

***Pyrus pashia* Buch.-Ham. ex D.Don**

Family : Rosaceae

The plant, a rosaceous member, is famous in many names, Himalayan Pear, Indian Wild pear, *tangi*, *mahal mol*, or *passi*. A small to medium tree, *Pyrus pashia*, is an inhabitant of cold temperatures but grows well in humid conditions. The fruit is very tasty and thus desired among hill communities; though grabbed from the wild it is extensively cultivated in the eastern Himalayan parts. Whereas leaves and shoots are processed differently and are the sources of many tribal or local delicacies. The leaves, though bitter, serve as fodder as well as made into butter tea by the *Monpa* community of Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh. Nutritionally, the fruits are rich in many key minerals like potassium, calcium, iron, magnesium, and phosphorus as well as power-packed with antioxidants. The raw fruits are used by many tribal groups living amidst high altitude montane ecosystems, one of them is the '*Gaddis*' in the Western Himalayas. In the upper hills of Garhwal and Kumaon, the wild Himalayan pear is dried, crushed to powder, and mixed with wheat flour for making chapatis. Hakeems or medicine men in Kashmir also prescribe its crushed dry powder as a medicine to stop diarrhea. Though relatively less popular, drying and pickling are also practiced. Interestingly, apart from its use as food, the tree is also used as living fence in the Himalayan villages.

