PLANT FACT SHEET

Brosimum alicastrum Swartz

GENUS *Brosimum* **FAMILY** Moraceae

COMMON NAMES Maya breadnut, Ramon tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Nut, Leaves, Fruit, Sap

The chestnut like seeds are eaten but only after cooking by roasting or boiling. They are also ground and mixed with corn in tortillas. They are made into a drink with milk and sugar.
The seeds are also used for a coffee like drink.
The latex from the tree is used as a drink.
The young shoots and leaves are edible.
The fruit are also ground and then made into flat bread. They are also boiled and eaten with fish.

DESCRIPTION

A large evergreen tree. It grows to 25-30 m high. It has a dense wide crown of leaves. It has narrow buttresses. The bark is grey. The leaves are simple and dark green. They are 17 cm long by 6 cm wide. There can be teeth along the edge and often the edge is wavy. The flowers are in a round head. Most are male with a female flowers in the centre. The fruit is small, round and golden orange. The tree has small roundish yellow or brown seeds about 2 cm across. They occur singly or sometimes two in a thin paper-like shell. It has a smooth but granular surface.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It is native to Central America. It is suited to tropical lowland areas. It is best in a humid climate with a seasonal dry period. It can grow in arid places. It is drought resistant. It can grow on shallow limestone soils. It can tolerate occasional flooding. In Costa Rica it grows to 1,000 m altitude.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It is grown from seeds or greenwood cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

A fast growing tree. It produces fruit is 5-6 years. There are 2 or 3 fruiting periods during the year.

NOTES

There are 6 Brosimum species in Costa Rica.

PICTURES



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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