

Family Euphorbiaceae

Excoecaria agallocha L.

Local names: *lipata*, *alipata* (Visayan), *buta-buta* (Cebuano)



Small to medium trees with surface roots on sandy-muddy substrate along tidal creeks or on hard mud in the inner mangroves and along dikes of ponds. The leaves are highly variable in size, shape and color. They fall off in the dry season just before the flowers appear, but sometimes flowering trees show leaves. The only dioecious mangrove species, female and male plants can be distinguished during the reproductive period. Male flowers in full bloom, which are longer than those of females, present a spectacular but short-lived sight of numerous golden catkins hanging from bare branches. The twigs are used as pest repellent, burnt ashes for salt extraction, and leaves to treat epilepsy. Its milky sap, which flows from any cut surface on the leaf, twig or trunk can cause skin irritation and alleged blindness, hence the local name *buta-buta*. The sap is used to treat toothache and ulcers, and as fish poison.



General

Substrate: sandy-muddy, hard mud
Tidal level: middle, high
Found with: *A. officinalis*,
A. rumphiana,
N. fruticans,
Rhizophora spp.

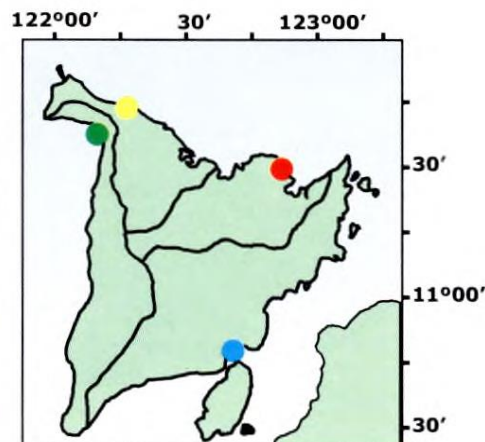
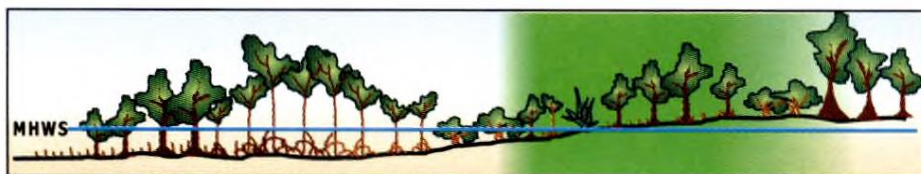
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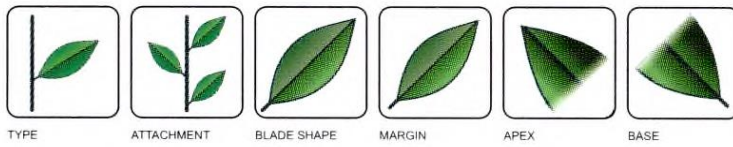
Shape: tree
Height: 5-15 m
DBH: 10-60 cm
Bark: slightly rough, grayish brown; often mottled due to lichens
Aerial roots: surface

Sampling sites: ● Zarraga, Iloilo
● Pan-ay, Capiz
● Ibajay, Aklan
● Pandan, Antique

FLOWERING J F M A M J J A S O N D

FRUITING J F M A M J J A S O N D





Leaves

Arrangement: simple, alternate, spiral
 Blade shape: elliptical
 Margin: entire - smooth
 Apex: acute
 Base: acute
 Upper surface: smooth, green
 Undersurface: smooth, light green
 Size: 5 (3-8) cm long,
 3 (2-4) cm wide
 Others: white milky sap,
 deciduous

Flowers

Inflorescence: catkin, axillary
 Petals: yellow (male & female)
 Stamens: yellow (male & female)
 Size (catkin): male 1.9-3.0 cm long,
 female 0.3-0.7 cm long

Fruits

Shape: rounded with 3 lobes
 Color: green, brown when mature
 Texture: smooth
 Size: 0.4-0.6 cm diameter
 Others: short style splits into 3 curling
 strands

