PLANT FACT SHEET

# *Tetrapanax papyrifer* (Hook.) K. Koch

**GENUS** *Tetrapanax* **FAMILY** Araliaceae

**COMMON NAMES** Rice paper, Chinese ricepaper plant

## EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

**Edible parts:** Root

The pith of the plant is used to produce rice paper.

## DESCRIPTION

A small tree up to 3-6 m tall. It spreads 4.5 m wide. It has stolons or runners. It has a dense woolly or hairy covering. The leaf blade is almost round and with 7-12 lobes. This extend about halfway to the centre. The leaves are 15-30 cm long and densely hairy underneath. The lobes taper. The leafy structures or stipules are 5-12 cm long. They join to the base of the leaf stalk. The male flowers are on stalks 3-5 mm long. These are 6-8 mm long in female flower heads. The petals are triangle shaped and 2 mm long. The fruit is round and flattened. It is about 2 mm long. It is purplish-black.

## HABITAT

It is a warm temperate and subtropical plant. It grows between 100 and 2,800 m altitude in China. It grows best in damp sites. It suits hardiness zones 8-11. In Brisbane Botanical Gardens. In Sichuan and Yunnan. In Portland Botanical Gardens.

## NOTES

There is only one Tetrapanax species. A form of rice paper is made from the pith of the stem.

## PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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Xiang Chi-bai (Shang Chih-bei); Porter P. Lowry II, ARALIACEAE [Draft], Flora of China



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**ONLINE FACT SHEET** https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/eed1ad2b-52e3-44d4-b19f-e230ae1c2805