum.de/Merkblaetter_en/330-10E.pdf)]

The bird of paradise belongs to the family of leguminous (*Fabaceae*), here to the subfamily carob plants (*Caesalpinioideae*). After molecular biological research the carob plants in their traditional enclosure are a paraphyletic taxon within the monophyletic leguminous. According to new research's the subfamily is divided in only three tribe and contains about 120 to 160 genera with around 2000 species. The tribe *Caesalpinieae*, to which the bird of paradise bush belongs; includes 50 species, whose bleed are radially symmetrical to zygomorphic. The sepals mostly are free. The leaves are double pinnate.

*Caesalpinia gilliesii* as shrub reaches a height of 1.5 – 2.5 m and prefers full sunny places. The leaves are pinnate, 10 – 15 cm long, each with 3 – 10 flower pair, 5 – 6 mm long and 2 – 4 cm wide. The racemes are up to 20 cm long, in each case with 5 yellow petals and 10 long, marked, red stamens. The fruits are pods, the seeds and the green fruit are toxic. Further details about the bird of paradise bush can be found at following web link: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesalpinia\\_gilliesii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesalpinia_gilliesii)



The following page shows detail pictures of the blossom (and fruit pod) of the bird of paradise





**Remark:**

Medicine men of indigenous peoples of South America used the plant for the treatment of fever, inflammations and cough. Four grams from the root are believed to last for an abortion in the first trimester of pregnant science to initiate.

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NLUK eV, U. Kluge