Magnolia hondurensis A. Molina R.

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MAGNOLIACEAE (MAGNOLIA FAMILY)

No synonyms

Jagua, magnolia

Magnolia hondurensis is an evergreen species from the wet forests of the tropics of Central America; it usually grows in regions with elevations greater than 1000 m (Aguilar 1966).

Magnolia hondurensis is a tree that reaches 20 m in height and 60 cm in diameter. It has a rounded or narrowly umbellated crown, the foliage is very dense, and the branches stretch out obliquely. The shaft is straight, sometimes slightly irregular, and cylindrical with a conical or slightly elongated base. The bark is brownish gray or dark gray, moderately rough with prominent lenticels that come loose in scaly, thin, irregular pieces, displaying brownish lenticels in the new bark. Leaves are simple, whole, alternate, shiny, dark green, and ferruginous or rusty-pubescent underneath.

The wood has white alburnum. The olive-green duramen turns yellowish coffee or greenish coffee in color, with dark purple-coffee or blackish stripes and a fine grain. The wood is used for general construction, interior finishes, furniture, cabinets, doors and windows, veneer and plywood, platforms and structures for ships, turnery, sawn wood, parquet floors, armory, and interiors of heavy vehicles.

The flowers are isolated, axillary, big, and very beautiful with white petals, greenish-yellow stamens, and a fragrant odor. The tree blooms March through April and fruits March through June. The fruits are dehiscent follicles, with large seeds suspended by filiform structures. The yellowish-white seeds are recalcitrant, covered with a soft, membranous tissue, and stuck to the aril. Seeds are cleaned by maceration and continuous washing with water. Seeds average 5,000 to 10,000 per kg with 60 to 70 percent viability.

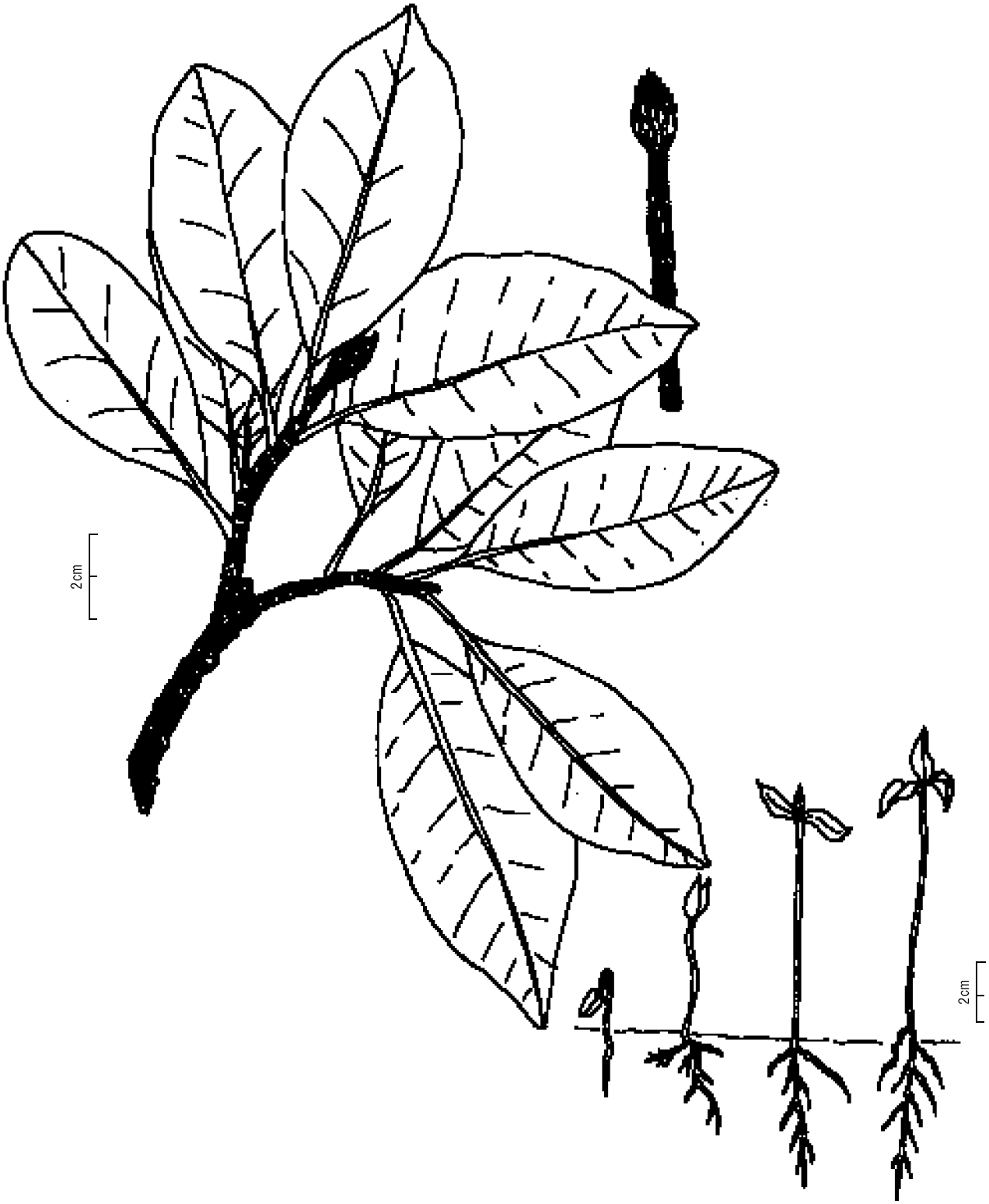
Once clean and dry, seeds can be stored for several years by lowering the levels of physical moisture between 7 and 9 percent and controlling storage conditions (Aguilar 1966).

Pregermination treatments include cutting seeds longitudinally, soaking them in water for 48 hours, or stratifying them in sand.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The bevel is 1.5 to 2 cm thick, opaque yellow to light orange, becoming dark later, granular, moderately hard, and brittle. It has a faint pleasant, bittersweet, odor.

The petiole is 1 to 1.5 cm long, slightly caniculate above, thick, and rusty-pubescent. The stipules are caducous. The lamina is oblong-elliptic or oblong-oval, 10 to 18 cm by 4.4 to 8 cm, short-acuminate to obtuse apex. The base is obtuse, cuneate, and coriaceous and the edges are frequently revolute. The right side is shiny and dark blue-green; the back is ferruginous or rusty-pubescent. The main vein is strongly prominent underneath; 12 to 14 pairs of secondary, parallel, straight veins are slightly prominent underneath and camptodrome. The reticulum of veins is not distinctive.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