


Vitex negundo

Five-leaved chaste tree	
	
Scientific classification	
Kingdom:	Plantae
(unranked):	Angiosperms
(unranked):	Eudicots
(unranked):	Asterids
Order:	Lamiales
Family:	Lamiaceae
Genus:	<i>Vitex</i>
Species:	<i>V. negundo</i>
Binomial name	
<i>Vitex negundo</i> L.	
Synonyms	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Vitex cannabifolia</i> Siebold & Zucc.• <i>Vitex incisa</i> Lam.• <i>Vitex incisa</i> var. <i>heterophylla</i> Franch.• <i>Vitex negundo</i> var. <i>heterophylla</i> (Franch.) Rehder	

Vitex negundo, commonly known as the **five-leaved chaste tree**, is a large aromatic shrub with quadrangular, densely whitish, tomentose branchlets. It is widely used in folk medicine, particularly in South and Southeast Asia.

It is known under a variety of names in different languages: Tamil: நொச்சி, *nochhi*; Hindi: नरिंगुडी, *nirgundi*; Sanskrit: सन्धिुवार, *sindhuvara*(హావోలీ / సోంధువార); Telugu : *Sindhuvara*; Filipino: *lagundi*; Sinhala: නික, *nika*; and Bengali: *Nishinda* (নিশিন্দা), Nepali: *Simali* (समिली) and *nirgudi* in marathi.

Description

Vitex negundo is an erect shrub or small tree growing from 2 to 8 m (6.6 to 26 ft) in height. The bark is reddish-brown. Its leaves are digitate, with five lanceolate leaflets, sometimes three. Each leaflet is around 4 to 10 cm (1.6 to 3.9 in) in length, with the central leaflet being the largest and possessing a stalk. The leaf edges are toothed or serrated and the bottom surface is covered in hair. The numerous flowers are borne in panicles 10 to 20 cm (3.9 to 7.9 in) in length. Each is around 6 to 7 cm (2.4 to 2.8 in) long and are white to blue in color. The petals are of different lengths, with the middle lower lobe being the longest. Both the corolla and calyx are covered in dense hairs.

The fruit is a succulent drupe, 4 mm (0.16 in) in diameter, rounded to egg-shaped. It is black or purple when ripe.

Distribution and habitat

Vitex negundo is native to tropical Eastern and Southern Africa and Asia. It is widely cultivated and naturalized elsewhere.

Countries it is indigenous to include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Tanzania, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Vitex negundo are commonly found near bodies of water, recently disturbed land, grasslands, and mixed open forests.

Nomenclature

Common names of *Vitex negundo* in different languages include:^[1]

- Assamese : *Pochotia*
- Bengali : *Nirgundi*; *Nishinda*; *Samalu*
- Bontok : *Liñgei*
- Chinese : *Huang jing* (黄荆)
- English : *Five-leaved chaste tree*; *Horseshoe vitex*; *Chinese chaste tree*
- Filipino : *Lagundi*
- Gujarati : *Nagoda*; *Shamalic*
- Hindi : *Mewri*; *Nirgundi*; *Nisinda*; *Sambhalu*; *Sawbhalu* (नरिंगुडी)



In vitro flowering in *Vitex negundo*



Inflorescence of *Vitex negundo* in Panchkhal valley in Nepal

- Ifugao : *Dabtan*
- Ilokano : *Dangla*
- Kannada : *Bile-nekki*
- Malayalam : *Indrani*
- Marathi : *Nirgunda*
- Punjabi : *Banna; Marwan; Maura; Mawa; Swanjan Torbanna*
- Sanskrit : *Nirgundi; Sephalika; Sindhuvara; Svetasurasa; Vrikshaha* (सन्धिुवार)
- Sinhala: *Nika*
- Tamil : *Chinduvaram; Nirnochchi; Nochchi; Notchi; Vellai-nochchi*
- Telugu : *Sindhuvara; Vavili; Nalla-vavili; Tella-vavili* (హావీలి/ సోధుహార)lekkali

Chemistry

The principal constituents the leaf juice are casticin, isoorientin, chrysophenol D, luteolin, p-hydroxybenzoic acid and D-fructose.^[citation needed] The main constituents of the oil are sabinene, linalool, terpinen-4-ol, β -caryophyllene, α -guaiene and globulol constituting 61.8% of the oil.^[citation needed] *In vitro* and animal studies have shown that chemicals isolated from the plant have potential anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, antifungal and analgesic activities.

Uses

Vitex negundo is used for treating stored garlic against pests and as a cough remedy in the Philippines. Roots and leaves used in eczema, ringworm and other skin diseases, liver disorders, spleen enlargement, rheumatic pain, gout, abscess, backache; seeds used as vermicide.

References

[1] *Vitex negundo* in Dr. K. M. Madkarni's Indian Materia Medica; Edited by A. K. Nadkarni, Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1976, pp: 1278-80.

External links

- Caldecott, Todd (2006). *Ayurveda: The Divine Science of Life*. Elsevier/Mosby. ISBN 0-7234-3410-7. Contains a detailed monograph on *Vitex negundo* (Nirgundi) as well as a discussion of health benefits and usage in clinical practice. Available online at <http://www.toddcaldecott.com/index.php/herbs/learning-herbs/315-nirgundi>

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