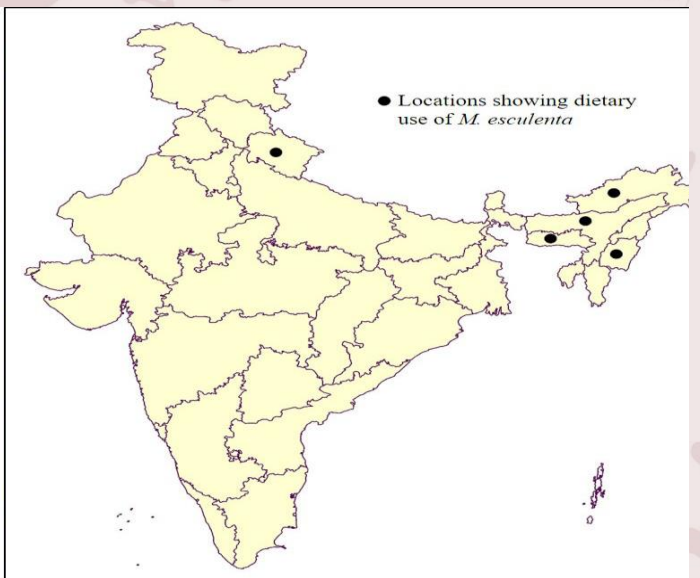


 ***Myrica esculenta* Buch.-Ham. ex D. Don** 

Family - Myricaceae

*Myrica esculenta*, a member of Myricaceae, is a tree of medium height with white flowers found in bunches. Fruits are globose or oval, bright red to dark brown color, and sweet and sour taste. It wears many names, Box berry, box myrtle, bayberry or Kath phal or Kaphal. It is found in hilly regions of northern India around Garhwal and Kumaon of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and the neighboring states of Nepal and Bhutan especially at elevations of 900–1,800 m. The fruits are eaten by the locals either raw or used to make juices, squashes, and jams. The fruit is high in minerals like Magnesium, Calcium, Potassium, Phosphorus, Sodium, Zinc, Iron and Copper. The fruit is a good source of vitamin C and is considered as one of the tastiest fruits of the sub-Himalayan regions. The dried bark and fruits are also available online and are finding places in modern kitchens and ecofriendly restaurants. The roots and fruits are constituents of ‘Chyavanprash’ and ‘Brahma Rasayana’. A large population of Uttarakhand and nearby areas uses the decoction of the bark as a mouth freshener. Despite its untapped potential the cultivation of the tree is very much limited and is only confined to the wild. The regeneration of the plant is very poor and thus demands active human intervention for propagation.



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