

Santalum album

Santalum album, commonly known as Indian sandalwood or white sandalwood, is a small tropical tree native to the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia.

Kingdom: Plantae
Clade: Tracheophytes
Order: Santalales
Family: Santalaceae
Genus: *Santalum*
Species: *S. album*



Common Names

Hindi: Chandan
Tamil: Chandanam
Telugu: Chandanamu
Malayalam: Chandanam
Kannada: Chandana
Marathi: Chandan
Bengali: Chandan

Characteristics Features

Size: *Santalum album* is a small to medium sized tree that can reach heights of 49 meters (1330 feet).

Leaves: The leaves are leathery, elliptical to ovate in shape, and dark green with a glossy appearance. They are arranged alternately along the branches.

Flowers: The flowers are small, yellow to purple in colour, and have a sweet fragrance. They are typically inconspicuous and form clusters at the ends of branches.

Wood: The heartwood of *Santalum album* is highly prized for its aromatic qualities and is pale yellow to golden brown in colour. It is dense, heavy, and retains its fragrance for decades.

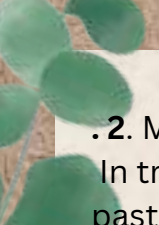
Fruits: The fruit is a small drupe that is round or oval in shape, containing a single seed.

Uses of *Santalum album*

1. Aromatic Uses:

Santalum album is famous for its aromatic heartwood, which is processed to produce sandalwood oil. Sandalwood oil is widely used in perfumery, cosmetics, and aromatherapy due to its distinctive sweet, woody fragrance.

The wood is also used to make incense sticks, which are burned for their pleasant aroma in religious ceremonies and meditation practices.



2. Medicinal Uses:

In traditional medicine systems like Ayurveda and Chinese medicine, sandalwood oil and paste are used for their antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, and soothing properties.

Sandalwood paste is applied topically to treat skin conditions, sunburns, and as a cooling agent.

3. Cultural and Religious Uses:

Santalum album holds cultural and religious significance in various cultures, especially in India and Southeast Asia. It is often used in religious rituals, ceremonies, and as a symbol of purity and sanctity.

Conservation and Cultivation

Due to high demand and extensive harvesting in the past, wild populations of *Santalum album* have declined significantly.

Efforts are underway to cultivate sandalwood through sustainable practices and plantations to meet the demand for its valuable heartwood and oil.

Santalum album remains highly valued for its aromatic properties, cultural importance, and traditional medicinal uses, making it an iconic and sought-after tree in regions where it is native.

