

You are viewing one of thousands of biographies – click below for more, including Search box and access to Plant associated organisations.

[Plant Biographies](#)

[Bibliography](#)

Pterocarpus soyauxii

[Synonyms : *Pterocarpus casteelsi*]

AFRICAN PADAUK is a tree. It is native to tropical west and central Africa.

It is also known as Andaman padauk, Angola padauk, Barwood, Baywood, *Bosulu* (Congolese and Zairean), Burma padauk, Camwood, *Corail* (Cameroon), *Issigu* (Gabonese), *Kisesi* (Congolese), *M'be'* (Cameroonian), *M'bel* (Gabonese), *Mbil* (Cameroonian), *Moconda* (Gabonese), *Muenge* (Cameroonian), *Mukula* (Congolese), *N'gula* (Congolese and Zairean), *Osun* (Nigerian), Red wood, *Takula* (Angolan), and West African padauk.

The vivid red heartwood darkens to purple-brown upon exposure to air.

Warning – dust from sawn wood may cause breathing difficulties.

African padauk is officially viewed as extinct for commercial purposes in its native habitat.

The heartwood yields an edible red to reddish-brown dye that has been used locally as a body paint. In more recent times it has been exported to Europe where it ended up as a food colouring for such products as tomato ketchup. (This dye superseded an even earlier source offered by West African camwood, *Baphia nitida*.)

The durable wood has been used for delicate joinery, carving, turning and veneering, and has also been used for flooring and tool handles. It was once used for building canoes and making paddles, and knife handles.