

## *Sterculia foetida*

### Scientific classification

Kingdom : Plantae

Clade : Angiosperms

Order : Malvales

Family : Malvaceae

Genus : *Sterculia*

Species : *S. foetida*



*Sterculia foetida*

### Description:

The branches of *Sterculia foetida* are arranged in whorls; they spread horizontally. The tree's bark is smooth and grey. The leaves are placed at the end of branchlets; they have 125–230 mm long petioles; the blades are palmately compound, containing 7-9 leaflets. The leaflets are elliptical, 100–170 mm long, and shortly petioluled. The petioles are the source of the foul smell of the plant.<sup>[6]</sup> The flowers are arranged in panicles, 100–150 mm long. The green or purple flowers are large and unisexual as the tree is dioecious (male and female flowers are found on different trees). The pollens are oval in shape, approximately 40 microns in length. The calyx is dull orange and is divided into five sepals, each one 10-13 mm long. The fruit consists of four to five follicles, each follicle generally containing 10-15 seeds. The follicles are scarlet when ripe.<sup>[6]</sup> In India, flowers appear in March, and the leaves appear between March and April. At Hyderabad (India), flowering was observed in September-October (2015) with ripened fruits on the top part and young green fruits at the lower branches. The fruit is ripe in February (11 months after the flowers appeared).

**Medicinal uses:** are used as laxative, diuretic, anti-epileptic and insect repellent. Its seed oil is used externally to treat itches and other skin diseases; however, mixing the boiled seeds with wood decoction was found to be effective for the alleviation of rheumatism.