PLANT FACT SHEET

Couroupita guianensis Aublet

GENUS *Couroupita* **FAMILY** Lecythidaceae

COMMON NAMES Cannon-ball tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit

The pulp is eaten and made into a beveridge.

DESCRIPTION

A large tree. It can be 25-30 m tall. It has a large spreading crown. The trunk is dark brown. It looses its leaves during the year. The wood is soft. The leaves are simple and alternate. They are oval and broader at the base. They are 15-20 cm long by 5-7 cm wide. The flowers grow directly on the trunk. They are on small branches. They hang down. The flowers are red and 10 cm across. They have large numbers of stamens arranged in 2 groups. One of these is in the flower centre and the other is on a lower petal. The fruit is large and the size of a cannon ball. They can be 25 cm across. Large numbers of fruit hang on stalks around the trunk. These stalks can be 15-30 cm long. The fruit have a soft fleshy centre. The fruit are edible but have a bad smell. The flesh is red. The fruit often burst explosively when they fall from the tree.

HABITAT

It is native to tropical America. A tropical plant. It is very sensitive to frost. Plants need lots of water and humidity. It grows on flood plains. In the Cairns Botanical Gardens. It suits plant hardiness zones 11-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. The fruit are cracked open and the seeds removed, washed and dried in the sun. Germination is slow. Fresh seed should be planted. They germinate in 8-15 days and can be transplanted in 5-7 months.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants grow quickly. They can be 2.5 m tall in 2 years. The fruit ripen in 8 months.

NOTES

There are 3-4 Couroupita species.

PICTURES



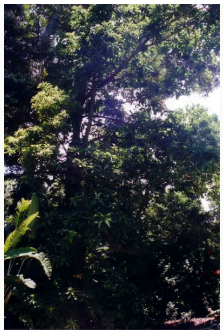
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