PLANT FACT SHEET

Careya arborea Roxb.

GENUS *Careya* **FAMILY** Lecythidaceae

COMMON NAMES Patana Oak, Slow-match tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Shoots, Leaves, Fruit, root, Seeds, bud

Young shoots are eaten uncooked. The flowers are eaten raw as a vegetable.
The bark or outside root is removed and pounded and ground to make flour for bread.
The seeds are eaten roasted. This is presumably to remove poison.
The ripe fruit are eaten raw. They are also used as a vegetable. They are also pickled.
CAUTION. There are some reports the seeds are poisonous.

DESCRIPTION

A small tree 7-15 m high. It can reach 20 m high. The trunk is low and the crown is dense and round. The bark is dark grey and thick and rough. The leaves are alternate. They do not have stalks. The edges of the leaves have a few teeth. The leaves are broadly oval and 15-20 cm long by 10-12 cm wide. They are leathery. Leaves fall before flowering. The flowers are white. They are 8 cm across and occur in thick clusters. They look like big bottle brushes. The fruit are green and has sepals which remain. The fruit are urn shaped and 6-7 cm across. They are smooth. The seeds are oblong.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in open forest. They are common in deciduous and semi-evergreen forests all over the Indian plains. It grows up to 1,600 m above sea level. In the Himalayas it grows up to 800 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds. Seeds germinate in 11-46 days.
It can also be grown from stem cuttings, layering or root suckers.

Harvesting and Seed Production

In India fruit are produced April to August.

NOTES

There are about 5 Careya species.
The genus was named for Rev Carey of Serampore.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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