

Pterocarpus santalinus

[Synonyms : *Pterocarpus indicus*, *Pterocarpus lignum*, *Santalum rubrum*]

RED SANDALWOOD is a tree. Native to Malaysia it has fragrant yellow flowers.

It is also known as Bloodwood, Caliatour wood, *Cendana janggi* (Malay), *Kayu merah* (Indonesian), *Lal chandan* (Hindi), Paduak sandalwood, *Raktachandana* (Bengali and Sanskrit), *Raktachandanamu* (Telugu), *Raktashandanam* (Malayalam), Red-sanders, Red sanderswood, Red santal wood, Red saunders, Rubywood, Santalwood, Sappan, *Sensandanam* (Tamil), and *Yerra chandanum* (Telugu).

The heartwood yields a red pigment.

From at least January 2002 red sandalwood has been included under Appendix II of CITES.

This means that authorities believe this species will be seriously threatened if it is over-harvested and therefore trade in it should be monitored and controlled. Governments, particularly in Malaysia and India are required to issue export licences to certify that this species was legally acquired and that its exportation does not threaten the survival of that species in the wild there.

Santalinus is derived from the genus name *Santalum* meaning ‘like plants in that (sandalwood) genus’.

Authorities say that red sandalwood (or sandalwood, *Santalum album*) may be the ‘almug’ or ‘almug trees’ referred to in the Bible (1 Kings, 10:11).

The red dye is used by Hindus for caste marks. It has also been used as an ingredient in a dye which produces various shades of red for silk, wool, cotton and leather and in powder form it has offered a red cosmetic colouring for rouge.

In their homeland these trees are often planted for shade along roadsides and also cultivated for their ornamental qualities.

The extremely hard and durable, smooth fragrant red wood has been used for frames of buildings (particularly as it is resistant to white ants) and for veneering and making furniture, as well as for agricultural equipment and picture frames.

Medicinally, the wood was once used locally as an emetic. A decoction of bark has been used to treat dysentery and diarrhoea, and today in India it is used occasionally to treat diabetes and for external applications for fevers, headaches and skin diseases.