Morus mongolica

Morus alba var. mongolica Bureau

Morus mongolica,[1][2][3] also described as Morus alba var. mongolica,[4] is a woody plant native to mountain forests in Mongolia, China, Korea, and Japan.[1][5] Common names include Mongolian mulberry, meng sang (China),[5] and ilama by native people in the namesake region of Mongolia.[6] Similar to M. notabilis, M. mongolica is an uncultivated (wild, undomesticated) mulberry.[7]

Morus mongolica is a perennial woody tree. The mature plant grows to about 8 metres (26 feet) in height. The leaves of the tree are palmate, with mature dimensions ranging from 8–15 centimetres (3+1⁄4–6 inches) in length and 5–8 cm (2–3+1⁄4 in) in width.[5]

The flowers occur in inflorescences, both male and female.[1] The male inflorescences are about 3–4 cm (1+1⁄4–1+1⁄2 in) long and 7 millimetres (1⁄4 in) wide, whereas the female inflorescences are about 2 cm long and 7 mm wide; both have peduncles of about 1–1.5 cm.[1][5] Both the male and the female flowers are in groups of fours: four sepals, four petals, four stamen (for male flowers) and four carpels (for female flowers).[1] The tree blooms from March to April and fruits in April to May.[5]

The fruits are aggregate, and are dull red to black in color.[1] Each cluster is about 1–3 cm long with a 1 cm diameter, while the individual drupelets are about 3 mm in diameter.[1]

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Morus mongolica (dried) University of Vienna Institute for Botany Herbarium 2

Morus mongolica (dried) University of Vienna Institute for Botany Herbarium 3

Morus mongolica (dried) University of Vienna Institute for Botany Herbarium 1

Morus mongolica is known to have multiple flavonoid and phenolic compounds.[8][9][10][11] These compounds can be found in the fruits,[10] leaves,[9] and bark.[12]

Its native range is the mountains of Mongolia, China, Korea, and Japan.[1][5]

The leaves are eaten and digested by silkworms[13] and the proteins are used by the silkworms for the production of cocoon silk.[7]

The fruits have been recorded as being consumed by Mongol herdsmen.[14]

The wood of the has been suggested to be of possible use for biofuel, among other soft wood trees.[15]