PLANT FACT SHEET

Lecythis zabucajo Aubl.

GENUS *Lecythis* **FAMILY** Lecythidaceae

COMMON NAMES Sapucaia nut, Monkey nut, Paradise nut

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Nuts, Seeds

The nuts are eaten. They are eaten fresh, roasted or used to make confectionary.
CAUTION: The seeds can accumulate toxic levels of selenium from the soil.

DESCRIPTION

A large deciduous tree. It grows 35 m high. The trunk is clear and straight when growing in rainforest. Cultivated trees are smaller. The leaves are simple and deep green. They are 12 cm long by 6 cm wide. They are papery with scalloped edges. The flowers are showy and white or yellow with purple edges. They have 6 petals. The stamens are inside a hinged flap. The flowers have a strong scent. The fruit is a capsule or pod 20 cm long by 26 cm wide. It is round with a 'lid'. The seeds are spindle shaped and deeply ridged. They are 5 cm long and 2.5 cm wide.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It is native to Brazil and Guiana. It grows in the humid fertile lowlands and river valleys. It suits hardiness zones 11-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown by seeds.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The fruit take 18 months to mature. Then the lid drops releasing the seeds.

NOTES

There are 26 Lecythis species.

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PROVIDED BY **Food Plants International**

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

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