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*Mangifera foetida*

[Synonyms : *Mangifera horsfieldii*, *Mangifera leschenaultii*]

**HORSE MANGO** is a tree. Native to Indo-China and Malaysia it has tiny, pink to dark red flowers.

It is also known as Bachang, Bachang mango, and Gray mango.

The fruit flesh has a strong sour turpentine-like smell and an acid taste reminiscent of turpentine.

Warning – unripe fruit contain a poisonous juice that can cause considerable pain if consumed and the bark sap can cause dermatitis.

*Foetida* is Latin (stinking) meaning ‘bad-smelling, fetid or stinking’.

Records indicate that despite their poisonous nature the young fruit, peppered with cayenne (*Capsicum annuum* var. *longum*), have long been eaten with fish in Java. There also as in other parts of south-eastern Asia the ripe fruit are eaten after they have been steeped in lime juice or syrup – and they provide an ingredient for chutneys, pickles and sweetmeats.

Throughout south-eastern Asia horse mango can be found growing in old gardens or being cultivated in orchards. According to authorities on south-eastern Asia horse mango is primarily valued for its fairly large, green to yellowish-green fruit and then for medicinal properties and its timber and insecticidal poisons.

Locally the juice has been used even today for tattooing, not least for deepening tattoos – a practice which some quarters have observed must be extremely painful.

Medicinally, it is surprising to learn that a bark lotion is applied to ulcers in Malaysian medicine.