

Flacourtia montana

Family : Salicaceae
Group : 6. Star trees
Parts Used : Fruit , Leaf, Bark

Vernacular Names

English : Mountain Sweet Thorn
Malayalam : Vayyamkaitha , Vayyankatha
Hindi : Paniyala



Distribution and habitat: Evergreen and semi-evergreen forests

Botany: Thorny trees growing up to 8 m with grey, thin and smooth bark.

• **Leaf:** Leaves simple, alternate, spiral; petioled, stout, glabrous; lamina 12-22 cm x 6-8 cm, ovate, elliptic, base acute or rounded, apex acute or acuminate, margin crenate-serrate, coriaceous, glabrous except midrib below, shining above; 3-5 nerves from the base, prominent, lateral veins 4-6 pairs, pinnate, prominent, intercostae scalariform, slender, prominent.

• **Flower:** Unisexual, small, in axillary congested pubescent cymes; sepals 4 or 5 tomentose, small, imbricate; petals absent; stamens many; anthers versatile; ovary superior, urn-shaped, glabrous, incompletely 2-5 locular, ovules 2 in each cell; styles 5, reflexed, notched tip.

• **Fruit:** Berry, globose, obtusely ribbed, 1-1.5 cm across, bright red, of an agreeable acid flavour; seeds few, reddish.

Properties: The fruits are sweet and sour, astringent and acrid. it has refrigerant, digestive, stomachic, alexipharmic, anti-inflammatory, depurative, urinary astringent and liver tonic properties. The bark is astringent, acrid, refrigerant, stomachic and diaphoretic. The leaf extracts with methanol possess hepatoprotective, anti-inflammatory and antioxidant activities.

Uses: The barks are useful in vitiated conditions of pitta, odontalgia, diarrhea, hemorrhoids, stomachic and debility of the extremities. The fruits are useful in vitiated conditions of *pitta* and *kapha*, rheumatism, nausea, dyspepsia, flatulence, colic, inflammations, skin diseases, diabetes, jaundice and tumours.

