



***Alstonia spp.***

**Family: Apocynaceae**

**Pulai**

**Other Common Names:** Milkwood (Papua New Guinea), Dita (Philippines), Shaitan wood (India), Mo Cua (Vietnam), Basong (Malaya), Mergalang (Sarawak), Milky pine, White cheesewood (Australia).

**Distribution:** Throughout the Indo-Malayan region, Australia, and Polynesia. Varying with species, found on dry land and swampy sites.

**The Tree:** Clear straight boles 40 to 50 ft in length, sometimes reaching 90 ft; diameters commonly 3 to 4 ft. Stems are characteristically fluted; sometimes buttressed.

**The Wood:**

**General Characteristics:** Sapwood yellowish white to pale brown; not differentiated from heartwood; texture moderately fine to somewhat coarse; grain mostly straight, sometimes interlocked; quite lustrous; without characteristic odor or taste when dry. Has large slit-like latex canals.

**Weight:** Basic specific gravity (ovendry weight/green volume) 0.34 to 0.40; air- dry density 25 to 30 pcf.

**Mechanical Properties:** (2-in. standard)

Moisture content (%)	Bending strength (Psi)	Modulus of elasticity (1,000 psi)	Maximum crushing strength (Psi)
Green (9)	5,130	900	2,790
6%	7,480	1,060	4,560
Green (34)	5,800	960	3,120

Janka side hardness 380 lb for green material and 460 lb for dry. Green Forest Products Laboratory toughness 179 in.-lb (5/8-in. specimen).

**Drying and Shrinkage:** The wood is reported to be easy to air dry with little or no degrade. Kiln schedule T10-D4S is suggested for 4/4 stock. Shrinkage green to overdry: radial 3.4%; tangential 6.1%.

**Working Properties:** Very easy to work by hand and machine tools; cuts smoothly; turns well. Peels easily on a rotary lathe. Nails well.

**Durability:** Prone to stain, decay, and insect attack. Very susceptible to attack by powder-post beetles.

**Preservation:** At least one species is reported to absorb preservatives very readily.

**Uses:** Patternmaking, boxes and crates, carving, veneer and plywood, interior trim, furniture components. Root wood of *A. spathulata* once used for "pith" helmets.

**Additional Reading:** (9), (12), (34), (47)

9. Burgess, P. F. 1966. Timbers of Sabah. Sabah For. Rec. No. 6.

12. Douay, J. 1956. *Gmelina arborea* (Roxb.). Monographie Bois For. Trop. 48:25-38.

34. Lauricio, F. M., and S. B. Bellosillo. 1966. The mechanical and related properties of Philippine woods. *The Lumberman* 12(5):66 +A-H.

47. Pearson, R. S., and H. P. Brown. 1932. Commercial timbers of India. Gov. of India Central Publ. Br., Calcutta.

**From: Chudnoff, Martin. 1984. *Tropical Timbers of the World*. USDA Forest Service. Ag. Handbook No. 607.**