



Conocarpus erectus

Family: Combretaceae

Buttonwood

The genus *Conocarpus* is composed of 2 species native to: North America [1] and the shores of tropical America and Africa [1]. The word *conocarpus* means "cone fruit", in reference to the cone like rounded fruits.

Other Common Names: Asokolo, Asopolo, Botoncahui, Botoncillo, Botonillo, Buttonbush, Button Mangrove, Button-tree, Chene Guadeloupe, Conocarpe Droit, Estachahuite, Flordia Button, Florida Buttonwood, Geli, Gra Mangrove, Grey Mangrove, Grignon, Grijze Mangle, Grijze Mangrove, Iztacuahuitl, Jele, Kaba, K an-chik-inche, Kanche, K ank-ank-che, K ank-che, Madre de Sal, Mangel, Mangel Blancu, Mangle, Mangle Blanco, Mangle Boton, Mangle Botoncillo, Mangle Cenizo, Mangle Garbancillo, Mangle Gris, Mangle Jeli, Mangle Lloroso, Mangle Marequita, Mangle Negro, Mangle Pinuelo, Mangle Prieto, Mangle Roche, Mangle Torcido, Mangle Zaragoza, Manglier, Manglier Gris, Mangrovia Grigia, Mangue, Mangue Branco, Mangue de Botao, Maraquito, N Ja, Paletuvier, Paletuvier Gris, Pash-ch uhnul, Pataban, Saragosa, Silver Buttonwood, Taabche, Tabche, Witte Mangel, Witte Mangro, Wortelboom, X-kanche, Xtabche, Yana, Zaragoza, Zaragoza Mangrove

Distribution

Native to the silt shores of coasts and islands of Florida, including the Florida keys. Also widely distributed on coasts of tropical America from Bermuda and Bahamas through West Indies including Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands. From Mexico south on the Atlantic coast to Brazil and on the Pacific coast to Ecuador including the Galapagos Islands and Peru. On coasts of west Africa and in Melanesia and Polynesia.

The Tree

Buttonwood occurs in tidal lagoons and bays of brackish water. It forms dense thickets of shrubby growth, but becomes tree like when growing alone. Flowers and fruits are produced year round. The tree reaches heights of 60 feet and 3 feet in diameter. The bark is thick and has broad plates of thin scales which are gray to brown. The bark is rich in tannins.

The Wood

General

The heartwood of Buttonwood is olive brown, with a reddish tinge, while the sapwood is lighter. It is moderately heavy, hard and strong. It has a high luster, medium texture, with a straight to mottled grain.

Mechanical Properties (2-inch standard)

	Specific gravity	MOE x10 ⁶ lbf/in ²	MOR x10 ³ lbf/in ²	Compression		WML ^a in-lbf/in ³	Hardness lbf	Shear x10 ³ lbf/in ²
				Parallel x10 ³ lbf/in ²	Perpendicular x10 ³ lbf/in ²			
Green	.69	1.19	7.4	4.10	1.14	6.2	1110	1.22
Dry	.85	1.58	10.2	7.85	1.63	5.9	--	--

^aWML = Work to maximum load.
^bReference (98).
^cReference (59).

Drying and Shrinkage

Type of shrinkage	Percentage of shrinkage (green to final moisture content)		
	0% MC	6% MC	20% MC
Tangential	8.5	--	--
Radial	5.4	--	--
Volumetric	14.6	--	--

^aBirch shrinks considerably during drying. References: 0% MC (98), 6% and 20% MC (90).

Kiln Drying Schedules No information available at this time.

Working Properties: Buttonwood is not easy to work, but finishes smoothly.

Durability: Good.

Preservation: No information available at this time.

Uses: Durable construction, fuel, charcoal.

Toxicity: No information available at this time.

Additional Reading and References Cited (in parentheses)

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 4. Markwardt, L.J. and T.R.C. Wilson. 1935. Strength and related properties of woods grown in the United States. USDA Forest Service, Tech. Bull. No. 479. USGPO, Washington, DC.
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