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Parmentiera alata

[Synonyms : *Crescentia alata*]

MEXICAN CALABASH is a tree. Native to Central America (from Mexico to Costa Rica) it has musky-scented yellowish-brown flowers.

It is also known as Calabash tree, Cruz, Jicara, *Kalebassenbaum* (German), Morro, and Tecomate.

The flowers are pollinated by bats and bees which enjoy the nectar.

Alata is derived from Latin *ala* (wing) meaning ‘winged’.

The seeds have been made into a refreshing drink, one particularly associated with Nicaragua where it is drunk traditionally from the round and woody fruit shells.

The wood has been used locally as general timber, as well as for making carts.

Some records suggest that a leaf decoction offered a local treatment for enhancing hair growth.