

Paradise tree

Botanical Name: *Simarouba glauca*

Family: Simaroubaceae

Common Name: Bitterwood

Hindi Name: लक्ष्मी तरु

Part Used: Bark, fruit, leaves

Importance

Simarouba glauca commonly known as Paradise Tree or Aceituno, is a tree native to parts of the southern United States (specifically Florida), Central America, and the Caribbean. It has been introduced and grown in other parts of the world, including India, where it is also known as Lakshmi Taru. It can grow at elevations from sea level to 1,000 m (3,300 ft). It grows 40 to 50 ft (12 to 15 m) tall and has a span of 25 to 30 ft (7.6 to 9.1 m). It bears yellow flowers and purple elongated oval fleshy fruits. It contains high levels of protein, essential amino acids, and certain minerals. However, the presence of antinutritional factors like quassinoids and other toxins limits its direct use in human or animal consumption. It contains a good balance of essential amino acids like leucine, lysine, and valine, with a high proportion of glutamic acid, arginine, and aspartic acid. Leaf powder contains Thiamine, Riboflavin, Niacin, Vitamin A, and vitamin C. The medicinal use of paradise tree particularly in traditional herbal medicine. Extracts from the plant, especially the leaves and bark, have been used to treat a variety of ailments, including malaria, fever, dysentery, and skin sores. Its anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, cancer, ulcer and anticancer properties are well-documented, stemming from compounds like quassinoids, flavonoids, and alkaloids.

