

## *Ceiba pentandra*

### Scientific classification

Kingdom : Plantae  
Clade : Angiosperms  
Order : Malvales  
Family : Malvaceae  
Genus : *Ceiba*  
Species : *C. pentandra*



*C. pentandra*

### Descripton:

Trees, to 20 m high, buttressed at base; bark green or greenish-grey, peeling off in round bosses; exudation red, watery, sticky; branches horizontal in whorls. Leaves digitately compound, alternate, gathered towards the apex of branchlets; rachis 5-20 cm, slender, glabrous, swollen tip and base; leaflets 5-9; petiolule 3-8 mm, stout, glabrous; lamina 4.5-14.5 x 1.5-4 cm, elliptic, obovate-oblong or ovate-oblong, base acute or cuneate, apex acute or acuminate, margin entire, glabrous, chartaceous; lateral nerves 5-14 pairs, pinnate, prominent, intercostae reticulate, prominent. Flowers bisexual, creamy white, usually in clusters of 3-10, axillary or grouped towards the ends of leafless branchlets, rarely solitary, axillary; pedicels 2-4 cm long, stout, glabrous; calyx green, campanulate, ca. 1 cm long, irregularly 4-5 lobed, coriaceous, glabrous outside, silky pubescent inside, persistent; petals 5, 2.5-4 x 1-1.5 cm, creamy white, obovate-spathulate, adnate to the base of staminal tube, tomentose out side except at the base pubescent near the apex inside, imbricate; staminal tube divided into 5 phalanges, each dividing again into 2 filiform branches bearing 2-3 anafractose, 1-locular twisted anthers; ovary superior, globular or ovoid, yellow, sessile, tomentose at apex; 5-locular, ovules many in each locule, on axil placenta; style white, filiform at base, suddenly

obliquely enlarged above the stamens; stigma capitate. Fruit a capsule 7.5-25 x 3-4 cm, ellipsoid to fusiform, green when young, become brown, narrowed at both ends, indehiscent or tardily dehiscent into 5 valves, septa membranous; seeds numerous, subpyriform, black with copious white silky fibres, testa brown to blackish.

**Medicinal uses:**

Ceiba pentandra is as a source of timber. Ceiba pentandra bark decoction has been used as a diuretic, aphrodisiac, and to treat headache, as well as type II diabetes. It is used as an additive in some versions of the hallucinogenic drink. The root forms part of preparations to treat leprosy.