

Wild uncultivated edible plants of India

Part 4 (.....after part 3)



***Bauhinia vahlii* Wight & Arn.**

Family: Leguminaceae



This plant is a crawling member of the upright and prodigious *Gulmohar* family and ranks as one of the largest creepers in India - is also known as '*maloo creeper*'. This creeper is found across the country and considered as an enemy of its refuge trees. The strong and woody stem can grow into a huge creepy giant, reaching up to 30 m long and 20 cm thick. Other than its ornamental value, the tree is well utilized throughout India for its edible part, i.e., seeds. Traditionally, the seeds are roasted and eaten or often used as a pulse substitute. It is well-embraced in dietary use among the tribals across India from Gujarat to Manipur, Uttarakhand to Andhra Pradesh including central and east Indian states. In addition to the seeds, the flower bud and stem bark have some food value and relished in Bihar and Gujarat. Also, tender young pods and leaves are used as vegetables. Research shows that seeds power-packed with lipids, essential amino acids (isoleucine, valine, histidine, leucine, phenylalanine, lysine and tyrosine) and minerals (nitrogen, calcium, iron, magnesium). Perhaps, this gigantic creeper has not reached common households owing to limited efforts towards domestication and cultivation.

