

1. MORINGA Adanson, Fam. Pl. 2: 318. 1763.

辣木属 la mu shu

Morphological characters and geographical distribution are the same as those for the family.

1. *Moringa oleifera* Lamarck, Encycl. 1: 398. 1785.

辣木 la mu

Moringa pterygosperma Gaertner.

Trees to 12 m tall; bark pale smooth to rugose but not fissured. Leaves petiolate, 3-pinnate, 25–60 cm, with stalked glands often exuding clear or amber liquid at base of petiole and leaflets; leaflets in 4–6 pairs, ovate, elliptic, or oblong, 1–2 × 0.5–1.2 cm, puberulous when young but glabrous at maturity, base rounded to cuneate, apex rounded to emarginate; petiolules slender, 1–2 mm. Inflorescence a widely spreading panicle, bracteate, 10–30 cm; bracts linear, ca. 1 mm. Flowers white to cream, fragrant, somewhat resembling an inverted Fabaceae flower with 2 dorsal sepals and 1 dorsal petal usually remaining unreflexed and forming a projecting “keel” while the rest of the perianth reflexes down to form a “banner” at right angles to the “keel”, each flower borne on a false pedicel 7–15 mm; true pedicel 1–2 mm. Sepals lanceolate to linear-lanceolate, 0.7–1.4 mm, usually puberulent. Petals spatulate, 1–2 cm, glabrous or puberulent at base. Stamens hairy at base. Ovary hairy. Capsule 3-valved, 20–50 × 1–3 cm, dehiscent. Seeds subglobose, 3-angled, 8–15 mm in diam. excluding wings; wings 0.5–1 cm wide, rarely absent. Fl. year round, fr. Jun–Dec.

Cultivated for ornament, sometimes escaping. Guangdong, Taiwan, Yunnan [native to India].

A variant with wingless seeds has been collected in S Yunnan (Xishuangbanna Dai Zu Zizhizhou): *K. S. Chow & P. P. Wan 80197* (MO).

The roots have a pungent taste and, like the leaves and young fruits, are used for food; an oil is extracted from the seeds, which also contain a powerful flocculant of use in clarifying turbid water.