



FRUIT TREES

Trees bear fruits and are consumed by humans as food or for other daily purposes. The most common trees which can be found everywhere, procured and planted easily.

JAMUN, JAM, JAMBULA, BLACK PLUM

Syzygium cumini (L.) Skeels

Synonym: *Eugenia jambolana* Lam.

Family: Myrtaceae

A medium-sized evergreen tree, fruits from May to August.

Fruit: The plant produces small purple plums, with a very sweet flavour.

Mythology: The tree is associated with Lord Shiva, Ganesha, Rama, Krishna and thirteenth Jain Tirthankara Bhagwan Vimalnath Ji. Tree is associated with Lord Shiva while fruits are associated with Lord Ganesha and Lord Rama.

Medicinal use: All parts of the tree can be used medicinally and it has a long tradition in alternative medicine. The different parts of the plant used in the treatment of diabetes, blisters in mouth, cancer, colic, diarrhea, digestive complaints, dysentery, piles, pimples and stomachache.

Phytochemicals: Fruits are rich in sugar, mineral salts, vitamins C, anthocyanins and flavonoids. Seeds are rich in antioxidants (flavonoids).

Environmental: Flowers attract insects, bees and small nectar birds, fruits are eaten by frugivorous birds.

Uses: Avenue tree, shade tree, temple garden, botanic gardens and fruit gardens.

AAM, AAMRA, MANGO

Mangifera indica L.

Family: Anacardiaceae

National fruit of India and the largest fruit-tree in the world, mango is a long-lived evergreen large tree. It is cultivated throughout the country and fruits from May to August.





Mythology: Leaves, flowers, wood and fruits are used in religious activities, tree is associated with Lord Rama, Ganesha, Kamadeva and Buddha; Goddess Lakshmi (as Purnakumbha), Saraswati and Ambika (Buddhism).

Medicinal: Barks and leaves are used to cure mouth infections; drink made from unripe mango fruit is used as a remedy for exhaustion and heat stroke in summers. Half-ripe fruit eaten with salt and honey is used for a treatment of gastro-intestinal disorders, blood disorders, and scurvy. Infusion of mango leaves given in the treatment of diabetes.

Nutritional Facts: Ripe mangoes are a rich source of Potassium, vitamin A, C and D; Cholesterol 0.

Environmental: Fleshy and sweet fruits attract a range of wildlife (birds, bats, and other fruit-eating animals). Bees, flies, ants visit the flowers, most pollination is done by flies.

Uses: Avenue, fruit garden, shade tree, temple garden.

KATAHAL, PANASA, JACKFRUIT

Artocarpus heterophyllus Lam.

Family: Moraceae

A large evergreen tree with glossy and leathery leaves; flowers and fruits from January to June.

Mythology: Flowers are associated with Lord Vishnu while fruits to Lord Ganesha.

Food: Jackfruit used as a staple food, starchy fruits and sweet seeds are edible fresh, as vegetable and even pickled, processed in numerous delicacies like jam, jelly and chutney.

Medicinal: Leaves are used to cure fever, boils, wounds and skin diseases. The ripe fruits are sweet, cooling, laxative, aphrodisiac and tonic.

Nutritional facts: Good source of Potassium, Vitamin A, C and B-6; Cholesterol 0.

Environmental: Sweet fragrant flowers attract variety of insects, fleshy sweet fruits as a food source for birds, animals.

Uses: Avenue, fruit garden, temple garden, landscaping.

BAEL, MAHAPHAL, BILVA, STONE APPLE

Aegle marmelos (L.) Corrêa





Family: Rutaceae

A small sized, deciduous thorny tree, with trifoliate leaves; flowers March to July and fruits from January to June.

Mythology: Leaves, fruits, wood and whole tree are associated with Lord Shiva, Goddesses Parvati, Lakshmi and Durga. Bael is considered sacred to Lord Shiva and as an offering of its leaves is a compulsory ritual, it is usually planted near a Shiva temple. Three leaflets resembling the Trishul or Trident are considered symbolic of creation, destruction and preservation as well as his three eyes. Planting these trees around home or temple is sanctifying and is equivalent to worshiping a 'Linga' with bilva leaves and water. The Skanda Purana interprets the significance of Bael tree and mentions that Goddess Parvati's perspiration, which fell to the ground while she performed penance, gave birth to this tree. A fallen tree is never used for firewood and though its fruit is highly valued by people, the people of Kerala never eat it, as it signifies the head of Shiva.

Nutritional facts: Fruits are rich in Potassium, calcium, phosphorus, vitamin A and C.

Medicinal: The unripe dried fruit is astringent, digestive, used to cure diarrhoea and dysentery. The ripe fruit cures indigestion. Decoction of roots and bark of the tree are used to treat fever. The leaves are used for treatment of inflammation, asthma, hepatitis and analgesic. Ayurveda prescribes the fruit of the herb for heart, stomach, intestinal tonic, chronic constipation and dysentery, some form of indigestion, typhoid and cholera. The unripe fruit is medicinally better than the ripe fruit.

Food: The pulp is used to make sherbet. Young leaves and shoots are eaten as vegetables.

Environmental: Bees are attracted by the flowers. It is larval host plant of butterflies like Lime butterfly and Common Mormon. In wild fruit pulp is enjoyed by wild animals.

Uses: Botanic garden, temple tree, fruit garden.

MUNGNA, SAINJNA, SHOBHANJANA, DRUM-STICK TREE

Moringa oleifera Lam.

Family: Moringaceae

A medium-sized deciduous tree, known for its edible leaves and long pods; flowers during January – April and fruits in May to July.





Medicinal: The leaves juice is believed to stabilize blood pressure, the flowers are used to cure inflammations, the pods are used in joint pain, the roots are used to treat rheumatism, bark chewed as a good digestive and the seeds are used to soften skin. Seeds have antiasthmatic properties.

Food: Tender leaves and fruit pods used in various food dishes.

Nutritional facts: Advocated as natural nutrition to combat malnutrition. Tender leaves are rich in proteins, vitamins and minerals, similarly pods are rich in vitamin C and minerals.

Environmental: Scented flowers and nectar attract carpenter bees and sunbirds (*Nectarinia zeylanica* and *N. asiatica*).

Uses: Fruit gardens, around houses and gardens.

FOREST TREES

ASHOKAM, ASHOK, SITA ASHOK

Saraca asoca (Roxb.) Willd.

Family: Fabaceae

A medium-sized evergreen tree, with glossy dark green leaves, flowers from December to May.

Flowers: Fragrant, in dense round clusters, from light yellow orange to bright red.

Mythology: Flowers are associated with Lord Shiva, Kamadeva; Goddess Parvati and Sita. Tree is important in Buddhist and Hindu mythologies, considered as a sacred tree, planted along temples. Tree is worshipped in Chaitra month of Hindu calendar. Associated with Kamadeva and mentioned in Ramayana as Ashok Vatika (garden of Ashoka trees).

Environmental: Fragrant orange-red flowers attract number of insects and small nectar feeding birds.

Medicinal: Bark, flowers and seeds are used in various uterine diseases in women in India.

Uses: Avenue, ornamental plantation, temple garden, landscape, botanic garden and flower gardens.

NEEM, PAKVAKRITA, NIMBA, MARGOSA

Azadirachta indica A.Juss.

Family: Meliaceae

A medium sized evergreen tree, commonly found in habitations.





Mythology: Whole tree associated with Lord Jagannath. In Karnataka, Neem flowers are used in a special ceremonial day of 'Ugadi', while leaves are used as drink and paste in 'Gudi Padva' festival in Maharashtra. In Orissa the idols of Lord Jagannath are made up of Neem heart wood.

Medicinal: Parts of the plant known for medicinal value are twigs, tender branches, leaves, fruits and seeds. Pharmacologically neem acts as antiseptic, antibacterial and antifungal. Decoction of leaves and flowers are orally taken for diabetes, antiseptic purposes. Slurry of bark is externally used in inflammation and injuries.

Environmental: Small fragrant flowers attract honey bees and small insects, ripen fruits are sweet and favoured by birds and bats.

Uses: Avenue, shade tree, Botanic gardens.

AMALTAS, ARAGVADHA, GOLDEN SHOWER

Cassia fistula L.

Family: Fabaceae

A medium-sized deciduous tree, flowers during summers.

Mythology: Flowers are associated with Lord Shiva and Vishnu and are of ritual importance in the Vishu festival of the Kerala state of India.

Medicinal: The plant is used as laxative and is very useful for the treatment of constipation. The root is used in treating common cold. Extract is used as tonic, helpful in treatment of fever. The leaves relieve swelling and pain. It is also helpful in reducing irritation of the skin. It shows good results in the treatment of liver disorders. The pulp of the plant is quite effective for constipation and urinary disorders. Fruit and the bark of stem help in purification of blood. Bark is used against hepatitis/jaundice and seeds are used against constipation in children.

Environmental: Flowers attract bees and butterflies, pulpy fruits attract small wild mammals.

Use: Avenue, ornamental, landscaping, botanic garden, temple garden.

BARGAD, BAHUPADA, VATA, BANYAN TREE





Ficus benghalensis L.

Family: Moraceae

A large evergreen tree, with numerous aerial roots; flowers and fruits during March to November.

Mythology: Whole plant is associated with Lord Shiva, Brahma, Vishnu, Krishna and Buddha. Known in Hindu mythology as 'the wish-fulfilling tree', banyans represent eternal life.

Medicinal: The bark and leaf buds of the tree are useful in controlling secretion or bleeding. The leaf buds and latex of the banyan tree are beneficial in the treatment of chronic diarrhoea and dysentery. A few drops of the latex of the banyan tree mixed in milk and taken daily helps to cure bleeding piles. Cleaning the teeth with the aerial roots of the banyan is beneficial in preventing teeth and gum disorders. The latex is commonly used locally for sores, ulcers and bruises. Aerial roots topically applied to pimples. A paste of leaves is applied externally to abscesses and wounds. Infusion of bark used in diabetes, dysentery, burning sensation.

Environmental: Figs provide food for several birds and animals and considered good nesting places in branches by birds.

Uses: Avenue, road plantation, ornamental and shade/shelter tree in gardens and as temple tree.

GOOLAR, UMBAR, UDUMBER, CLUSTER FIG

Ficus racemosa L.

Synonym: *Ficus glomerata* Roxb.

Family: Moraceae

A medium-sized deciduous tree, with clustered figs on the stem, flowers and fruits during April to November.

Mythology: Whole tree is associated with Lord Shiva, Brahma, Vishnu and Kanaka Muni (Buddhism). In ancient scriptures the roots of the plant are considered to be Brahma, its bark as Vishnu and its branches as Shiva. The tree is compared to Vishnu; in fact one of the names of Vishnu is Udumbara. In the Atharva Veda, this is given eminence as a means for acquiring prosperity and vanquishing adversaries.

Medicinal: Root is used in dysentery, diabetes, applied in mumps. The bark is highly efficacious in threatened abortion and also recommended in urological disorders, diabetes, leprosy, dysentery and piles. The leaves are good wash for wounds and ulcers also used to cure diarrhoea and dysentery. Latex is aphrodisiac and used to cure diabetes, boils, swellings and toothache.





Food: Fruits are edible raw and as vegetable.

Environmental: The tree is often the home to the tiny lac insect. Fruit is likened by number of birds, bats and animals.

Uses: Planted around temples and monasteries for religious purpose; as ornamental tree and along road sides.

PEEPAL, ASHWATHA, BO TREE

Ficus religiosa L.

Family: Moraceae

A large, deciduous tree with long tipped glossy leaves; flowers and fruits from April to November.

Mythology: Whole tree is associated with Lord Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, and Buddha. Peepal is one of the revered trees and considered as king of trees in India. The roots of Peepal represent Brahma; its bark represents Vishnu and its branches Shiva. The tree is considered to be a Brahman and worshipped daily after the morning bath.

Medicinal: Parts of medicinal significance are Bark, leaves, fruits, seeds and latex. Leaf juice has been used for the treatment of asthma, cough, sexual disorders, diarrhoea, haematuria, earache and toothache, migraine, eye troubles, gastric problems and scabies. Leaf decoction has been used as an analgesic for toothache. Bark is used in healing ulcers, various skin diseases and scabies and in treatment of diabetes, the root bark is stated to be aphrodisiac.

Environmental: Fruit is likened by number of birds, bats and animals, tender leaves are likened by monkeys.

Uses: Planted around temples and monasteries for religious purpose; as ornamental tree and along road sides.

CHAMPA, CHAMPAKA, GOLDEN CHAMPA

Magnolia champaca (L.) Baill. ex Pierre

Synonym: *Michelia champaca* L.

A large evergreen tree with creamish-white to pale-yellow or orange fragrant flowers; flowers and fruits during April to August.





Mythology: Flowers are used for worship in temples.

Medicinal: A decoction of the bark and leaves is given after childbirth; the bark is used as a febrifuge.

Environmental: Beetles feed on flower parts and help in pollination, flowers attract butterflies, pinkish aril on seeds enjoyed by frugivorous birds like bulbuls, barbets and koels.

Uses: As a roadside tree, temple premises and ornamental tree in gardens.

KANCHAN, KANIAR, KOBIDAR, ORCHID TREE

Bauhinia purpurea L.

Family: Fabaceae

A medium-sized deciduous tree with red-purple flowers; flowers during September to March.

Medicinal: Bark is extensively applied in glandular diseases and as a poison antidote while the leaves are administered as cough medicine.

Food: Flower buds cooked as vegetable.

Environmental: Nectar in flowers attracts number of nectar birds.

Uses: Ornamental tree, garden tree, homesteads and avenue plantation.





HEDGES

CHANDNI, TAGAR, NANDIVRIKSHA, CREPE JASMINE

Tabernaemontana divaricata (L.) R.Br. ex Roem. & Schult.

Family: Apocynaceae

An evergreen, large shrub with scented white flowers, usually flowers throughout the year.

Mythology: Flowers are associated with Lord Shiva, and are offered to deities in Hinds during cultural and religious rituals.

Medicinal: Leaf paste with lime is applied for insect bites and skin diseases. Whole plant as anthelmintic properties and leaf paste is applied to relieve headache and fever. Decoction of the bark is used to alleviate stomach and rheumatic pains. The juice of the flower is used for the treatment of sore eyes and various skin diseases.

Environmental: Showy and fragrant flowers attract butterflies, honey bees and small insects, branchlets are used by small birds for perching and foraging insects.

Uses: Garden plant, landscaping, ornamental, large hedges.

JUHI, YUTHIKA, INDIAN JASMINE

Jasminum auriculatum Vahl

Family: Oleaceae

An evergreen shrub with scented white flowers, flowers during spring to summers and in rainy seasons.

Mythology: Flowers are associated with all forms of Goddess and Lord Vishnu and Ganesh.

Medicinal: The roots are useful in skin diseases especially for ring-worm. Flowers are fragrant, bitter, acrid, sweet, refrigerant, astringent, and diuretic in nature. They are useful in burning sensation, antiseptic, ulcers, skin diseases, wounds and corns.

Environmental: Flowers attract bees, butterflies and fruits are enjoyed by small birds, bushes provide nesting sites for small birds.

Uses: Ornamental, fragrant gardens, landscaping and hedges.





MOGHRA, MALATI, ARABIAN JASMINE

Jasminum sambac (L.) Sol.

Family: Oleaceae

An evergreen dense shrub with glossy leaves and scented white flowers; flowers throughout the year.

Mythology: White scented flowers are associated with Lord Vishnu, Shiva, Ganesh and also Kamadeva.

Medicinal: The traditional use of this plant suggests analgesic, antidepressant, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, sedative, tonic effects. Leaves and flowers are used as antipyretic and decongestant. Flower infusion used for ulceration, dermatitis and fever. The root is used to treat headaches, insomnia and pain due to dislocated joints and broken bones.

Ethnobotany: Essential oil is used as fragrance for skin care products. Dried flowers are used to make jasmine tea.

Environmental: Highly fragrant flowers attract flies, bees and butterflies.

Uses: Ornamental, fragrant gardens, landscaping and hedges.

RUGMINI, JUNGLE GERANIUM, JUNGLE FLAME IXORA

Ixora coccinea L.

Family: Rubiaceae

An evergreen large shrub to a small tree with dark green glossy leaves and pink to red coloured beautiful flowers; flowers mostly throughout the year.

Environmental: Highly aesthetic flowers attract butterflies, small nectar birds; ripe pulpy fruits attract large birds.

Mythology: Considered as sacred plant in parts of South India and associated with Lord Shiva.

Uses: Flowers found in different colour varieties from pink, red, orange to yellow, used in landscaping, hedges, flowering beds, as potted flowering plant.

MEHENDI, HENNA, EGYPTIAN PRIVET





Lawsonia inermis L.

Family: Lythraceae

A large shrub to small tree with creamish white flowers; flowers during January to June.

Environmental: Small fragrant creamish flowers attract small insects and butterflies.

Application: Leaf powder is used in body art and hair dye.

Medicinal: Used in traditional ayurvedic medicines, to inhibit tuberculosis bacteria, skin diseases and urinary stones.

Uses: Hedge plantation, boundary plantation, herbal gardens.

SANKUPPI, KUNDALI, SEASIDE CLERODENDRUM, INDIAN PRIVET

Volkameria inermis L.

Synonym: *Clerodendrum inerme* (L.) Gaertn.

Family: Lamiaceae

An erect or trailing evergreen shrub, used in hedges and landscaping.

Environmental: White flowers attract butterflies for nectar; leaves are cattle resistive, bush canopy used by small birds for roosting and nesting.

Uses: Hedges, ornamental, garden beds, boundary plantation.

ADUSA, ADULSA, VASAKA, MALABAT NUT

Justicia adhatoda L.

Synonym: *Adhatoda vasica* Nees

Family: Acanthaceae

An evergreen, much branched shrub, with light green leaves and white flowers; flowers during spring.

Medicinal: Used in number of Indian traditional medicine systems, whole parts of the plant used to cure cough, asthma, diarrhoea, malaria, dysentery etc.





Environmental: White nectar flowers attract butterflies, nectar birds, leaves are cattle resistive, bush canopy used by small birds for roosting and nesting.

Uses: Boundary plantation, ornamental, hedge plantation.





CLIMBERS

MADHU MALATI, RANGOON CREEPER

Combretum indicum (L.) DeFilipps

Synonym: *Quisqualis indica* L.

Family: Combretaceae

A deciduous shrubby vine with beautiful pale-pink to deep crimson star shaped flowers with long tubes, in tight clusters; flowers during May to September.

Environmental: Attracts butterflies and nectar birds.

Medicinal: Decoction of roots, seeds and fruits for diarrhoea; fruits for nephritis and roots for rheumatism.

Uses: Ornamental climber, boundary plantations.

NEELI LATA, BENGAL CLOCK VINE, BLUE TRUMPET VINE

Thunbergia grandiflora (Roxb. ex Rottl.) Roxb.

Family: Acanthaceae

A robust, thick vine with striking blue coloured large funnel shaped flowers; flowers from March to November.

Environmental: Attracts number of small insects, ants and carpenter bees.

Uses: Flowers available in two colours Blue the natural and hybridized white, ornamental climber, boundary plantations, coverings.

ADHOGUDA, VIDHARA, ELEPHANT CREEPER, WOOLLY MORNING GLORY

Argyreia nervosa (Burm. f.) Bojer

Family: Convolvulaceae





A vigorous vine with large heart-shaped leaves covered with dense white hairs downside, and large pink-blue flowers; flowers twice a year in July to December and March to April.

Environmental: Attracts number of small insects and ants.

Uses: Pot plant, boundary plantation, ornamental climber.

