

Moringa oleifera Lam.

Systematic Position

Kingdom: Plantae

Division: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Capparales

Family: Moringaceae

Genus: *Moringa*

Species: *Moringa oleifera* Lam.



Popular names: Drumstick tree, Horseradish tree, Soajna, Soanjna, Sainjna, Murukai.

Flowering time: January to March

Fruiting time: April to June

Plant distribution: It is native to India and Pakistan. In India, it is present in Jammu and Kashmir, Gujarat and Maharashtra.

Gardening notes:

1. Propagation: By direct sowing of seeds or root cuttings.
2. It requires sandy soil for growth.

Economic importance:

1. Leaves and fruits are rich source of iron, calcium, protein, vitamin A, B and C.
2. The oil from seeds (Ben oil) is edible and is also used in cosmetics.
3. Ben oil is also used by watch makers as lubricant in fine machinery.
4. The branches are used as fodder by deer and monkeys.
5. Tender fruits are cooked as vegetable as well as used for making pickle.
6. Seeds have antipyretic property.
7. Roots can be made into a condiment similar to horseradish.

Plant description: It is a small or medium-sized deciduous tree with beautiful umbrella shaped crown

Root- Tap root and branched.

Stem- Aerial, erect, woody, cylindrical and branched, bark smooth and silver in young stems, it becomes pale brown, thick, corky and deeply furrowed when old;

Leaf- Alternate, tripinnately imparipinnate, petiolate, deciduous; rachis pubescent, pulvinate, slender, and jointed at base, pinnae 5-11, stalk of the pinna articulate at base, pinnules 5-11, petiolule present.

Inflorescence- Cymose panicles, axillary.

Flower- Hermaphrodite, more or less perigynous, pedicellate, bracteate, white, honey scented, flower clusters can be 50 cm long; Sepals- 5, lanceolate, white and pale green color; Petals- 5 polypetalous, white, hard to distinguish from sepals; Stamens- 5, with yellow colored anthers polyandrous, filaments unequal in length, staminodes 3-5, alternating with fertile stamens, anthers in the fertile stamen

monothechal; Carpels- Ovary oblong, style cylindrical, terminating into flat or truncate or club shaped stigma.

Fruit- 9-ribbed pendulous pod, 30-45 cm long and 1-2 cm broad somewhat tomentose when young.

Seed- 2-3 cm long embedded in the pits of the valves, 3 angled, winged, blackish and rounded.

Some close-up pictures of plant parts





Flora of KC