

Pterospermum acerifolium Willd.

Systematic Position

Kingdom: Plantae

Phylum: Tracheophyta

Class: Equisetopsida

Order : Malvales

Family: Malvaceae

Genus: *Pterospermum*

Species: *Pterospermum acerifolium* (L.) Willd.

Popular names: Kanak-champa, Karnikara, Kaniar, Katha-champa, Bayur, Maple-leaved bayur, Dinner plate tree, Muchkund.

Nature: Tree

Flowering time: March to April

Fruiting time: April to June

Plant distribution: A tree of Indian origin which is indigenous to Southeast Asia, from India to Burma and is cultivated extensively in Maharashtra. It is most likely to grow naturally along forested stream banks.

Gardening notes:

1. **Light:** It grows well in full sunlight.
2. **Water:** The best growing conditions are moist than dry climate.
3. **Propagation:** By seeds.



Economic importance:

1. Wood used for planks, packing-cases and turnery articles; suitable for veneers, plywood for general use, construction work, panelling, bridges, boats, tool-handles, match-boxes, furniture, toys, walking-sticks, mathematical instruments and brush-backs.
2. Flowers are edible, used for inflammations, ulcers, tumours and leprosy.
3. Leaves employed for thatching and as packing material for tobacco.
4. It is used for the treatment of Leucorrhoea and bleeding diathesis.
5. The down on the leaves is used by the hill people to stop bleeding.
6. The leaves are used as plates.
7. Both bark and leaves were used as a remedy for smallpox and still find use in folk medicine to treat wounds and itching.
8. A paste of flowers was applied over the forehead for providing relief during headache, hemicranias.

Plant description: A large deciduous tree growing to a height of nearly 35 feet.

Root- Tap root, branched; **Stem-** Aerial, erect, branched, cylindrical, solid, woody, bark- grey or greyish brown, becoming progressively rougher and cracked as the tree ages.

Leaf- Simple, large, alternate, broad, obovate-ovate, variable in shape and size, irregularly lobed, dentate and wavy margins, acute apex, adaxial surface dark glossy green, smooth, abaxial surface woolly-grey, blade 8-12 cm long, 6-8 cm wide, nearly as broad as long, prominent midrib and veins, main nerves spreading, radiating from the point where the leaf stalk is attached, petiolate, petiole- 5-6 cm long, yellowish, brownish hairs present on the surface, stipulate, stipules small, brown, caducous;

Inflorescence- Axillary, solitary.

Flower- Complete, bisexual, showy, large, hermaphrodite, actinomorphic, hypogynous, pedicellate, pedicel small, 1-2 cm long, green, bracteate, bracts green; Epicalyx- Brown, hairy, thin; Sepals- 5, creamish with brownish hairs on surface, gamosepalous, inferior, valvate aestivation; Petals- 5, creamish, attractive, polypetalous, imbricate aestivation; Stamens – 15, monadelphous at the base, arranged in two whorls, outer whorl is opposite the sepals (antisealous), represented by staminodes, inner whorl divided into 5 bundles, each of three fertile anthers are opposite the petals (antipetalous), anthers yellow, thin; Carpels- 5, syncarpous; ovary raised on androgynophore, oblong, superior, 5 loculed, densely tomentose, each locule many-ovuled, style- slender, clavate, stigma- 3-5 lobed.

Fruit- Capsule large, woody, five-angled, up to 12 cm long, surface rough and warty, with brown hairs, oblong, glabrous, many seeds, dehisces into five parts to reveal neatly packaged rows of flattened seeds with thin, shiny wings on one side.

Seed- Brown, winged, thin.

Some close-up pictures of plant parts

