

Terminalia catappa

(Tropical Almond)



Tropical almond (*Terminalia catappa*) is a large, spreading tree now distributed throughout the tropics in coastal environments. tree is tolerant of strong winds, salt spray, and moderately high salinity in the root zone. It grows principally in freely drained, well aerated, sandy soils. species has traditionally been very important for coastal communities, providing a wide range of non-wood prod-cuts and services. It has a spreading, fibrous root system and plays a vital role in coastline stabilization. It is widely planted throughout the tropics, especially along sandy seashores, for shade, ornamental purposes, and edible nuts. timber makes a useful and decorative general-purpose hardwood and is well suited for conversion into furniture and interior building timbers.

Fruits are produced from about years of age, and the nutritious, tasty seed kernels may be eaten immediately after extraction. Tropical almond is easily propagated from seed and is fast growing and flourishes with minimal maintenance in suit-able environments. Selected cultivars of the species warrant wider commercial planting for joint production of timber and nuts. tree has a demonstrated potential to naturalize in coastal plant communities, but not to adversely dominate such communities

Terminalia catappa, commonly called tropical almond or Indian almond, is a medium to large deciduous tropical tree that grows to 75-90' tall (often lower in cultivation) with a spreading crown featuring horizontal branching in tiers.

Fruit Typically one to five fruits develop on the basal part of the flower spike. fruit is a sessile, laterally compressed, ovoid to ovate, smooth-skinned drupe. During maturation, it changes color from green through yellow to bright red or dark purplish red at full maturity. Fruit size varies considerably, kernel consists of two delicate and intricately entwined cotyledons enclosed in an inconspicuous cream-colored, rarely red, Testa

Cultivation and uses

T. catappa is widely grown in tropical regions of the world as an ornamental tree, grown for the deep shade its large leaves provide. The fruit is edible, tasting slightly acidic.

The wood is red and solid and has high water resistance; it has been used in Polynesia for making canoes. In Tamil, almond is known as nattu vadumai.

The leaves contain several flavonoids (such as kaempferol or quercetin), several tannins (such as penicillin, punicalagin or teracatain), saponins and phytosterols. Due to this chemical richness, the leaves (and the bark) are used in different herbal medicines for various purposes. For instance, in Taiwan, fallen leaves are used as an herb to treat liver diseases. In Suriname, an herbal tea made from the leaves has been prescribed against dysentery and diarrhea. The leaves may contain agents for prevention of cancers (although they have no demonstrated anticarcinogenic properties) and antioxidants, as well as anticlastogenic characteristics. Extracts of *T. catappa* have shown activity against Plasmodium falciparum chloroquine (CQ)-resistant (FcB1) and CQ-sensitive (HB3) strains.

Keeping the leaves in an aquarium may lower the pH and heavy-metal content of the water. It has been used in this way by fish breeders for many years and is active against some parasites and bacterial pathogens. It is also believed to help prevent fungus forming on the eggs of the fish.

Health benefits of almond leaves-

The leaves contain phytosterols, saponins, flavonoids such as quercetin and kaempferol as well as tannins such as teracatain, penicillin and punicalagin. The leaves can be used for treating and preventing diarrhoea, dysentery, cancer, and liver diseases

Climate

Tropical almond is well adapted to maritime subtropical and tropical climates where rainfall is usually in the range of 1000–3500 mm (40–140 in) per annum, distributed rather uniformly throughout the year or with a summer maximum. It is invariably found near the coast, at elevations of less than 300–400 m (1000–1300 ft), where there is little seasonal and diurnal variation in temperatures. The entire range is frost-free.

Terminalia Catappa used for

catappa leaves is used to treat scabies, leprosy wounds and other skin diseases (Nair and Chanda, 2008). Its traditional use includes the treatment of diarrhea and fever, especially in India, the Philippines and Malaysia (Kloucek et al., 2005; Shinde et al., 2009)

Timber

The sawn timber has a wide range of end-uses including general building construction, especially interior purposes such as flooring and furniture. Larger sound logs are suitable for veneer and plywood manufacture. The wood is not suitable for long-term ground contact.

Fuelwood

The wood is suitable for use as fuelwood.

Craft wood/tools

Traditional wood uses in the South Pacific include kava bowls, tool handles, clubs, walking sticks, and drums.

References –

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terminalia_catappa
- <https://www.healthbenefitstimes.com/indian-almonds/>