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Genipa americana

[Synonyms : *Gardenia genipa*, *Genipa americana* var. *caruto*, *Genipa barbata*, *Genipa caruto*, *Genipa codoncalyx*, *Genipa cymosa*, *Genipa excelsa*, *Genipa grandifolia*, *Genipa nervosa*, *Genipa oblongifolia*, *Genipa pubescens*, *Genipa spruceana*, *Genipa venosa*]

GENIP is an evergreen tree. Native from Mexico to Brazil (especially Guyana) it has small, white to yellow flowers.

It is also known as *Angelina* (Colombian), *Arasaloe* (Surinamese), *Brir* (Costa Rican), *Caruto* (Venezuelan), *Genipa*, *Genipap*, *Genipapeiro* (Brazilian), *Genipayer* (French), *Huitoc* (Peruvian), *Irayol* (Guatemalan), *Jagua*, *Jagua azul* (Mexican), *Mamoncillo*, *Marmalade box*, *Palo Colorado* (Peruvian), *Tapoeripa* (Surinamese), and *Tou kio tse* (Chinese).

The sap turns dark blue upon exposure to air.

After the fruit have been harvested they are left to soften (almost rot) before use.

Americana means 'of or from America (North or South)'.

Local Amazonian Indian tribes have used a yellow dye obtained from the stems for tattooing, dyeing and body painting.

The orange-like, yellowish or brown fruit when well over-ripe are eaten locally but are understood to be an acquired taste. They can also be used for pickles and preserves.

But for some the tree's outstanding use is in providing fruit for a local refreshing drink known as *genipapo* or *genipapado*. A fermented version is also prepared and this is called *Licor de Genipado*.

The trees themselves have sometimes been cultivated as living fences. Their strong and flexible, light coloured wood is used in Brazil mainly for general carpentry. This wood has also been used for turning, veneering and the manufacture of plywood, as well as for flooring and furniture, and for making tool handles and shoe lasts.

It is believed that genip was introduced to Sri Lanka in 1904.