

Myroxylon peruiferum

+ Synonyms

L.f.

Fabaceae

Common Name:

General Information

Myroxylon peruiferum is a deciduous tree with a large, open, rounded crown; it can grow 10 - 20 metres tall. The straight, cylindrical bole is sometimes buttressed, it can be 60 - 80cm in diameter[363, 419].

The tree yields a good quality timber, for which it is commonly harvested from the wild and traded internationally. It also yields an essential oil that is used in perfumery and has a number of local medicinal uses. It can be grown as a pioneer for restoring woodland and, as an ornamental tree, it can be used in landscaping[419].

Known Hazards

None known

Botanical References

Range

S. America - Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia.

Habitat

A wide-ranging tree found in a wide range of forest types and soil types, growing in both dense primary forest and more open, secondary formations[419].

Properties

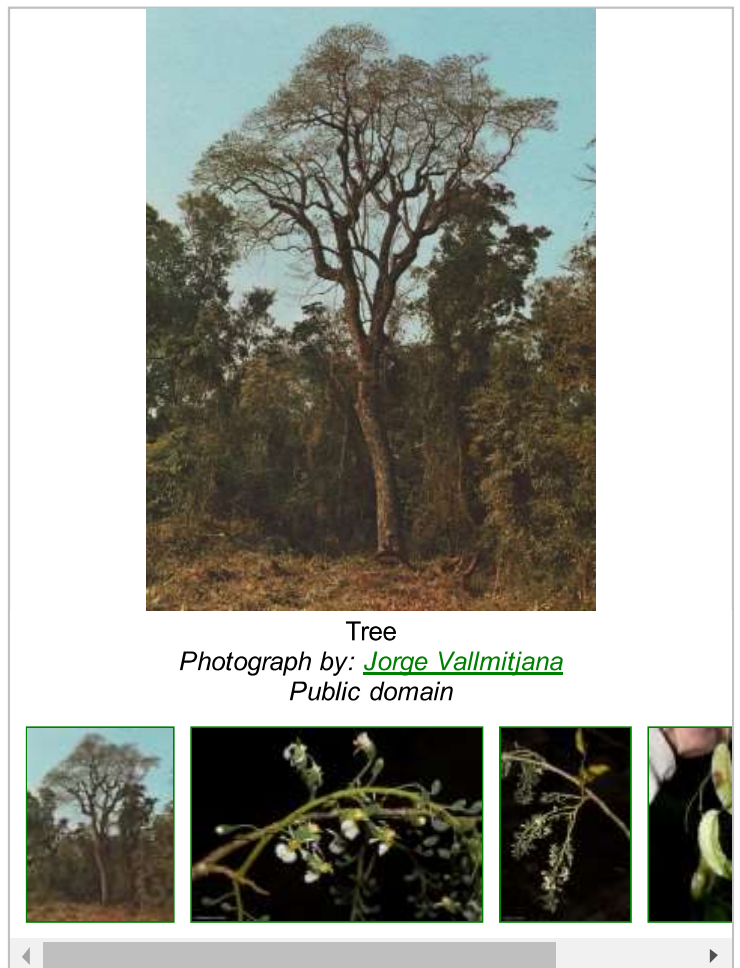
Medicinal Rating	+++
Other Uses Rating	+++
Habit	Deciduous Tree
Height	15.00 m
Growth Rate	Medium
Pollinators	Insects
Cultivation Status	Ornamental, Wild

Cultivation Details

Succeeds in full sun to moderate shade[419]. Succeeds in a wide range of soils[419].

Plants have a moderately fast rate of growth[419].

Although many species within the family Fabaceae have a symbiotic relationship with soil bacteria, this species is said to be devoid of such a relationship and therefore does not fix atmospheric nitrogen[755].



Edible Uses

None known

Medicinal

The crushed fruits are used as an inhalant for treating asthma[348].

A pomade of the fruits prepared in powder form together with the bark mixed with tallow or resins is applied as a poultice to reduce headaches[630].

The fruits are strung in a necklace and worn around the neck so that their odour can be inhaled to clear the nasal and respiratory system as a treatment for colds[348].

An oil called quinaquina is prepared from the fruits. A balm, reputedly very effective for treating ulcers of the chest, is prepared from 100g of the fruit bruised and infused in 500cc of wine for twenty-four hours; this is then cooked over a slow heat with 600g of ordinary oil, until it is dry. Then 400g of turpentine and 40g of incense and an equal amount of myrrh are added. This preparation is said to agglutinate and heal open sores[630].

The crushed fresh leaves are said to heal new wounds[630].

The bark is scraped and boiled, and the water drunk, as a remedy for colds and diarrhoea[348].

Both the resin and the bark are renowned as admirable balsamic and vulnerary agents[630]. Applied topically, they are said to heal new wounds[630].

Agroforestry Uses:

The tree has a moderate rate of growth, succeeds in open positions and is tolerant of a wide range of soil conditions. It can be used as a pioneer species for restoring native woodland or for establishing woodland gardens[419, K].

Other Uses

A balsamic resin is obtained from incisions made in the trunk[419]. It is used in perfumery[419].

The heartwood is purple-red; it is distinctly demarcated from the pale brown sapwood[363]. The wood is medium-textured, cross-grained, lustre is medium, odour and taste indistinct. It is heavy, hard, with moderate mechanical properties, very durable and resistant to the attacks of wood-eating organisms. It is moderately difficult to work due to its hardness and the internal tensions of the wood. A high quality wood, it is used in cabinet making, decorative works, lathe work, for various purposes in construction such as boards, parquet floors, doors, windows, frames, laths and rafters; and external applications such as posts, poles, railway sleepers bridge beams etc[363, 419].

Propagation

Seed - best sown as soon as it is ripe in a partially shaded position in a nursery seedbed or in individual containers. A germination rate in excess of 50% can be expected, with the seed sprouting within 15 - 30 days[419]. When the seedbed-sown seedlings are 4 - 6cm tall, pot them up into individual containers and they should be ready to plant out less than 5 months later[.].

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