PLANT FACT SHEET

Dillenia alata (R. Br. ex DC.) Martelli

GENUS *Dillenia* **FAMILY** Dilleniaceae

COMMON NAMES Red beech, Golden Guinea Tree, Queensland red beech

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Seeds

The seeds are eaten raw especially by children.
The white fleshy part of the fruit (aril) can be eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A small to medium sized tree. It grows to 10-18 m high and spreads to 4-10 m across. The trunk is smoothly round. It has a dense rounded evergreen crown. The bark is loose and flaky. It is reddish brown and bright in colour. The leaves are smooth and produced one after another along the stem. They are often grouped into rings around the stem. They are a rich glossy green. They are broadly oval with a lobe at the base. The leaf blade is 13-25 cm long by 8-12 cm wide. The veins show up clearly and they are raised underneath the leaf. The tip of the leaf is rounded. The leaf stalk has prominent wings and is 5.5 cm long. The flowers are bright yellow. They have 5 petals and 5 spreading lobes. The flowers are 5-8 cm across. There are usually 2-4 flowers together in a cluster at the end of a branch. The fruit is smooth, open, flat and fleshy. They are 4-4.5 cm across. There are 6-8 segments. These open out in a spreading fashion. The fruit are pinkish red when ripe. The fruit contain small brown seeds in a white seed layer. The seed are 5 mm across.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It occurs in dense coastal monsoon forest near freshwater streams. It needs adequate moisture and a well drained soil. It suits a humid place. It is drought and frost tender. In the Cairns Botanical Gardens. It suits hardiness zones 10-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from fresh seeds. It can also be grown from cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is a fast growing tree. In Australia flowering is in October to January and fruit occur in October to November. (September to February).

NOTES

There are about 60 Dillenia species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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