Binalo is a medium-sized tree that can be found throughout tropical areas of the Pacific. It may grow up to 50 ft. tall and is common on beaches, rivers, river mouths and limestone terraces not far from the coast.

**Other Common Names:** Aden apple, Amae, Badrirt, Banalo, Bang-beng, Indian tulip tree, Kilulo, Malapuso, Milo, Mio, Miro, Mulomulo, Pacific rosewood, Panu, Polo, Pone, Portia tree, Seaside mahoe, Surina

**Synonyms:** Hibiscus populneus, Thespesia macrophylla

**Family Name:** Malvaceae

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**Plant Appearance**

**Distinctive feature:** The Hibiscus-like flowers are yellow when they open in the morning and darken during the day. They fade to a rose purple color before dropping off the tree in the evening.

**Leaf**

- **Shape:** Heart-shape
- **Arrangement:** Alternate
- **Type:** Simple

**Flower**

- **Size:** 2-3 in. with five petals
- **Color:** Pale yellow with reddish centers in the morning, darkening during the day and turning purple before falling off.
- **Shape:** Bell-shaped
- **Arrangement:** Solitary axillary flower

**Flowering period:** Year-round

**Habit**

- **Typical height:** 25-40 ft.
- **Ave. crown radius:** 20-35 ft.

**Fruit**

- **Type:** Dehiscent fruit (the pods open when mature to release the seeds)
Size: 1-2 in. in diameter, rounded but flattened
Color: Green to brown/grayish (mature)
Number of seeds: 4-10 seeds per pod
Edible: No

Growing Your Own

PROPAGATION

Form: Seed and cuttings
Seed collection: Collect mature seeds. Capsules generally open at maturity but may also be opened by hand.
Seed treatment: Seeds should be scarified with sandpaper or nail clippers, or cracked with a hammer. Avoid damaging the inner part of the seed. Seeds do not require soaking.
Germination time: 2-4 weeks after sowing
Planting depth: 0.5-1 in. (about twice the diameter of the seed)
Pre-planting: Binalo grows quickly and can be transplanted four months after germination.
Special hints: 12-inch cuttings will root easily in about a month if conditions are favorable. Cuttings should be protected from direct sun and placed in transparent plastic to keep leaves from desiccating.
Pollinators: Common insects and birds

Production Conditions

pH value: 6.0 – 7.4
Water: Low
Salt tolerance: High
Wind tolerance: High
Soil characteristics: Well-drained, clay, sand, cinder, coral, organic
Light: Full sun, partial sun
Space requirement: 10-20 ft.
Growth rate: 1-3 ft. per year
Growth direction: Upright
Fertilizer: Once a month, young trees need to be fertilized with water soluble or organic fertilizer (e.g. kelp or fish emulsion) at a third or a quarter of the recommended strength.
Pruning: Prune one area at a time as it recovers slowly from pruning.

Risks

Near surface roots: None
Limb breakage: Low
Special considerations: Binalo is sometimes considered messy as it drops leaves and dry seed capsules year-round.
Pests: Cotton stainer (Dysdercus sp.), and cotton-boll weevil (Anthonomus grandis). Binalo is also prone to fungal root and butt rot caused by Phellinus noxius, which is characterized by slowly enlarging diseased patches around the base of infected trees.

How to Use This Plant

Binalo is fast growing as easy to care for. It is an excellent tree for coastal properties.

Agroforestry: Accent, coastal erosion control, hedges, ornamental, screening, specimen plant, shade tree, green manure, windbreak, boundary or barrier support for mangrove areas fodder for livestock

Medicinal: Every part of Binalo is used medicinally. It is used to treat such illnesses as pleurisy, cholera, acid reflux, burns, hemorrhoids, high blood pressure, ulcers, rheumatism, migraines, and many others.

Other uses: The wood is used for tool handles, dishes, drums, and fence stalks, as well as boats and cabinets. Binalo is used to make tannins, dyes, oil, gum, and cordage.

References and Resources


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Photo Credits

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Notes


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