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About Our Cover

Sterculia foetida Linn. from East Africa, India, Malaysia and Northern Australia is a fast growing large deciduous tree up to 100 feet high. The palmate leaves are composed of 5 to 9 elliptic leaflets, which are pink when young. The yellow vile smelling flowers with purple markings almost an inch in diameter are foetid, woolly and borne

on 12 inch green panicles on the ends of the twigs.

Two to five spectacular woody curved red pods 3 to 4 inches square are arranged in star-like clusters. Many purple-black velvety seeds with a small waxy lump at one end cling to the inside of the pod.

The soft yellow wood is used for temporary construction; the salmon colored bast is used to make a poor grade of rope. Edible seeds, flavored like cacao but not bitter are used as a laxative and to adulterate cacao. Oil is

extracted from the peanut-like oily kernels to be used for illuminating purposes, for paint and cooking. An extract of the bark is used for dropsy, rheumatism, as well as for an astringent.

In spite of the bad odor during its short flowering period, *Sterculia foetida* is a popular ornamental tree in Hawaii. The scarlet pods which dry to dull brown are highly prized for dry arrangements, especially at Christmas.

Donald P. Watson
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