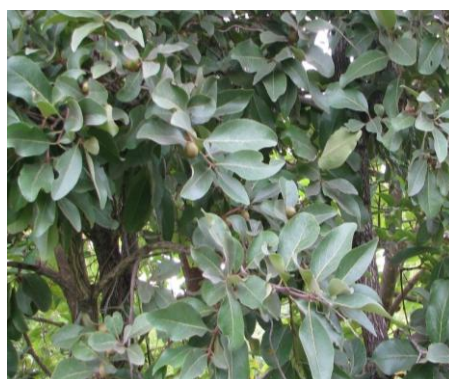


## *Diospyros melanoxylon*

**Botanical name:** *Diospyros melanoxylon*

**Common name:** Coromandel Ebony or East Indian Ebony



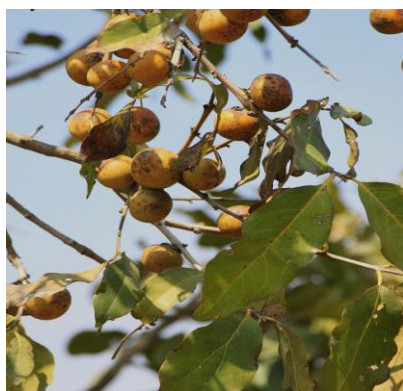
### **Morphological characters:**

*Diospyros melanoxylon* is a medium-sized tree or shrub up to 25 m, and 1.9 m girth. The bark is pelican in colour, exfoliating in rectangular scales. The primary root is long, thick and fleshy at first, afterwards woody, greyish, often swollen in upper part near ground level.

The roots form vertical loops in sucker-generated plants. Leaves opposite or alternate and coriaceous, up to 35 cm long, tomentose on both sides when young, becoming glabrous above when fully grown. Male flowers are mauve in colour, tetramerous to sextamerous, 1-1.5 cm long, sessile or nearly sessile in short peduncles, mostly 3-flowered. Female flowers mauve, mostly extra-axillary or sometimes solitary, axillary generally 2, opposite each other, larger than the male flowers. Fruits olive green, ovoid or globose 3-4 cm across; 1-, 2-, 3-, 4-, 5-, 6-, or 8-seeded berries. Pulp yellow, soft and sweet. Seeds compressed, oblong, shiny, often banded.

### **Growing season and type:**

1. The tree is deciduous or evergreen depending on its habitat.
2. In a dry locality, it is leafless for a short time in the hot weather, regaining its leaves in May-June.
3. In a moist locality, it is evergreen.
4. The flowers appear from April to June on new shoots and the fruit ripens after 1 year.
5. The edible fruits are largely eaten and disseminated by fruit bats and birds, notably hornbills. The tree produces good seed in alternate years.



1



2



3

1. Fruit of *Diospyros melanoxylon*

2. Leaf of *Diospyros melanoxylon*

3. *Diospyros melanoxylon* stem