



## Rasi Vanam

Mithuna (Midhunam)

Pala Indigo Tree



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**Botanical Name:** *Wrightia tinctoria* R.Br.

**Tamil Name :** Vetpaalai

**Sanskrit Name:** Svetakutaja

**English Name:** Pala Indigo Tree

### Habitat

Deciduous trees; up to 15 m; bark 8-10 mm thick, grey, smooth; outer layer thin, inner layer thick, brittle, creamy; blaze greenish-yellow; latex milky white. Leaves simple, opposite, distichous, stipulate; petiole 2-5 mm long, stout, glabrous; lamina 3.5-11 x 2-4 cm, oblong-lanceolate or elliptic-ovate; base acute; apex acuminate or caudate acuminate; margin entire, glabrous, glaucous beneath, chartaceous; lateral nerves 5-10 pairs, slender, arched, pinnate, prominent, inter-costae reticulate. Flower bisexual, white, scented, in terminal cymes appearing along with new leaves; pedicel 1.5 mm long, bracts 2, minute; calyx lobes 5, with membranous margin, 2 mm, ovate, obtuse, ciliate, glandular inside; corolla salver shaped, lobes 5, broad lobes 12 x 5 mm, oblong, obtuse, throat with 1-2 series of erect, fimbriate corona scales, tube 1.5-2 mm; stamens 5, inserted on the mouth of the tube, anthers sagittate, spurred at base, conniving and adhering to the stigma; disc absent; carpels 2, free, many ovuled, style filiform, stigma ovoid, usually with a toothed basal ring. Fruit of 2 follicular mericarps, 15-45 cm long, slender, smooth, green, cylindric, cohering at the tip; seed 16 mm long, black, commate at one end. (India Biodiversity Portal.com).



## Religious Association

The **Pala Indigo tree** has also been associated with the subject of astrology under the *rasi* Mithuna (*Midhunam*).

## Medicinal uses and other benefits

*Wrightia tinctoria* finds mention in the ancient Siddha and Ayurveda works. It can be very useful in the treatment of skin problems, liver diseases and viral infections. The crushed leaves can be used as poultice to treat burns, boils, wounds, rashes and mouth ulcers. For jaundice and tooth ache use the juice of crushed leaves.

## The curing of psoriasis disease

The leaves of *Wrightia tinctoria* are cut in small pieces and crushed. The cut and crushed leaves are soaked properly in fresh coconut oil in the ratio 1:2 or 1:1 for 2 to 3 days and with occasional stirring. Then the leaves are dried in the sunlight for 2 to 4 days to reduce the moisture. The filtered oil will assume a violet purple color. The oil solution is applied to body parts including scalp and expose to sun light for 15 to 20 minutes which improves the oil absorption and induces healing activity. (<http://www.psoriasisselfmanagement.com>).

This treatment should be continued for a period of minimum one year. Psoriasis will be cured by this method. This is a very cost effective method to follow.



## Conclusion

This tree is commonly available all over India. This tree needs to be propagated all over the country so that the common people may be benefited. Also the method of curing psoriasis should be widely publicized so that many people can avail of the very simple treatment. This is a non-communicable disease and hence there is no fear of infection. The patients should be suitably counselled that this method of treatment of using the leaves of *Wrightia tinctoria* is a very simple method and effective and hence there is no need to fear.

