

23. SECHIUM P. Browne, Civ. Nat. Hist. Jamaica, 355. 1756, nom. cons.

佛手瓜属 fò shou gua shu

Lu Anmin (路安民 Lu An-ming); Charles Jeffrey

Chayota Jacquin; *Chocho* Adanson.

Herbs, scandent, perennial. Roots tuberous. Tendrils 3–5-fid. Leaf blade cordate, membranous. Plants monoecious; flowers white. Male flowers in a raceme; calyx tube semiglobose; segments 5; corolla rotate, 5-partite; segments ovate-lanceolate, apex acute; stamens 3, inserted on base of calyx tube; filaments connate; anthers free, one 1-celled, two 2-celled; anther cells flexuous; pistillode absent. Female flowers solitary or binary, usually in same axil as male flowers; calyx and corolla as in male flowers; ovary fusiform, 1-locular, setose; style short; stigma 5-lobed; lobes reflexed, with only 1 pendulous ovule. Fruit obovoid, fleshy, sulcate at apex. Seed 1, large, ovate, compressed, woody, cotyledons large.

About five species: Mexico and Central America; one species (introduced) in China.

1. *Sechium edule* (Jacquin) Swartz, Fl. Ind. Occid. 2: 1150. 1800.

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Sicyos edulis Jacquin, Enum. Syst. Pl. 32. 1760.

Stem angular-sulcate. Petiole slender, 5–15 cm, glabrous; leaf blade suborbicular, membranous, abaxially puberulent, adaxially slightly scabrous, base cordate, margin dentate, apex acuminate. Male flowers 10–30 on 8–30 cm peduncle, pedicels 1–6 mm; calyx tube short; segments explanate, 5–7 mm; corolla

rotate, 12–17 mm; segments ovate-lanceolate. Female pedicel 1–1.5 cm; calyx and corolla as in male flowers; ovary obovoid, 5-angled; style 2–3 mm; stigma ca. 2 mm wide. Fruit pale green, obovoid, 8–15 × 6–8 cm, 5-sulcate in upper part, slightly hispid. Seed ca. 10 × 7 cm, compressed. Fl. Jul–Sep, fr. Aug–Oct.

Commonly cultivated in S China [native to Mexico; commonly cultivated in warm parts of the world].

The fruit is used as a vegetable.

