

### *Carissa spinarum*

[Synonyms : *Antura edulis*, *Arduina brownii*, *Arduina campenonii*, *Arduina edulis*, *Arduina inermis*, *Arduina laxiflora*, *Arduina xylopicron*, *Azima pubescens*, *Cabucala brachyantha*, *Carandas edulis*, *Carissa abyssinica*, *Carissa axillaris*, *Carissa brownii* var. *angustifolia*, *Carissa campenonii*, *Carissa candolleana*, *Carissa carandas*, *Carissa carandas* var. *congesta*, *Carissa carandas* var. *paucinervia*, *Carissa cochinchinensis*, *Carissa comorensis*, *Carissa congesta*, *Carissa coriacea*, *Carissa cornifolia*, *Carissa dalzellii*, *Carissa densiflora*, *Carissa densiflora* var. *microphylla*, *Carissa diffusa*, *Carissa dulcis*, *Carissa edulis*, *Carissa edulis* var. *ambungana*, *Carissa edulis* var. *comorensis*, *Carissa edulis* subsp. *continentalis*, *Carissa edulis* var. *demsiflora*, *Carissa edulis* var. *edulis*, *Carissa edulis* var. *horrida*, *Carissa edulis* var. *lucubea*, *Carissa edulis* subsp. *madagascariensis*, *Carissa edulis* var. *major*, *Carissa edulis* var. *microphylla*, *Carissa edulis* var. *nummularis*, *Carissa edulis* forma *pubescens*, *Carissa edulis* var. *revoluta*, *Carissa edulis* var. *sechellensis*, *Carissa edulis* var. *septentrionalis*, *Carissa edulis* var. *subtrinervia*, *Carissa gangetica*, *Carissa hirsuta*, *Carissa horrida*, *Carissa inermis*, *Carissa lanceolata*, *Carissa laotica*, *Carissa laotica* var. *ferruginea*, *Carissa laxiflora*, *Carissa macrophylla*, *Carissa madagascariensis*, *Carissa mitis*, *Carissa obovata*, *Carissa oleoides*, *Carissa opaca*, *Carissa ovata*, *Carissa ovata* var. *pubescens*, *Carissa ovata* var. *stolonifera*, *Carissa papuana*, *Carissa paucinervia*, *Carissa pubescens*, *Carissa revoluta*, *Carissa richardiana*, *Carissa scabra*, *Carissa sechellensis*, *Carissa septentrionalis*, *Carissa suavissima*, *Carissa velutina*, *Carissa villosa*, *Carissa xylopicron*, *Carissa yunnanensis*, *Damnacanthus esquirolii*, *Jasminonerium densiflorum*, *Jasminonerium dulce*, *Jasminonerium edule*, *Jasminonerium inerme*, *Jasminonerium laxiflorum*, *Jasminonerium madagascariense*, *Jasminonerium ovatum*, *Jasminonerium pubescens*, *Jasminonerium sechellense*, *Jasminonerium suavissimum*, *Jasminonerium xylopicron*]

**KARANDA** is a spiny, scrambling evergreen shrub or vine. Native to India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Indonesia, it has small (often pink-tinged) highly fragrant white flowers. It is also known as Bengal currants, *Caramba* (Filipino/Tagalog), *Carandas*, *Caraunda*, Christ's thorn, *Kalakkay* (Tamil), *Kanachuka* (Sanskrit), *Karakka* (Malayalam), *Karaunda* (Hindi), *Kerenda* (Malay), *Maha-karamba* (Singhalese), *Namdaeng* (Thai), *Perunkila* (Tamil), and *Wakay okachettu* (Telugu).

The plant exudes a milky juice from all parts of it that are bruised or wounded.

Locally the unripe fruit are used to make pickles. The semi-ripe fruit are made into jams and other preserves. The ripe glossy, white through pinkish-red to deep purple berry fruit are not only eaten raw when sweet enough but are also added to curries and are stewed (heavily sweetened as necessary) or made into other puddings. (In the time of the British raj in India it is said that nostalgic Englishmen often compared the fruit to gooseberries, *Ribes uva-crispa*.) The cooked fruit also yield a bright red juice that can be popular in cold soft drinks.

The berries have been used for tanning and dyeing.

Karanda is cultivated widely in India as both an ornamental plant and as thorny barriers or hedging and in south-eastern Asia it has also offered other advantages locally. A paste of

the pounded roots has provided fly repellent and, apart from fuel, the wood has also been used to make small household items such as combs, spoons and various utensils. The leaves have been fed to a particular species of silkworm. Some of the tribes of northern India still use powdered root bark for treating worms on animal wounds. This plant has been grown as an ornamental in conducive climates beyond its native habitat with the added advantage of its fruit. Medicinally, local herbalists (in India especially) have used the root for treating stomach upsets and worms and have prescribed a leaf decoction to ease fever. Karanda has also been chosen in remedies for rabies, malaria, epilepsy, fluid retention, ear ache, rheumatism, scurvy, convulsions and skin problems.