

## *Dendrocalamus strictus*

Family: Poaceae

This giant grass family member belongs to the great league of ‘bamboos’. Interestingly, it is also infamous in other names, such as male bamboo, Calcutta bamboo or solid bamboo perhaps indicating its sturdiness. Although the plant has been highly valued for making house frames, tent poles, scaffolding, bullock carts, and fences its various edible parts, young shoots, seeds, flowers, underground parts are popular among the tribes and non-tribes alike. The tribes like *Gond*, *Kawar*, *Nagesia*, *Oraon korwa*, *Pandokodaku*, *Khairwar*, *Majhwar* communities of Chhattisgarh use this plant for the edible leaves and shoots. The plant is called as ‘*bhans*’ in this area. In the Mayurbhanj district of Orissa, the tribal groups like *Santhal*, *Kolha*, *Bathudi*, and *Gond* use the leaves, seeds, and shoots as a good source of nutrients. The local names include *dongri bans*, *salia bans*, *banso*, and *bans*. In Uttarakhand, especially in the Lohba range of Kedarnath forest division in the Garhwal region the flower and the underground parts of the plant are also used among the local communities. Young shoots are cooked and consumed widely in Coorg and Malnad region of Karnataka. The shoots are steamed and salted to be eaten raw. Pushcarts filled with the delicacy are a very common scene in many parts of South India. The food from bamboo remains incomplete without a word about north-eastern India. Perhaps most widely referred use of bamboo is from the seven sisters of India. Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, and the rest of the other states have their variety of sumptuous dishes from young bamboo shoots.

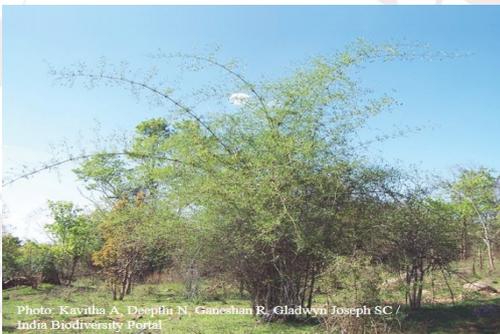


Photo: Kavitha A, Deepthi N, Ganeshan R, Gladwyn Joseph SC / India Biodiversity Portal

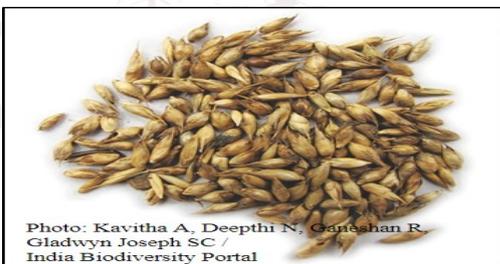


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The seeds are used to substitute grains especially when you are keen on your calorie intake. These are used to make a variety of dishes where rice is used. The 'kheer' made using the seeds are available across the restaurants of Kerala and is very popular during the harvest festival 'Onam'. The 'payasam' is made using jaggery and milk along with *Dendrocalamus* seeds. In addition to this, the rural places of south India bake rice with coconut to make steamed cakes or 'puttu'. Nowadays, being a trendy food it is available in many e-com platforms, organic shops, and dishes are common in many cafeterias in south India