

Strychnos nux-vomica Linn.

Family : Loganiaceae
Group : 6. Star trees
Parts Used : Leaf, Seed, Bark

Vernacular Names

English : Strychnine tree
Malayalam : Kanjiram
Hindi : Kajra
Sanskrit : Karaskara
Kannada : Ittangi
Tamil : Itti
Telugu : Mushti



Distribution and habitat: Throughout India in deciduous forests up to 1200 m. It is also found in Sri Lanka, Siam, Indochina and Malaysia.

Botany: It is a large deciduous tree, with simple leaves and white fragrant flowers.

• **Leaves:** Simple, opposite, orbicular to ovate, coriaceous, glabrous, 5 nerved, apex obtuse, acute or apiculate, transverse nerves irregular and inconspicuous.

• **Inflorescence:** Many flowered terminal cymes, 2.5-5 cm across. Bracts (5 mm) and bracteoles (1.5 mm) small. Flowers are white or greenish white and fragrant. Calyx 5 lobed, pubescent and small (2 mm). Corolla salver shaped, tube cylindrical slightly hairy near the base within and greenish white, tube much elongate than the lobes. Stamens 5, filaments short.

• **Fruit:** A berry, 5-6 cm diameter, globose, indehiscent, thick shelled, orange red when ripe with fleshy pulp enclosing the seeds.

• **Seeds:** Seeds orbicular, flat, shiny, greenish white, coin like, 2-2.5 cm diameter, covered with fine grey silky hairs. Seeds mature in 8 - 9 months after flowering during December- June. Seeds have a dormancy of 4-6 weeks and viability up to 1 year

Properties: Spasmolytic, muscle relaxant

Chemical constituents:

• Seeds contain strychnine, Brucine, α and β -columbrine. Isostrychnine, Pseudostrychnine. Glucoside- Loganin.

• Flowers contain Brucine, Icajine, Novacine, Strychnine, Vomicine and fruit pulp (phenolic glycoside) - Cuchiloside and Salidroside

Uses: In small doses it can serve as efficacious cure forms of paralysis and other nervous disorders.

1. The seeds are used as a remedy in intermittent fever, dyspepsia, chronic dysentery, paralytic and neuralgic affections. It is also useful in impotence, neuralgia of face, heart disease.

2. Leaves are applied as poultice in the treatment of chronic wounds and ulcers and the leaf decoction is useful in paralytic complaints.

3. Root and root bark used in fever and dysentery.

Formulations: *Samirgaja keasri hab khas*

Agrotechnology

Soil and climate: It survives in lateritic soil. The tree prefers a warm tropical climate.

Propagation: It is propagated through seeds and vegetative propagation. Soak seeds in water overnight before sowing. It takes 30 days for germination.

Spacing : 5 m x 5 m

Seed requirement per acre : 0.3 kg

Seedlings required per acre : 160 nos.

Harvesting: The leaf fall is during December (do not shed all the leaves at a time) and new foliage appears in February. Flowering is during March - April and fruiting during May - December. Fruits take about 8-9 months to mature.

