PLANT FACT SHEET

Use with caution

This plant can be harmful if it is eaten raw, in large amounts or without the right preparation. Read the whole fact sheet before use.

Barringtonia racemosa (L.) Sprengel

GENUS *Barringtonia* **FAMILY** Lecythidaceae

COMMON NAMES Fish Poison Tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Fruit, Seeds

The seeds and young leaves are eaten. The seeds are pounded and starch extracted.
The leaves are cooked and eaten as a vegetable. They are first soaked in lime water.
Caution: The fruit are used to poison wild pigs.

DESCRIPTION

A small evergreen tree or shrub reaching a height of 10-16 m. It spreads to 5 m across. The stem is erect and branching. The tree has a rounded crown. The leaves are crowded at the ends of the branches. They are dark green and 25 cm long by 2-3 cm wide. Leaves can be twice this size. They are pointed at both ends and with toothed edges. The branches are marked with leaf scars. The flowers are white or pink and about 2 cm across. They occur in hanging stalks with individual flowers along the stalk. These stalks can be 25 cm long. The fruit hang along these stalks. The fruit is oblong to oval and somewhat 4 angled. Fruit can be 8 cm long and 2-5 cm wide. They are oval and irregular. They are green or purple. They contain only one seed.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It prefers well-drained, moist, humus rich soil. It can grow in a sheltered, partly shaded position. It is drought tender and very frost tender. Found throughout the Philippines in areas of shrub near the seashore and open lowlands up to 320 m altitude. It grows in coastal swamps and along stream banks. It can resist strong sea breezes. It is salt tolerant. It can grow in arid places. It suits hardiness zones 10-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. Seed need to be sown fresh. It can be grown from cuttings.

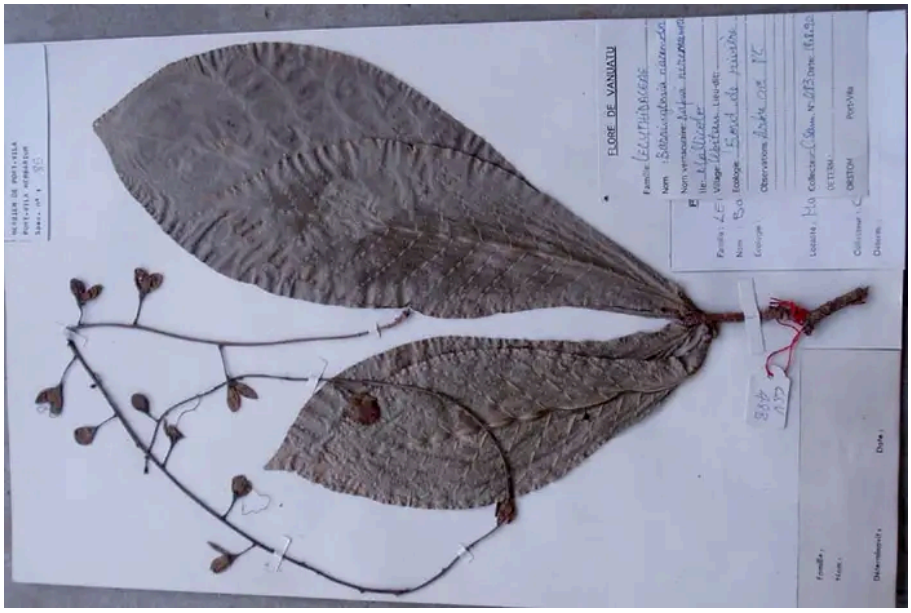
Harvesting and Seed Production

Trees grow easily and rapidly.

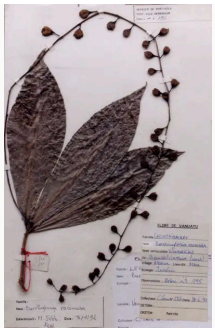
NOTES

Many parts of the plant are used to stun fish. There are about 40 Barringtonia species.
It possibly has anti-cancer properties.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

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