



Scientific Name	<i>Calliandra haematocephala</i> Benth.
Common Names	Powder puff plant, Fairy duster
Family	Fabaceae(Leguminosae) Subfamily-Mimosaceae
Plant description	Herbaceous perennial shrubs or small trees that grow 0.5-6m (1.5-19.5 feet) tall. It has bipinnate, elliptical leaves, which often close at night. The flowers are showy and come in a variety of colours including shades of pink, white, red, and even green. Inflorescence is usually racemose with cylindrical or globose heads. The flowers are notable for their dense clusters of brightly coloured stamens that form a powder-puff appearance. <i>Calliandra</i> are often fed on by caterpillars, such as the larvae of <i>Statira sulphur</i> . Like other legumes, <i>Calliandra</i>

	has root nodules that fix atmospheric nitrogen, making it a valuable crop for soil improvement
Distribution	They are native to tropical and subtropical regions of the Americas. It has been introduced to other parts of the world such as Southeast Asia, Africa, Australia, Brazil and Bolivia. In Uganda, it is the most cultivated fodder tree. It is an aggressive pioneer species that can be seen in disturbed areas such as roadsides, river banks and shifting cultivation plots.
Uses	Its beautiful flowers make it an ideal choice for gardens and landscaping. Its wood is valued for furniture, cabinetry and other wood products. It is particularly suited for charcoal production. It is a valuable fodder for all classes of ruminants. Leaves and pods contain large amounts of protein and are free of toxic substances. However, its high tannin content makes it less useable for pigs and poultry.
Flowering and Fruiting time	<i>Calliandra</i> species typically flower in the spring and summer months (March- August), while some others produce flowers year-round. The exact timing may vary depending on the specific species and location. The fruiting period usually occurs after flowering, around summer to early fall (June- October). The fruits are pods.