PLANT FACT SHEET

Dialium guineense Willd.

GENUS *Dialium* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Sierra Leone tamarind, Black velvet tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Nuts, Fruit, seeds - aril, Leaves, Seeds

The pods are chewed to relieve thirst and soaked in water to make a drink.
The pulp is used in chutneys and preserves.
The pulp (aril) around the seeds is eaten fresh.

DESCRIPTION

An evergreen shrub or tree. It grows up to 20 m high. The trunk has slight buttresses. The crown is large and round. The leaves have leaflets along the stalk. There are 3-7 leaflets. They are 13 cm long. The flowers are yellowish white and in branched erect panicles. They have rusty hairs. The fruit are pods 2 cm long by 2.5 cm wide. They are flat and oval. The pods are velvety black with an acid pulp. The pulp is edible. The pods are held above the leaves on wide spreading branched panicles.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It is native to tropical West Africa. It grows in lowland, evergreen humid or semi-dry forests. It grows in savannah. It can grow in arid places. It grows up to 1,200 m above sea level. It grows in areas with a rainfall between 1,000-1,600 mm per year. In Brisbane Botanical Gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. Plants can be budded. Plants can be grown from stem cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Fruit mature in 90-150 days.

NOTES

There are about 40 Dialium species. They grow in tropical SE Asia. They probably all have edible fruit. Also as Caesalpinaceae.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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