

*Pometia pinnata*

[Synonyms : *Pometia ridleyi*]

**FIJIAN LONGAN** is an evergreen tree. Native to Malaysia it has tiny green flowers.

It is also known as *Asam kuang* (Malaysian), *Chieng dong* (Lao), *Dawa* (Fijian), *Kasai* (Malaysian), *Kayu sapi* (Javanese), *Kwaang* (Lao), *Langsek anggag* (Sumatran), *Leungsir* (Sundanese), *Paga-nyet-su ava* (Burmese), and *Tava* (Samoan and Tongan).

*Pinnata* is a botanical reference to the leaf-shape meaning ‘a feathery arrangement of leaflets on each side of the common stalk’.

The small litchi-like aromatic reddish-brown fruit are eaten raw and said to be especially popular in Tonga. The oily seeds have been eaten roasted or boiled.

A leaf extract has been used locally to blacken greying hair.

The tough, pale reddish-brown wood has provided local material especially in Samoa for housebuilding and cooperage, as well as for making agricultural implements and furniture.

Experts on the south-eastern Asian region believe that the wood is Fijian longan’s greatest asset, and suggest that the fact that it can also be a source of vegetable oil, fruit, vegetables and medicine is of less importance in that area.

Medicinally, local Malaysian herbalists have recommended the addition of a leaf and bark decoction to bath water to ease fever, and the Javanese (now part of Indonesia) have applied the bark to festering sores. The leaves (alone or with other ingredients) have also provided a local remedy for dysentery and diarrhoea – and there are also local claims that the bark may have contraceptive qualities. Inner bark juice has been used to treat painful joints and ‘flu, and the outer bark has provided an ingredient for a treatment for arthritis.