

8. *Diospyros cruenata* Thwaites

Taxonomy and Commercial Grade

Cambodian name	: Cheu kmao
Scientific name	: <i>Diospyros cruenata</i> Thwaites
Family	: Ebanaceae
Commercial Grade-Cambodia	: Luxury

Distribution and Habitat: Found in dense and mixed forests of Eastern Asia.

Gene Ecological Zones: Northern Cardamoms (B), Northwestern Lowlands (D), Eastern Mekong Basin (F), Central Annamites (G).

Botanical Description: A medium to large tree from 8-35 m tall (Dy Phon 2000), and producing boles up to 50 m in dbh (Brandis D., 1987). The colour of the wood is white with black streaks. *Diospyros cruenata* differs from *D. affinis* Thwaites on the basis of its numerous stamens (12-16). The male has apiculate calyx-segments.



Seed Collection: The seed is mature when the pod has changed in colour to dark brown. The pods are often collected as soon as the colour turns from green to yellow to minimize insect predation. Branches are cut or shaken, and the seeds are collected from a tarpaulin that is spread on the ground.

Uses: The wood of *Diospyros cruenata* is valued for the manufacture of ornamental trinkets, and is excellent for firewood (Dy Phon, 2000).

Current Status: Because the wood is very valuable and has very high demand in the market, this species is over-exploited and in danger of extinction if adequate protection measures are not implemented. Its distribution is scattered and its habitats have been destroyed by forestland conversions and clear-cutting. Moreover, trees are selectively cut. The number of mature trees has been reduced significantly and it is now difficult to find significant sources of germplasm.

In 2002, the second CTSP meeting on the Forest Gene Conservation Strategy defined *Diospyros cruenata* Thwaites Pierre as a priority species in need of immediate protection and conservation. This species is protected by Cambodian Forestry Law No.35.

References:

- Brandis, D, 1987, Indian Trees, London
- Cambodian Forestry Law No. 35, 25th June 1988
- FA, 2002 (draft), List of Trade Names of Commercial Wood in Cambodia, Trade Names of Commercial Wood, unpublished
- Dy Phon, 2000, Dictionary of Plants used in Cambodia
- Heng Ponley, Director General of the Department of Traditional Medicinal Plants, Ministry of Health, 2002, per.comm.
- Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 1986, Decision No. 050 SSR.KSK: Wood Classification and Minimum Diameter for Allowable Cutting, 12th September
- CTSP Seminar, 29 Jan. 2002 on Forest Gene Conservation Strategy

