Buddhas Lamp

Clerodendrum spp.

Code: TREE-1FEDEE2EB927E11 **Location:** XIM University Campus **Local / Vernacular name:** ବଡୁଧଡ଼ଙ୍କ 616

Botanical Details

Leaf habit: Mostly evergreen in warm climates; semi-deciduous in dry regions Flowers / Fruits: Showy, tubular or star-shaped flowers (often white, red, or purple) with prominent stamens; small drupes or capsules as fruit Native range: Native ranges vary by species; generally Asia, Africa, Pacific islands

Uses & Importance

Ecological: Clerodendrum species are vital biological contributors to tropical and subtropical ecosystems, primarily acting as high-value nectar hubs. Their tubular, nectar-rich flowers are specifically structured to attract a diverse array of pollinators, including honeybees, long-tongued butterflies, and various hummingbirds or sunbirds. In coastal and riverine habitats, specific species within this genus play a critical role in soil stabilization; their dense root systems help bind sandy and loose soils, preventing erosion during monsoon seasons and tidal surges. When used in urban landscaping, they provide essential "stepping stone" habitats for city-dwelling pollinators, improving urban biodiversity. Their lush foliage also contributes to the mitigation of the heat island effect by providing localized cooling through transpiration. Furthermore, the berries produced by many species are a staple food for local avian populations, which assist in seed dispersal, ensuring the continuous regeneration of these plants across forest margins and disturbed lands.

Medicinal: The Clerodendrum genus is a cornerstone of traditional Asian and African medicine, celebrated for its potent antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties. The roots and leaves are the most frequently utilized parts, often prepared in decoctions to treat chronic respiratory conditions such as asthma, bronchitis, and common colds. In Ayurvedic practice, species like C. serratum (Bharangi) are specifically used to balance Kapha and Vata doshas, acting as an effective remedy for rheumatism and joint pain. For dermatological care, crushed leaves or flower pastes are applied topically to soothe skin diseases, boils, and inflammation. The plant contains a variety of bioactive secondary metabolites, including flavonoids and diterpenoids, which modern research is investigating for their potential in reducing systemic fever and inhibiting the growth of pathogenic bacteria. Its role as a natural analgesic and its traditional use in managing inflammatory responses make it a highly respected botanical resource in rural healthcare systems where it is often the first line of defense against seasonal ailments.

Cultural: Symbolically, Clerodendrum is associated with tranquility, devotion, and the "light of wisdom," reflected in common names like "Buddha's Lamp." In many parts of South and Southeast Asia, the striking white or red flowers are highly valued for their aesthetic and spiritual appeal; they are frequently woven into intricate garlands for temple

offerings and used in various religious rituals to signify purity. Culturally, the plant is a staple of "village architecture," commonly planted as living hedges around temple grounds and domestic courtyards to define sacred spaces and provide a sense of visual serenity. In some regional folklores, the blooming of certain Clerodendrum species is seen as a sign of environmental health and spiritual balance. Its presence in garden landscapes across the tropics represents a bridge between ornamental beauty and traditional utility, serving as a reminder of the deep-seated connection between spiritual practice and the botanical world. From its use as a ceremonial decoration to its status as a guardian of the household boundary, the plant remains a beloved fixture of tropical heritage.

Location

GPS: 20.15860192, 85.76535449

Directions: https://www.google.com/maps/dir/?api=1&travelmode=walking&destination=20.15860192%2C85.76535449