

8. TAMARINDUS Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 1: 34. 1753.

酸豆属 *suan dou shu*

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Trees. Leaves abruptly pinnate, alternate; stipules caducous, small; leaflets 10 to numerous paired. Racemes or racemes arranged in panicles at ends of shoots; bracts and bracteoles often caducous, colored, ovate-oblong. Calyx tube narrowly turbinate; segments 4, imbricate. Petals: only upper 3 developed, subequal in length, lower 2 reduced, scalelike, concealed at base of staminal tube. Perfect stamens 3, connate into an ascending, curved tube or sheath from middle downward; filaments short; anthers dorsifixed; staminodes few, minute, at apex of sheath. Ovary stalked, stalk adnate to calyx tube; ovules numerous; style elongated; stigma capitate. Legume narrowly terete, indehiscent; epicarp thin, crustaceous; mesocarp thick and pulpy; endocarp membranous, septate between seeds. Seeds compressed, obliquely oblong or obliquely ovoid-orbicular; cotyledons thick, fleshy; embryo erect.

One species: native to Africa, widely introduced and cultivated in the tropics including China.

1. *Tamarindus indica* Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 1: 34. 1753.

酸豆 *suan dou*

Trees, 10–15(–25) m tall. Trunk 30–50(–90) cm d.b.h. Bark dark ashy, irregularly longitudinally splitting. Leaflets oblong, small, 1.3–2.8 cm × 5–9 mm, glabrous, base obliquely rounded, apex rounded or emarginate. Flowers few, yellowish tinged with purplish red stripes; peduncles and pedicels yellowish green puberulent; bracteoles 2, ca. 1 cm, enclosing flower bud before anthesis. Calyx tube ca. 7 mm; lobes lanceolate-oblong, ca. 1.2 cm, reflexed after anthesis. Petals obovate, subequal to calyx lobes, margin repand, curled. Stamens 1.2–1.5

cm, pubescent near base, free parts of filaments ca. 7 mm; anthers elliptic, ca. 2.5 mm. Ovary slightly incurved, terete, ca. 8 mm, hairy. Legume brownish, straight or arcuate, terete-oblong, turgid, 5–14 cm, often irregularly constricted. Seeds 3–14, brownish, shiny. Fl. May–Aug, fr. Dec–May. $2n = 24, 26, 28^*$.

Cultivated. Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, ?Hainan, Yunnan (Jinsha Jiang valley) [native to Africa; widely cultivated in the tropics].

The pulp of the fruit and the seed oil are edible. The fruit can be used medicinally for relieving fever and constipation and as an antiscorbutic. The hard, heavy wood is used for building houses and making farm tools and furniture. The trunk is robust, with wind-resistant strength, and is suitable for planting on seashores.

