

AGLAIA ODORATA Lour.

SINAMOMONG-SUNGSONG

Aglaia pinnata Druce

Local names: *Cinamomo* (Sp.); *cinamomo de China* (Sp.); *sinamomomg-sungsong* (Tag).

Sinamomong-sungsong is cultivated as an ornamental tree and for its fragrant flowers in Manila and in the larger towns of the archipelago. It was introduced from southeastern Asia.

This plant is a small, much-branched, smooth tree growing from 4 to 7 meters high. The leaves are 5 to 12 centimeters long, with the rachis slightly winged. There are five leaflets, which are obovate to oblong and 2 to 7 centimeters in length, the lower ones being smaller than the upper. The flowers, borne on axillary, lax panicles 5 to 10 centimeters long, are numerous, yellow, very fragrant, and 3 millimeters in diameter. The fruit is ovoid or subglobose, and about 12 millimeters long.

The flowers are fragrant in the evening, and, dried, are often used to perfume clothes and cigarettes, and to scent teas.

In the Philippines a decoction of the root and leaves is used as a tonic.

According to Perrot and Hurrier the Sino-Annamites use the roots and leaves as pectoral, stimulant, febrifuge, tonic and for convulsions. Ridley reports that an infusion of the flowers is given as a cooling drink in eruptive fevers. Stuart and Soubeiran and Thiersant say that the leaves and roots are used as tonic in China. Burkill quotes van Dongen, who reports that in Java an infusion of the leaves is taken as a tonic in cases of excessive menses and also for venereal diseases.