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*Conocarpus erectus*

[Synonyms : *Conocarpus acutifolius*, *Conocarpus erectus* var. *arboreus*, *Conocarpus erectus* var. *procumbens*, *Conocarpus erectus* var. *sericeus*, *Conocarpus procumbens*, *Conocarpus pubescens*, *Conocarpus sericea*, *Conocarpus supinus*, *Terminalia erecta*]

**BUTTON MANGROVE** is an evergreen shrub or tree. Native to tropical America and the West African coast, it has small purplish-green flower balls with protruding stamens. It is also known as Buttonbush, Button-tree, Buttonwood, Florida button, Florida buttonwood, Gra mangrove, Green buttonwood, Grey mangrove, Silver buttonwood, West Indian alder, and Zaragoza mangrove.

*Erectus* means ‘upright or erect’.

Button mangrove was used by the North American Seminole Indian tribe as the source of a dye for buckskin.

Seminole Indians also used the wood as fuel for barbecuing food.

The bark has been used locally for tanning.

Authorities have noted that although the wood is susceptible to the attentions of some termites it seems to be particularly durable in sea water or below ground – and it does take a fine polish. Thus it has provided local material for piling and for building boats and barges, for making charcoal and for burning as fuel.

It has been introduced outside its native habitat as an ornamental plant.

Medicinally, local herbalists have used the leaves to ease fever and it has also provided a local remedy for diabetes, diarrhoea, fever, internal bleeding, some venereal diseases, anaemia, catarrh, conjunctivitis and headaches.