



Lecythis spp.

Family: Lecythidaceae

Sapucaia

Monkey Pot

Other Common Names: Coco (Panama), Coco mono, Coco cristal (Colombia), Coco de mono, Olla de mono (Venezuela), Monkey Pot (Guyana), Kwattapatoe (Surinam), Castanha sapucaia, Sapucaia vermelha (Brazil), Machin-mango (Peru).

Distribution: Widely distributed from southeastern Brazil through northern South America to Costa Rica. Common in the Amazon lowlands and coastal mountain forests of Brazil.

The Tree: Size varies with species but may reach height of 130 ft with straight cylindrical boles clear to 60 ft and more, diameters of 5 to 6 ft are common; usually 20 to 30 in. Stems are somewhat buttressed or shallowly fluted.

The Wood:

General Characteristics: Heartwood light to dark salmon; sapwood creamy yellow. Texture medium fine and uniform; luster mostly low but high in some species; grain fairly straight slightly interlocked; without distinctive odor or taste.

Weight: Basic specific gravity (ovendry weight/green volume) varying with species from 0.61 to 0.93; air-dry density 46 to 69 pcf.

Mechanical Properties: (First two sets of data based on the 2-in. standard; third set on 1-in. standard.)

Moisture content (%)	Bending strength (Psi)	Modulus of elasticity (1,000 psi)	Maximum crushing strength (Psi)
Green (73)	18,340	2,890	8,880
12%	27,540	3,380	13,280
12% (44)	14,100	1,840	NA
12% (24)	27,000	3,240	13,500

Janka side hardness for denser species 2,430 lb for green material and 3,100 lb at 12% moisture content. Forest Products Laboratory toughness average for green and dry material may reach 300 to 400 in.-lb (5/8-in. specimen).

Drying and Shrinkage: Rated as easy to moderately difficult to air-season depending on species; a slow to rapid drying rate is reported. Warp and checking ranged from slight to moderate. No data on dry kiln schedules available. Shrinkage green to ovendry: radial 6.0%; tangential 7.6%; volumetric 13.4%. These values are low for wood of this high density.

Working Properties: The wood is moderately difficult to work because of its high density; however, surfaces obtained in planing, boring, sawing, and shaping were smooth and good to excellent. Silica content varies with species and dulling of cutters is also variable.

Durability: The wood is reported to be very durable upon exposure to both a white-rot and a brown-rot fungus confirming its reputation for high resistance to decay. Heartwood is also highly resistant to dry-wood termites. Reported to be moderately resistant to marine borer attack.

Preservation: The wood is highly resistant to preservation treatments.

Uses: Heavy construction, ship keels and beams, railroad crossties, industrial flooring, uses requiring high impact resistance (wagon wheels, tool handles), turnery. *L. paraensis* produces a highly favored edible nut.

Additional Reading: (24), (44), (56), (73)

24. Food and Agriculture Organization. 1970. Estudio de preinversion para el desarrollo forestal de la Guyana Venezolana. Informe final. Tomo III. Las maderas del area del proyecto. FAO Report FAO/SF: 82 VEN 5. Rome.
44. Llach, C. L. 1971. Properties and uses of 113 timber-yielding species of Panama. Part 3. Physical and mechanical properties of 113 tree species. FO-UNDP/PAN/6. FAO, Rome.
56. Record, S. J., and R. W. Hess. 1949. Timbers of the new world. Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn.
73. Wangaard, F. F., A. Koehler, and A. F. Muschler. 1954. Properties and uses of tropical woods, IV. Tropical Woods No. 99:1-187.

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