

# *Roupala montana* Aubl.

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## PROTEACEAE (PROTEA FAMILY)

*Roupala pyrifolia* Salisb. & Knight, *Rhopala media* R. Br., *Rh. Dentata* R. Br., *Rhopala complicata* Kunth, *Rhopala ovalis* Pohl, Pl. Bras., *Rhopala macropoda* Klotzsch & Karst, *Rhopala gardneri* Meissn., *Rhopala martii* Meissn, *Rhopala martii* var. *Simplicifolia* Meissn, *Rhopala frondosa* Rich ex. Meissn, *Rhopala tomentosa* a. *integrifolia* Meissn, *Rhopala boissieriana* Meissn, *Rhopala veraguensis* Klotzsch es Meissn, *Roupala borealist* Hemsl., *Roupala dariensis* Pitt., *Roupala panamensis* Pitt., *Roupala discolor* Rusby, *Roupala dissimilis* Pitt., *Roupala repanda* Lundell, *Roupala montana* var *dentata* (R. Br.) Sleumer

Danta hediondo, danto, danto carne, ratón, ratoncillo, zorrillo, zorrillo hediondo

One of about 50 species in an American genus, *Roupala montana* is distributed from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, Mexico to Brazil.

*Roupala montana* is a slow-growing, medium-size tree that reaches 8 to 25 m in height and 40 to 70 cm d.b.h. The tree has a cylindrical trunk, some low branching, and a rounded crown that is dense with dark green foliage. The gray-brown bark is smooth with narrow furrows in old mature trees. The young stems are terete, ferruginous-strigillose, and glabrescent. Leaves are very heteromorphic; alternate juvenile leaves are pinnately compound, and generally larger than the adult form. The number of leaflets is extremely variable even on a single branchlet; the margin is generally coarsely serrate or sometimes undulate; and the veins are conspicuous. Adult leaves are ovate, 5 to 12 cm long, 2 to 9 cm broad, acute or acuminate at the apex, cuneate to more or less obtuse at the base, often decurrent upon the petiole, subcoriaceous, ferruginous-strigillose and glabrescent above and below. The fresh

wood and crushed leaves or branchlets have a strong odor like that of ground fish or tuna fish, as described by those doing the testing. Although *R. montana* occurs in a wide range of soil types, it grows best in soils with good drainage. This species grows in moist and wet forests from the lowlands up to 144 m (Nevling 1960). The climatic conditions in which the species grows have an annual rainfall of 1500 to 3000 mm and an average temperature of 18 to 25 °C.

The small, creamy-white flowers are produced from late January through April in terminal or axillary racemes of many flowers. The rachis are 6 to 18 cm long and tomentose, and the flowers are borne singly or in pairs. The fruit is a flat follicle, obliquely bivalvate, often minutely spurred at the base, 2.5 to 4 cm long, about 1.5 cm broad, and glabrous. Follicle dehiscence occurs from the end of March through April, liberating the winged seeds that germinate at the beginning of the wet season at the end of May. Winged seeds are oval, 1.5 cm long, and 0.8 cm broad.

