

*Hydnocarpus kurzii*

[Synonyms : *Gynocardia prainii*, *Hydnocarpus heterophyllus*, *Taraktogenos kurzii*]

**CHAULMOOGRA** (English, Hindi, Sanskrit) is an evergreen tree. Native to south-eastern Asia (particularly Burma – called today Myanmar – and Thailand) it has small, yellow flowers.

It is also known as *Arbol de aceite marotti* (Spanish), *Chalmogra* (Bengali, Hindi), *Chaulmogra*, *Chaulmoogra nut*, *Chaulmoogra tree*, *Chaulmugara* (Hindi), *Chaul'mugra* (Russian), *Chaulmugra* (English, Sanskrit), *Cholmugra* (Spanish), *Hidonokarupusu kuruchii* (Japanese), *Kalaw* (Burmese), *Kalaw-ni* (Burmese), *Kalaw tree*, *Khaul'mugra* (Russian), *Kulau* (Malay), *Lamtani* (Assamese), *Maravetti* (Malayalam), and *Memtam* (Assamese).

Oil can be extracted from the seed.

Warning – the oil can cause nausea and vomiting, and can affect both the heart and the blood supply. It can also cause skin irritation externally. Fruit eaten by animals make their flesh poisonous for human consumption.

*Kurzii* commemorates a German botanist, Wilhelm Sulpiz Kurz (c.1834 -1878) who collected plants widely in south-eastern Asia, especially the Andaman Islands, Burma, Malaysia and India, and some authorities believe was an expert on the *Musa* genus (banana). He was an Assistant at the botanical garden at Buitenzorg from 1859-1863. (Buitenzorg is now more familiar as Bogor in Indonesian western Java and the botanical garden, still acclaimed today, is part of an agricultural research centre.) From the end of 1864 Kurz was Curator of the Herbarium in the Royal Botanic Garden, Calcutta and when he died in office a monument to him was built in that Garden. Among his published works is *Forest Flora of British Burma*.

The fruit flesh is said to be enjoyed by bears – and wild pigs are believed to relish the seeds.

The seeds can also be fed to fish. (However, as already indicated, anything that has fed on parts of the tree is unfit for human consumption.)

The seed cake left after oil extraction has been applied as manure.

Chaulmoogra has been employed in veterinary medicine.

Medicinally, in south-eastern Asia the oil and the crushed seed have been used for a very long time to treat leprosy and various skin disorders and it is also used for easing rheumatism.