

Shalmali

- **Botanical Name:** *Salmalia malabarica* (also known as *Bombax ceiba*)
- **Family:** Bombacaceae
- **Synonyms:** Semal, Simul, Indian Kapok Tree, Red Silk Cotton Tree
- **Vernacular Name:** Commonly known as "Semal" in Hindi, "Silk Cotton Tree" in English, and "Ilavu" in Tamil.
- **Classification:** A large deciduous tree belonging to the Bombacaceae family.
- **Habitat:** Native to tropical and subtropical regions of Asia, including India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. It thrives in well-drained soils and is commonly found in forests and along riverbanks.
- **Morphology:** A tall tree, growing up to 20–30 meters in height, with a straight trunk covered in conical spines. The leaves are palmate, with 5–7 leaflets. The flowers are large, cup-shaped, and bright red, blooming from January to March. The fruits are capsule-like, containing seeds surrounded by silky fibers (kapok).
- **Useful Parts:** Bark, roots, flowers, fruits, and gum.
- **Chemical Composition:** Contains tannins, flavonoids, gallic acid, and catechins. The gum is rich in polysaccharides, and the seeds contain fatty acids like linoleic and oleic acids.
- **Pharmacological Action:** Known for its anti-inflammatory, astringent, aphrodisiac, and antimicrobial properties. It is used in treating diarrhea, dysentery, wounds, and respiratory disorders. The gum (mochras) is used for its cooling and demulcent effects.
- **Formulation:** Used in Ayurvedic preparations like Shalmalyadi Taila and herbal decoctions for digestive and respiratory health. The gum is also used in traditional remedies for skin and reproductive health.

Rasa: Madhura , Amla

Guna: Snigdha , Laghu, Picchila

Virya: Sheeta

Vipaka: Madhura