Kafal

Myrica esculenta is a tree or large shrub native to the hills of northern India, southern Bhutan and Nepal. Kafal grows usually at altitudes ranging from 1500m to 2500m.its common names include kafal, bayberry and box myrtle. Its berries are edible and consumed locally.

This seasonal fruit ripens during the months of May and June and is preferred by most of the people as afternoons munch for its sweetness and also its tangy flavor.

Kafal is known to have a symbiotic relationship with nitrogen fixing soil microorganism.

All the parts of kafal are used in one way or the other. The bark is used to cure a no. of diseases, including mental illnesses. It’s also known to have anti allergic property. The fruit itself is said to posses anti asthmatic property. The fruit and bark together are used for making red and yellow dye. The oil extracted from kafal flowers and seeds are used as tonic. The fruit is also used for making squash, syrup, and jam.

It holds important space in the world of ayurveda with its properties like vishagna (detoxifier), sita prasamana (to relieve cold sensation on the skin), stambhana (which works as an astringent), avedanasthapaka (which works as a pain killer), kanthya (beneficial for the throat) and sukra sodhana (which purifies seminal fluids).

According to susruta, the great Indian physician from around the fourth century AD, not only the fruit, but also its seed and bark of its tree are beneficial for edema, haemoptysis and cardiac debility.