



TABERNAE

Tabernaemontana rotensis

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Tabernae is a medium-sized tree that grows naturally in limestone forests and only found on Guam and Rota. *Tabernaemontana rotensis* was proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act in June, 2000 (Fish and Wildlife Service, 2000). But in recent years, several stands have been discovered on both islands, and is not as rare as once believed.

Other Common Names: None

Synonyms: *Tabernaemontana pandacaqui*

Family Name: Apocynaceae

Plant appearance

Distinctive feature: The branch of a Tabernae usually splits into two. The stem is gray with prominent lenticels. The fruit when split, has a red pulp tissue covering the seeds.

Leaf

Shape: Elliptic, oblong

Arrangement: Opposite

Type: Simple

Flower

Size: About 0.4-0.6 in.

Color: White

Shape: Salverform (with long, thin tube that widens suddenly into a flat-faced flower)

Arrangement: Panicles on top of the branch produce abundant flowers that are spread out.

Flowering period: Year-round

Habit

Typical height: 15-25 ft.



Tabernae flowers^a.

Fruit

Type: Dry, dehiscent (naturally opens at maturity)

Size: About 1.18 in. long and 0.39 in. wide

Color: Green to orange-red

Number of seeds: 6-12

Edible: Wildlife food (fruits)

Growing your own

Form: Seeds

Seed collection: Collect mature healthy seeds from the tree or around the tree. Dry them.

Seed treatment: 24-hour water soak prior to sowing.

Germination time: 1-2 months

Planting depth: No deeper than twice the size of the seed.

Pre-planting: Germinate in individual pots when possible. Plants grown in 1-gallon pots should be transplanted into the ground after 4-6 months.

Special hints: When outplanting, it is best to plant during the months of August to October. Supplemental watering may be required up to 6 months.



Tabernae leaves^a.

Production conditions

pH value: 7.0-8.0 (neutral to alkaline)

Water: Low

Salt tolerance: High

Wind tolerance: High

Soil characteristics: Well-drained soil

Light: Full sun and tolerates shade

Space requirement: 8-15 ft.

Growth rate: 1-3 ft. per year

Growth direction: Upright, spreading

Fertilizer: For outplants, apply small amounts of complete fertilizer once every 3-4 months for 1 year.

Pruning: Prune dead branches. Prune as necessary for structure and crown thinning. Pruning is necessary no more than 25 percent of the plant every 4-6 months.



Tabernae fruit^a.

Risks

Near surface roots: None

Limb breakage: Medium-sized limbs usually break during the occurrence of typhoons.

Pests: Mealy bugs tend to attack the stem and scale insects attack the lower surface of the leaves and fruits. The snail, *Satsuma mercatorius*, eats the red pulp once the fruit splits open.

How to use this plant

Tabernae is one of the species recommended for reforestation purposes on Guam.

Agroforestry: Multi-story cropping

Medicinal: Unknown

Other uses: Urban forestry, reforestation



Tabernae seed^a.

Photo Credits

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For further information

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Tabernaemontana seedling^a.

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This is a continuation of the first set of 9 Native Tree factsheets in collaboration with Guam Department of Agriculture and USDA which is found in this link: http://cnas-re.uog.edu/useful-cnas-documents-posters/?wpv_aux_current_post_id=3189&wpv_view_count=3187-TCPID3189&wpv_paged=2.

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