PLANT FACT SHEET

Manilkara hexandra (Roxb.) Dubard

GENUS *Manilkara* **FAMILY** Sapotaceae

COMMON NAMES Ceylon ironwood tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Seeds - oil

The seeds contain edible oil.
The ripe fruit are eaten fresh or dried. They are very sweet. They are also put into a pot with sugar to form a sticky black mass that is eaten.
The bark is added to palm sugar to restrict fermentation.

DESCRIPTION

Shrubs or trees, 3-12 m tall. The bark is grey and deeply furrowed. The sap is milky. The trunk becomes large. Leaves are alternate and often closely clustered at the end of branchlets, with conspicuous scars. The leaf stalk is 0.8-2 cm long. The leaf blade is oval and 5-10 cm long by 3-7 cm wide. The leaves are greyish green and leathery. The flowers are white or pale yellow. They can occur singly or in clusters in the axils of leaves. The berry is oval and 1-2 cm long. The fruit are reddish-yellow on maturity. They are 1 or 2 seeded. Seeds are about 8-10 mm long. The fruit is sweet, sticky and edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. Plants grow in thickets at low altitudes. In India they grow in dry forests in the West. Deccan. It grows along roadsides and wastelands. It can be along seashores. It grows in semi-arid conditions.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed. They can also be grown from cuttings or by air-layering. They can be grafted.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is slow growing. In India the fruit are available October to April. The seeds contain 25% edible oil.

NOTES

The seeds have medicinal value. There are about 75 Manilkara species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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