

# Citrus reticulata

*Rutaceae*

South-East Asia, Cochin China

Common names: **Eng:** tangerine; **Swah:** mchenza.

Ecology: Now it is grown in most tropical and sub-tropical countries and is the hardiest of the cultivated citrus and can tolerate lower temperatures. The loose peel and sweet-flavoured juice are characteristic. The name mandarin is best used for the yellow-fruited cultivars and tangerine for those with a deep orange rind.

Uses: Food (fruit).

Description: A small tree 2-8 m with a dense top of slender branches and rather **few spines**. LEAVES: Shiny dark green above, yellow-green below, **oblong to narrowly oval to 8 cm** long, the edge usually with **widely spaced rounded teeth**, the stalk very narrowly winged. FLOWERS: In leaf axils, about 2 cm across, smaller than sweet orange, white and single. FRUIT: Typically yellow to bright red-orange when ripe but some stay green. Fruit are **rounded but flattened, to 8 cm diameter, rind and segments easily separated**, the centre hollow. The orange juicy **pulp around the seeds is** very sweet.

**Propagation:** Seedlings, wildings

**Seed info.:**

**treatment:** no treatment necessary.

**Management:** Pollarding to initiate branching and to keep the tree low.

**Remarks:** The citrus fruit is classified as a special kind of berry. The berry has 10-14 parts or segments and within each are juicy sacs. Most citrus require nitrogen and phosphorus and potassium is important as a fruit sweetener. Irrigation helps good growth.

