

Podocarpus neriifolius

[Synonyms : *Margbensonia neriifolia*, *Nageia discolor*, *Nageia endlicheriana*, *Nageia leptostachya*, *Nageia neglecta*, *Nageia neriifolia*, *Podocarpus bracteata*, *Podocarpus decipiens*, *Podocarpus discolor*, *Podocarpus endlicheriana*, *Podocarpus junghuhniana*, *Podocarpus junghuhnianus*, *Podocarpus leptostachya*, *Podocarpus leptostachyus*, *Podocarpus macrophyllus* var. *acuminatissimus*, *Podocarpus neglecta*, *Podocarpus neglectus*, *Podocarpus neriifolia*, *Podocarpus neriifolius* var. *decipiens*, *Podocarpus neriifolius* var. *linearis*, *Podocarpus neriifolius* var. *membranaceus*, *Podocarpus neriifolius* var. *penibukanensis*, *Podocarpus neriifolius* var. *polyanthus*, *Podocarpus neriifolius* var. *staintonii*, *Podocarpus polyantha*]

OLEANDER PODOCARP is an evergreen tree. Native from south-eastern Asia to the western Pacific it has small, fused-scaled, yellow female flowers.

It is also known as *Ambai ayam* (Sumatran), *Amunu*, *Antoh* (Javanese), *Belah buloh* (Bruneian/Indonesian/Malaysian), *Brown pine*, *Hadjo ketong* (Indonesian, Timorese), *Handalaska* (Sundanese), *Kibima* (Sundanese), *Ki madela* (Sundanese), *Oleander leafed podocarp*, *Sangching* (Thai), *Sentada* (Malaysian), *Taji* (Javanese), *Thitmin*, and *Wuluan* (Javanese).

From at least January 2002 oleander podocarp has been included under Appendix III of CITES which itemises species regulated voluntarily by named countries ie. the same native species in another country may not be subject to any formal regulation. Nepal believes that oleander podocarp could be seriously threatened if it is over-harvested there and an export permit and official certificate of origin for this species needs to be sought from the Nepalese government.

Neriifolius is made up of the genus name *Nerium* and Latin *-folia* (leaf) components meaning ‘with leaves like those in that (oleander) genus’.

The Nepalese eat the tiny fleshy berry-like aril (which partially surrounds a single seed).

In Burma (now referred to as Myanmar) the hard and lightweight, greyish-yellow wood has been used for general carpentry in Calcutta (India) for making pencil casings, and in western Pakistan for producing mathematical instruments. In the region as a whole it has also provided a source of material for spars, masts, oars and furniture.

Authorities on south-eastern Asia seem to view the tree primarily as a source of timber there and recognise possible medicinal qualities as a secondary benefit.