


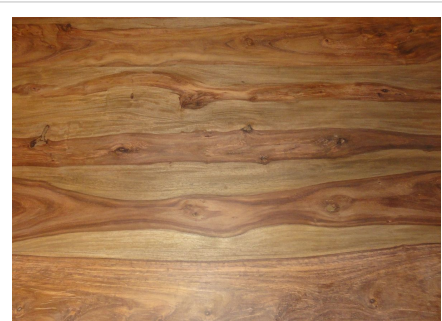
Dalbergia sissoo

<i>Dalbergia sissoo</i>	
	
Scientific classification	
Kingdom:	Plantae
(unranked):	Angiosperms
(unranked):	Eudicots
(unranked):	Rosids
Order:	Fabales
Family:	Fabaceae
Genus:	<i>Dalbergia</i>
Species:	<i>D. sissoo</i>
Binomial name	
<i>Dalbergia sissoo</i> Roxb.	

Dalbergia sissoo (or **Indian Rosewood**) (Urdu: شیشم), is a deciduous rosewood tree, also known as **sisu**, **sheesham**, **tahli/Tali/تالی**, or **Irugudujava**. It is native to the Indian Subcontinent and Southern Iran. In Persian, it is called جگ **Jag**. It is the state tree of Punjab state (India) and the provincial tree of Punjab province (Pakistan). It is primarily found growing along river banks below 900 metres (3,000 ft) elevation, but can range naturally up to 1,300 m (4,300 ft). The temperature in its native range averages 10–40 °C (50–104 °F), but varies from just below freezing to nearly 50 °C (122 °F). It can withstand average annual rainfall up to 2,000 millimetres (79 in) and droughts of 3–4 months. Soils range from pure sand and gravel to rich alluvium of river banks; shisham can grow in slightly saline soils. Seedlings are intolerant of shade.

Timber

Shisham is best known internationally as a premier timber species of the rosewood genus, but is also used as fuel wood and for shade and shelter. With its multiple products and tolerance of light frosts and long dry seasons, this species deserves greater consideration for tree farming, reforestation and agro forestry applications. After teak, it is the most important cultivated timber tree of the Bihar, which is the largest producer of shisham timber in India and Pakistan. In the Bihar, the tree is planted on roadsides, along canals and as a shade tree for tea plantations. It is also commonly planted in southern Indian cities like Bangalore as a street tree.



Sheesham wood

Shisham is among the finest cabinet and veneer timbers. It is the wood from which 'Kartaals', the Rajasthani percussion instrument, are often made. In addition to musical instruments, it is used for plywood, agricultural tools, carvings, boats, skis, flooring, etc.

The heartwood is golden to dark brown; the sapwood, white to pale brownish white. The heartwood is extremely durable (the specific gravity is 0.7 – 0.8) and is very resistant to dry-wood termites; but the sapwood is readily attacked by fungi and borers. *Dalbergia sissoo* is known to contain the neoflavonoid dalbergichromene in its stem-bark and heartwood.^[1]

Fuel wood

The calorific value of the sapwood and heartwood of 'excellent' fuel wood is reported to be 4,908 kcal/kg and 5,181 kcal/kg respectively. As a fuel wood it is grown on a 10 to 15-year rotation. The tree has excellent coppicing ability, although a loss of vigor after two or three rotations has been reported. Shisham wood makes excellent charcoal for heating and cooking.

Botany

D. sissoo is a medium to large deciduous tree with a light crown which reproduces by seeds and suckers. It can grow up to a maximum of 25 m (82 ft) in height and 2 to 3 m (6 ft 7 in to 9 ft 10 in) in diameter, but is usually smaller. Trunks are often crooked when grown in the open. Leaves are leathery, alternate, pinnately compound and about 15 cm (5.9 in) long. Flowers are whitish to pink, fragrant, nearly sessile, up to 1.5 cm (0.59 in) long and in dense clusters 5–10 cm (2.0–3.9 in) in length. Pods are oblong, flat, thin, strap-like 4–8 cm (1.6–3.1 in) long, 1 cm (0.39 in) wide and light brown. They contain 1–5 flat bean-shaped seeds 8–10 mm (0.31–0.39 in) long. They have a long taproot and numerous surface roots which produce suckers. Young shoots are downy and drooping; established stems with light brown to dark gray bark to 2.5 cm (0.98 in) thick, shed in narrow strips; large upper branches support a spreading crown.

Propagation

Propagation takes place most commonly by root suckers and also by seeds. The seeds remain viable for only a few months. Seeds should be soaked in water for 48 hours before sowing and 60% – 80% germination can be expected in 1–3 weeks. Seedlings require partial sun or full sun.

Toxicology



Ethanollic extract of the fruits of *Dalbergia sissoo* exhibited molluscicide effect against eggs of the freshwater snail *Biomphalaria pfeifferi*.^[2]

References

- [2] Adenusi A. A. & Odaibo A. B. (2009). "Effects of varying concentrations of the crude aqueous and ethanolic". *African Journal of Traditional, Complementary and Alternative medicines* 6(2). abstract (<http://journals.sfu.ca/africanem/index.php/ajtcam/article/view/465>), PDF (<http://journals.sfu.ca/africanem/index.php/ajtcam/article/view/465/396>).

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