Terminalia arjuna

CLASSIFICATION

Kingdom: Plantae
Division: Magnoliophyta
Class: Magnoliopsida
Order: Myrtales
Family: Combretaceae
Genus: Terminalia
Species: arjuna
Vernacular name: Arjuna

PLANT PROFILE:

A large evergreen tree with smooth grey bark exfoliating in large, thin, irregular sheets, often tinged with green and red. The leaves are oblong, opposite and sub-opposite. The leaves on the lower surface usually carry a pair of prominent glands close to the top of the leaf-stalk. The flowers are pale-yellowish-white, cup-shaped, resembling myrobalan, small and crowded on a long axis. It flowers from March to June when its honey attracts swarms of bees. The fruit is a winged nut, the leathery wings are usually five in number and are closely veined, the veins not spreading horizontally but tending to curve upwards. The fruit is tan-colored when dry.

USES:

Terminalia arjuna is a medicinal plant of the genus Terminalia, widely used by Ayurvedic physicians for its curative properties in organic/functional heart problems including angina, hypertension and deposits in arteries. Its bark is astringent and is used in fevers and in fractures and contusions. Bark styptic, tonic, febrifuge and anti-dysenteric; pulverised bark gives relief in symptomatic hypertension and acts as a diuretic in cirrhosis of liver. Fruits tonic and deobstruent. Juice of leaves used in earache. The cardio protective effects of Terminalia are thought to be caused by the antioxidant nature of several of the constituent flavonoids and oligomeric proanthocyanidins, while positive inotropic effects may be caused by the saponin glycosides. In addition to its cardiac effects, Terminalia may also be protective against gastric ulcers, such as those caused by NSAIDs.