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Amyris balsamifera

[Synonyms : *Elemifera balsamifera*]

WEST INDIAN SANDALWOOD is a tree. It is native to tropical America (particularly Cuba).

It is also known as Balsam torchwood, Candlewood, Oil-tree, Rosewood, Sandalwood, and Torchwood.

Oil can be extracted from the wood.

Balsamifera is derived from Latin *balsamum* (sweet-smelling balsam gum) and *-fer* (bearing, carrying) components meaning ‘balsam-bearing, balsamic or like balsam’.

Negro slaves in the Deep South of North America used the bark to make torches.

Although no other wood is said to compare with sandalwood (*Santalum album*), West Indian sandalwood is sometimes used as an alternative because actual sandalwood is becoming so scarce. It is used commercially for building, and also offers a source of incense.