Tabernaemontana rotensis

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Tabernaemontana rotensis is a medium-sized tree that grows naturally in limestone forests and only found on Guam and Rota. Tabernaemontana rotensis was proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act in June, 2000 (Fish and Wildlife Service, 2000). But in recent years, several stands have been discovered on both islands, and is not as rare as once believed.

Other Common Names: None
Synonyms: Tabernaemontana pandacaqui
Family Name: Apocynaceae

Plant appearance
Distinctive feature: The branch of a Tabernaemontana usually splits into two. The stem is gray with prominent lenticels. The fruit when split, has a red pulp tissue covering the seeds.

Leaf
Shape: Elliptic, oblong
Arrangement: Opposite
Type: Simple

Flower
Size: About 0.4-0.6 in.
Color: White
Shape: Salverform (with long, thin tube that widens suddenly into a flat-faced flower)
Arrangement: Panicles on top of the branch produce abundant flowers that are spread out.
Flowering period: Year-round

Habit
Typical height: 15-25 ft.

Fruit
Type: Dry, dehiscent (naturally opens at maturity)
Size: About 1.18 in. long and 0.39 in. wide
Color: Green to orange-red
Number of seeds: 6-12
Edible: Wildlife food (fruits)

Growing your own
Form: Seeds
Seed collection: Collect mature healthy seeds from the tree or around the tree. Dry them.
Seed treatment: 24-hour water soak prior to sowing.
Germination time: 1-2 months
Planting depth: No deeper than twice the size of the seed.
Pre-planting: Germinate in individual pots when possible. Plants grown in 1-gallon pots should be transplanted into the ground after 4-6 months.
Special hints: When outplanting, it is best to plant during the months of August to October. Supplemental watering may be required up to 6 months.
**Production conditions**

- **pH value:** 7.0-8.0 (neutral to alkaline)
- **Water:** Low
- **Salt tolerance:** High
- **Wind tolerance:** High
- **Soil characteristics:** Well-drained soil
- **Light:** Full sun and tolerates shade
- **Space requirement:** 8-15 ft.
- **Growth rate:** 1-3 ft. per year
- **Growth direction:** Upright, spreading
- **Fertilizer:** For outplants, apply small amounts of complete fertilizer once every 3-4 months for 1 year.
- **Pruning:** Prune dead branches. Prune as necessary for structure and crown thinning. Pruning is necessary no more than 25 percent of the plant every 4-6 months.

**Risks**

- **Near surface roots:** None
- **Limb breakage:** Medium-sized limbs usually break during the occurrence of typhoons.
- **Pests:** Mealy bugs tend to attack the stem and scale insects attack the lower surface of the leaves and fruits. The snail, *Satsuma mercatorius*, eats the red pulp once the fruit splits open.

**How to use this plant**

Tabernae is one of the species recommended for reforestation purposes on Guam.

- **Agroforestry:** Multi-story cropping
- **Medicinal:** Unknown
- **Other uses:** Urban forestry, reforestation
Photo Credits
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References
http://www.gpepp.org/tabernaemontana-page/
http://www.theplantlist.org/tpl1.1/record/kew-200914

This is a continuation of the first set of 9 Native Tree factsheets in collaboration with Guam Department of Agriculture and USDA which is found in this link: http://cnas-re.uog.edu/useful-cnas-documents-posters/?wpv_aux_current_post_id=3189&wpv_view_count=3187&TCPID3189&wpv_paged=2.

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