

***Ceiba pentandra* (Panji Ilavu)**

Classification

Kingdom: Plantae

Clade: Angiosperms

Clade: Eudicots

Clade: Rosids

Order: Malvales

Family: Malvaceae

Genus: *Ceiba*

Species: *pentandra*



PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Trunk: Large, straight trunk with a broad, rounded crown. The bark is smooth with grayish-brown colour.

Leaves: Large, palmate leaves, the leaflets are elliptical, pointed, and have a serrated margin.

Flower: Showy, funnel-shaped flowers with 5 petals, Flowers are yellow or pinkish-yellow, with a reddish-purple center.

Fruit: Large, cylindrical fruit pods.

DISTRIBUTION AND HABITAT

Ceiba pentandra is native to the tropical regions of Central and South America, as well as the Caribbean. We can see it in tropical forests, including rainforests, deciduous forests, and cloud forests. Grows well in full sun to partial shade, and tolerates a wide range of soil types.

CULTIVATION AND USES

Grown for its valuable wood, used for furniture, construction, and paper production. Ornamental plant in gardens and parks. Used in agroforestry systems to provide shade.

INTERESTING FACTS

Ceiba pentandra is considered a "living fossil," The tree's seed pods produce a unique, fluffy fiber called kapok. *Ceiba pentandra* was a sacred tree in Mayan and Aztec cultures. It can grow up to 3 meters per year, making it one of the fastest-growing trees in the world.