PLANT FACT SHEET

Edibility uncertain
It has not been confirmed that this plant is safe to eat. Do not eat it on the strength of this fact sheet alone.

Mallotus philippensis (Lam.) Muell. Arg.

GENUS *Mallotus* **FAMILY** Euphorbiaceae

COMMON NAMES Red Kamala, Indian kamala

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Root, Seeds

The unripe fruit are cooked as a vegetable.
The fruit are powdered and mixed in curries.
The seeds are cooked and eaten. They are boiled, baked, roasted or fried.

DESCRIPTION

A small evergreen tree. It grows 8-12 m high. It has a bushy growth pattern spreading to 4 m wide. The small branches are slender. The young growth has rusty hairs. The leaves are 5-20 cm long by 5-9 cm wide. They are oblong and dark green. The edges of the leaves are irregular and wavy. The leaf tapers to the tip and is wedge shaped at the base. The veins are easy to see. There are a pair of side veins near the base then 5-6 other pairs. There are very small glands underneath the leaf. The leaf stalk is 7 cm long. The flowers occur along stalks 2-10 cm long. These are produced in the axils of the upper leaves. The flowers are small and brown and male and female flowers are separate on the same same plant, or on separate trees. The fruit are capsules 0.6-0.8 cm across. They are covered with red powder. The fruit have 3 lobes.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows in rainforests. It will grow on a range of soils. It can tolerate moderate frosts. It grows to 1500 m on the edge of the Himalayas. In Borneo it grows up to 1,600 m above sea level. It suits hardiness zones 9-11. Adelaide Botanical Gardens. In XTBG Yunnan. In Sichuan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from fresh seed. The seed are washed and then sown. They can take several months to germinate. They can also be grown from hardened young cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

In Australia, fruit are ripe September to February. In NE India August to May.

NOTES

The capsule yields a red dye and the fruit have been used as a tapeworm remedy. It is used in medicine. It has anticancer properties. There are about 140 Mallotus species. They grow in the tropics.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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