

Krishna's Buttercup



Common name: Krishna's Buttercup
Scientific name: *Ficus benghalensis* var. *Krishnae*
Origin: India

Krishna's Buttercup is an extremely rare mutant of the Banyan. It is named because of its distinct, cup shaped leaves, which have a story associated with them: the Hindu god Krishna was stealing butter and to avoid punishment from Yashoda, his foster mother, he rolled it in a leaf of the tree. The leaves retained that shape, hence resulting in the unique pocket-like folds on the underside of the leaves. This evergreen tree is one of Rani Bagh's most beloved.

Jamun



Common name: Jamun
Scientific name: *Syzygium cumini*

The jamun (which also goes by the names black plum, Indian black cherry, Ram jamun, Malabar plum, Java plum) is a deep purplish/ bluish black fruit referred to as the "Fruit of Gods" in India. It plays a role in Hindu mythology, as Lord Ram is said to have eaten jamun during his exile from Ayodhya. Temples built to honour Lord Ram always have at least one jamun tree. It is said that Lord Megha came to the Earth in the form of a jamun, and the fruit is hence as dark as a storm cloud. The jamun is packed with nutrients like Vitamin C and iron, and plays an important role in Ayurvedic medicine. Recent

research has found that the jamun can play a role in the prevention and treatment of metabolic syndrome (MS).

Lignum Vitae



Common name: Lignum Vitae
Scientific name: *Guaiacum officinale*
Native to: South America and the Caribbean

Sometimes known as the Tree of Life, Lignum Vitae has flowers that are initially a bright blue but eventually fade to white. The flower is also the national flower of Jamaica. The tree's wood is among the hardest in the world. Resin can be extracted from the bark or wood, and it has a wide range of medical purposes. For example, it can be used to discover bloodstains and is consumed orally for gout and atherosclerosis. *Guaiacum officinale* is now considered an endangered species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Ironwood Tree



Common name: Ironwood, Nagkesar, Naga-Champa
Scientific name: *Mesua ferrea*

The evergreen Ironwood tree is the national tree of Sri Lanka and the state tree of Mizoram. The tree is considered sacred and has fragrant white flowers. It is used in traditional medicine.

Buddha's Coconut



Common name: Buddha's Coconut
Scientific name: *Pterygota alata*/*Sterculia alata*

Native to: India

This tree is named Buddha's coconut because of the shape of its fruits, which contain winged seeds. A variety of *Pterygota alata* (*Pterygota alata* v. *irregularis*) is also nicknamed 'pagla gachh' in Bengalee, or 'mad tree' because the leaves all have different shapes, even on one single tree. The leaves are glossy and heart shaped at the base. The seeds are eaten, and the plant is also used medicinally in India.

Corkscrew flower



Common name: wood shaving flower/
corkscrew flower

Scientific name: *Strophanthus boivinii*

Native to: Madagascar

Called wood shaving flower or corkscrew flower because of the narrow, twisted flower petals which are a bright orange, a bark decoction of *Strophanthus boivinii* can be used medicinally to treat colic and is applied on wounds. However, ingesting any part of the plant is toxic for humans and animals.

Rani Bagh has the only *Strophanthus boivinii* present in Mumbai.

Divi Divi



Common name: Divi Divi

Scientific name: *Caesalpinia coriaria*

Native: Mexico to Venezuela and the Caribbean

Divi divi is the national tree of an island country, Curacao in the Caribbean. Its flowers are cream-coloured and their fragrance is very attractive for insects.

The tree's pods can be used to produce a black dye that is used to make ink, and tannin from the pods is utilised to make leather.

Lac Tree/ Kusum Tree



Common names: Lac Tree, Kusum tree

Scientific name: *Schleichera oleosa*

Native: Tropical parts of South Asia, including India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Myanmar, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia

The tree is famous for the bright, vivid red of its leaves when they are new.

The tree acts as a host for lac insects, which produce biodegradable lac resin. This is used in several industries including cosmetics, pharmaceuticals and fruit coating.

The oil from its seeds is used in traditional medicine to cure acne and itches. It was also used for hairdressing! This is the only species of the *Schleichera* genus.

Makad Limbu



Makad limbu, Bombay Atalantia
Scientific name: *Atalantia racemosa*

It is a small tree with white flowers, seen in Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka. Some believe that skin diseases (including leprosy) will be cured if mud found below the tree is applied on the skin. In Hinduism, it is seen as a sacred tree (Shtala Vrisksha) and is worshipped in some temples in Tamil Nadu.

Candle tree, Palo de Velas



Common names: Candle Tree, Palo de Velas
Scientific name: *Parmentiera cereifera*

The candle tree, which is native to Central America, has waxy, edible fruits that are shaped like candles. The fruits can be eaten raw, cooked, or pickled. The flowers grow directly from the bark of the tree. The candle tree has both ornamental and some medicinal uses: research finds that it is associated with anti-inflammatory activity, anti-hyperglycemic activity, and gastroprotective activity. "Parmentiera", the genus, is named after Antoine-Augustin Parmentier, a French pharmacist. Potatoes were banned in France and were thought to cause leprosy. Parmentier fought to lift the ban and promote the nutritional value of the potato.

Guest Tree



Common name: Guest Tree

Scientific name: *Kleinhovia hospita*

Native: australia, delta of the mekong river, Malaysian archipelago, Indonesia

The guest tree is an evergreen tree. Its flowers are pink, and its bark and heart-shaped leaves are poisonous, and sometimes used to kill head lice. Fibres from the bark can be used to create ropes for the tying of domestic animals. Its species, hospita- Latin for hospitable- may refer to the fact that insects, birds and parasites are supported by the tree. In India, the tree cannot be seed-propagated, suggesting that there is no suitable pollinator.

Ghost Tree



Common name: Ghost Tree

Scientific name: *Sterculia Urens*

Native to: India, Indonesia, Australia

Known for its bark, which is greyish-white (and sometimes red) and peels off in flakes that is responsible for it being called the “ghost” tree, Sterculia is a reference to the Roman god of manure, an indication of the strong stinking smell of the tree’s green-yellow flowers, while urens, which means burning, is an indication of the tree’s red fruit’s stinging hairs.

The tree’s gum, Gum Karaya, has widespread uses in cosmetics and pulp binding.

Elephant Apple



Common name: Elephant Apple
Scientific name: *Dillenia indica*

Native to tropical Asia and China, the 'Elephant Apple' / 'Chalta' / 'Hondapara' tree is a near-evergreen tree with leaves that are up to 35 cm long with pointy tips. Its flowers have white petals, and its yellow-green fruits contain a pulp used in jam-making. In forest regions, a key agent for seed dispersal is elephants, explaining the name of the tree. The tree plays a crucial role in forest ecology of North-Eastern India.

Sacred Barna



Common name: Sacred Barna/ Varuna
Scientific name: *Crataeva tapia* L.

Sacred Barna is a deciduous tree found throughout India and often found near temples. Its flowers are white, which fades to yellow, and it has woody fruit. It is used in Ayurveda (for purifying blood, respiratory issues, joint issues, etc) and is a central ingredient in various herbal formulations. Its wood is used for manufacturing drums and toys.

Breadfruit



Common name: Breadfruit, Barhal, Ulu,
Scientific name: *Artocarpus altilis*

When the large fruit is roasted, it resembles bread. This is why the tree is often called the breadfruit tree. The tree has two varieties– one with fruits with seeds and one with seedless fruits. The fruit– which has a white pulp– is roasted, fried, dried, boiled, made into a curry, and baked. Originating in the Pacific Islands, breadfruit is considered a staple food in the Pacific, and it has a high amount of carbohydrate, protein, and fiber. The tree can be used to make cloth and for insect repellent.

Bottle Brush



Common name: Bottle Brush
Scientific name: *Melaleuca citrina*,
Callistemon citrinus (curtis) Skeels
Native to: Australia

Bottlebrush has scarlet flowers. The tree is used in traditional medicine systems (of the aboriginal people and of Indians) to treat bronchitis and coughs. It is also grown ornamentally and grown to manufacture essential oils (which show antimicrobial, anti inflammation, anti-staphylococcal activity).