

***Mimusops elengi* (Elanji)**

Classification

Kingdom: Plantae

Clade: Tracheophytes

Clade: Angiosperm

Clade: Eudicots

Clade: Asterids

Order: Ericales

Family: Sapotaceae

Genus: *Mimusops*

Species: *elengi*



PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Height: It is an evergreen tree reaching a height of about 16m.

Flower: It flowers in April, and fruiting occurs between June and October. The flowers are cream, hairy, and scented.

Fruit: The fruits are fleshy in colour between yellow and brown and contain a large brown seed.

Trunk: The bark of the tree is thick and appears dark brownish black or greenish black in colour with striations and few cracks on the surface.

DISTRIBUTION AND HABITAT

It is a medium sized evergreen tree found in tropical forests in South Asia, South-East Asia and Northern Australia. It was introduced to China in the 20th century, and is now cultivated in its south, as well as in Taiwan.

CULTIVATION AND USES

The flowers are sun dried and used to make floral infusions and as an addition to green tea in Thailand. Its timber is valuable, the fruit is edible, and it is used in traditional medicine. The wood is a luxurious wood that is extremely hard, strong and tough, and rich deep red in colour. The heartwood is sharply defined from the sapwood.

INTERESTING FACTS

It is used as an ornamental tree in many places. The flowers may also be used in natural perfume.