

**10. THEOBROMA** Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 2: 782. 1753.

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Trees. Leaves alternate, large and entire. Inflorescence 1-flowered or cymose, usually on trunk or major branches. Flowers bisexual, small and perfect. Calyx 5-lobed, divided nearly to base. Petals 5, lower part deeply concave, middle part becoming narrow, upper spatulate. Stamens in 5 groups of 1–3, alternate with staminodes; filaments connate at base into tube; staminodes 5. Ovary sessile, 5-celled; ovules many per locule; stigma 5-lobed. Fruit large, drupaceous. Seeds many, embedded in pulp; cotyledons fleshy; endosperm absent.

About 22 species: tropical America; one species (introduced) in China.

**1. Theobroma cacao** Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 2: 782. 1753.

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Evergreen trees, to 12 m tall; bark thick, dark gray-brown. Branchlets brown, puberulent. Stipules linear, caducous; leaf blade narrowly ovate- to obovate-elliptic, 20–30 × 7–10 cm, both surfaces glabrous or sparsely stellate, base rounded to shallowly cordate, apex long acuminate. Inflorescence small and delicate, cymose. Flowers ca. 18 mm in diam.; pedicels ca. 12 mm. Calyx pink, lobes narrowly lanceolate, persistent, margin hairy. Petals 5, yellowish, lightly longer than calyx, lower part helmet-shaped and abruptly narrowed, reflexed, apex acute. Staminodes linear. Ovary obovoid, slightly 5-angular, 5-celled; ovules 14–16 per locule, in 2 rows; style cylindrical. Drupe ellipsoid or narrowly ellipsoid, 15–20 × ca. 7 cm, longitudinally 10-grooved; endocarp thick, fleshy, hard and woody when dried, 4–8 mm thick. Seeds 12–14 per cell, ovoid, slightly flattened, ca. 2.5 × 1.5 cm. Fl. throughout year.

Cultivated. Hainan, S Yunnan [native of South America, now widely cultivated throughout wet tropics].

The seeds are important as the source of chocolate and cocoa.

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