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Manilkara hexandra

[Synonyms : *Kaukenia hexandra*, *Manilkara emarginata*, *Mimusops hexandra*]

KHIRNI (English, Nepalese) is a tree. Native to India, it has small yellow fruit pods.

It is also known as *Ket* (Thai), *Mai ket* (Thai), *Manjipala* (Telugu), Milky tree, *Palai* (Tamil), *Palu* (Singhalese), *Rayan* (Gujarati), *Tie se* (Chinese), and *Tie xian zi* (Chinese)

The seeds yield a non-drying clear, yellow oil.

Hexandra is derived from Greek *hexa-* (six) and *andro-* (man) components meaning ‘with six stamens’.

Locally the young fruit pods are eaten boiled. The fried or roasted seeds which have a peanut-like taste are also eaten. In some regions the fruit pods are viewed as famine food.

Apparently the bark is often used to slow down toddy fermentation – and it has been recommended for tanning.

The tree’s hard and heavy, durable brown wood has been used in construction and for making amongst other things railway sleepers, ploughs, carts, piling, sugar mills and oil presses, posts, mallet heads and tool handles.

Authorities on south-eastern Asia suggest that khirni’s prime importance there is as a timber tree, then as a source of vegetable oil and edible fruit and nuts.

Medicinally, local herbalists have used the tree in remedies for jaundice.