

Dalbergia

CLASSIFICATION

Kingdom:	Plantae
Division:	Magnoliophyta
Class:	Magnoliopsida
Order:	Fabales
Family:	Fabaceae
Genus:	<i>Dalbergia</i>
Species:	<i>sissoo</i>
Vernacular name:	Sheesham



PLANT PROFILE:

Dalbergia sissoo, is an erect deciduous tree, native to the Indian Subcontinent. It is also called Sissoo, Sisu, Sheesham, Tahli and Indian Rosewood. It is primarily found growing along river banks below 900m elevation, but can range naturally up to 1,300m. The temperature in its native range averages 10–40°C, but varies from just below freezing to nearly 50°C. It can withstand average annual rainfall up to 2,000mm and droughts of 3–4 months. Soils range from pure sand and gravel to rich alluvium of river banks; Shisham can grow in slightly saline soils. Seedlings are intolerant of shade. With its multiple products, tolerance of light frosts and long dry seasons, this species deserves greater consideration for tree farming, reforestation and agro forestry applications.

USES:

Timber tree, the young branches and foliage eaten by livestock. After teak, it is the most important cultivated timber tree in India, planted on roadsides, and as a shade tree for tea plantations. Sissoo makes first class cabinetry and furniture. It is used for plywood, agricultural, and musical instruments, skis, carvings, boats, floorings, etc. The leaves are used for fodder. In the U.S. (Arizona, Florida) it is said to be one of the most desirable shade trees for streets and backyards. It is grown in the sewage-irrigated greenbelt around Khartoum, Sudan. The leaves and young shoots can be used as fodder for livestock and grazing animals typically in winter seasons when other fodder is not available. The tree has many reputed medicinal properties and have been used culturally for a variety of ailments including: skin diseases, blood diseases, syphilis, stomach problems, dysentery, nausea, eye and nose disorders, aphrodisiac, expectorant, among others. Indian rosewood also has insecticidal and larvicidal properties, as well as resistance to some wood boring insects.