Kleinhovia hospita

L.

Sterculiaceae

LOCAL NAMES
English (guest tree,kleinhovia); Filipino (hamitanago,tanag,bignon); Hindi (bhola); Indonesian (timanga); Malay (temahai); Thai (po-farang,chomphu-phuang,hatsakhun-thet); Vietnamese (c[aa]y tr[af])

BOTANIC DESCRIPTION
Kleinhovia hospita is an evergreen, bushy tree up to 20 m tall, with a dense rounded crown, bole forking low, developing many suckers when old with twigs softly hairy.

Leaves simple, alternate; stipules ensiform to linier, about 8 mm long; petiole 2.5-30 cm long; blade ovate to heart-shaped, 5-30 cm x 4-25 cm, glabrous on both sides, apex pointed, secondary veins in 6-8 pairs, palmately nerved.

Inflorescence a terminal, loose panicle protruding from the crown; flowers about 5 mm wide, pale pink; pedicel 2-10 mm long; bracteoles lanceolate, 2-4 mm long, pink, tomentose; petals 5, inconspicuous, upper one yellow.

Fruit a rounded, 5-lobed, membranous capsule, 2-2.5 cm in diameter, loculicidally dehiscent, each locule 1-2-seeded. Seed globose, whitish, warty, exalbuminous.

Bark fissured, greyish outside, yellowish inside.

BIOLOGY
K. hospita flowers throughout the year. The fruits are more conspicuous than the flowers because of their abundance and size. Fruit production starts early, often in the third year after planting.

ECOLOGY
K. hospita is commonly found in abandoned clearings, grassland and secondary forest. In Indonesia and Malaysia it is restricted to areas with pronounced dry season. In Indonesia it is common in teak forest. In Malaysia it occurs mainly along river banks and in coastal areas of the northern part of the Peninsula. It is associated with riverside settlements where it is a vigorous component of secondary forest.

BIOPHYSICAL LIMITS
Altitude: 0-200(-500) m.
Temperature: 16-29° C.
Rainfall: 1 800- 2 500 mm
Soil type: Fertile limestone derived soils. It grows well on acid soils and provides nutrient-rich mulch.

DOCUMENTED SPECIES DISTRIBUTION

Native: Australia, China, Fiji, French Polynesia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Taiwan, Province of China, Thailand

Exotic:

The map above shows countries where the species has been planted. It does neither suggest that the species can be planted in every ecological zone within that country, nor that the species can not be planted in other countries than those depicted. Since some tree species are invasive, you need to follow biosafety procedures that apply to your planting site.

PRODUCTS
Fibre: The fibrous bark is used for rough cordage.

Food: The young leaves are eaten as a vegetable.

Timber: Its branches which are often twisted, are favoured for ornamental pieces such as knife handles. Straight branches are used for house rafters. Poles are used as stakes for yams (Dioscorea spp.). The wood shows a pinkish buff, is moderately fine in texture, soft, light, easy to season, work and finish.

Fuel: In the Solomon Islands K. hospita provides fuelwood. Its energy value is reportedly about 19 000 kJ/kg.

Medicine: The juice from the leaves makes a good eye wash. In Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands a preparation from the cambium is used to treat pneumonia. The leaves are also used as a hair-wash to get rid of lice and itchiness. The leaves and bark contain cyanogenic compounds that are assumed to help to kill ectoparasites such as lice. Extracts of the leaves have shown anti-tumour activity against sarcoma in mice.

SERVICES
Erosion control: Has great potential for erosion control due to its fast growth, deeply penetrating main root and existence of an extensive, superficial root system.

Ornamental: The attractiveness of the pink-coloured panicles accounts for its spread as an ornamental tree.

Reclamation: Since K. hospital is known to be common in abandoned clearings and secondary forest it has great potential for use as a reforestation species.

TREE MANAGEMENT
K. hospita has been tested in alley-cropping system. Planting material is often easily available from natural stands. Planting in teak forest is not recommended, as it will overgrow the teak trees.

GERMPLASM MANAGEMENT
Seed storage behaviour is described as orthodox.

PESTS AND DISEASES
The wood is susceptible to dry-wood and powder-post termites.

FURTHER READNG

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SUGGESTED CITATION

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