



PLANT FACT SHEET

Intsia bijuga (Colebr.) Kuntze

GENUS *Intsia* FAMILY Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Kwila, Johnstone River Teak, Scrub Mahogany

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Leaves

CAUTION: The fruit are poisonous.

The aril or layer around the seeds is eaten.

The seeds contain oil.

The seeds can be made edible by careful preparation. This includes shelling then soaking them in water for 3-4 days and then boiling them.

DESCRIPTION

A tree which grows along the foreshore. It is 30-50 m tall. The trunk can be 15 m long. It has small buttresses. The trunk can be 60-90 cm across. The bark peels off in circular flakes. The crown is spreading and leaves often fall off. The leaves are divided along the stalk. The leaf is 25 cm long. There are 2 pairs of leaflets. These leaflets are oval and often different on each side of the midrib. They are shiny green. They are 8-14 cm long by 6-11 cm wide. The flower panicle has many flowers densely together and they are at the end of a branch. The petals are often crinkled and can be white or red. The stamens are dark red. The flowers have a pleasant smell. The fruit is a pod which is oblong and flat. It has a short beak. There are veins along the valves. The pod is 14-28 cm long by 4-7 cm wide. There are 2-4 or more seeds which are flat and 2-2.5 cm across.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It usually occurs in the lowlands close to the coast. It can tolerate wet soils. It can grow in areas which are occasionally flooded. It is often on limestone. It can grow on atolls. It suits a pH of 6.1 to over 7.4. It can tolerate salty soils. It can tolerate salt spray. It grows on the side of tidal rivers. It is usually in areas with a rainfall of 1500-2300 mm per year. It is drought resistant. It grows best with temperatures around 26-27°C. It cannot tolerate temperatures below 17°C. It grows best in full sun. In Papua New Guinea it grows from sea level to 450 m altitude. In Madagascar it is usually below 50 m altitude.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. The seed need to be treated to break the hard seed coat. They can also be grown by cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It grows at a moderate rate. It can grow 1.5 m in a year. It can take 75-80 years to reach maturity.

NOTES

The wood is very hard and is called ironwood. There are 2 *Intsia* species and others have now been transferred to *Afzelia*. The bark and leaves are used in medicine.

Also as *Caesalpinaceae*.

PICTURES



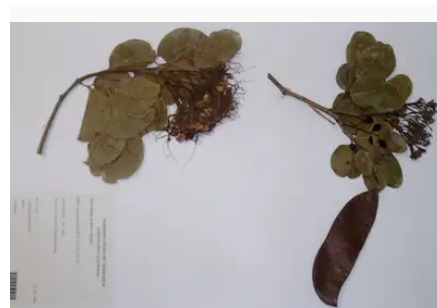
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