

**Botanic name :** *Melastoma malabathricum* L.

**Family:** Melastomataceae

**Common name:** Malabar Melastom

**Habitat:** Terrestrial

**Distribution :** Native to India (Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka); distributed in Indonesia, Japan, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam

**Description:** Evergreen shrub, leaves elliptic to lanceolate; flowers vary from light to dark pink and have 5 petals, arranged in around 1-5 flowered clusters; dissimilar stamens, numbering twice the number of petals. The flower shows 5 purple, curved anthers, and 5 yellow anthers. Fruit a berry-like capsule with numerous seeds coated with red, sweet astringent pulp.

**Phytochemicals:**  $\alpha$ -amyrin, betulinic acid, and isolated flavonoids, including quercetin and quercitrin

**Medicinal/Economic use :** The roots are used as a mouth-wash for toothache. An extraction of the leaves are used to cure wounds and against stomach problems and diarrhea/dysentery. The fruits are edible & astringent. Ethnopharmacologically, the leaves, shoots, barks, seeds, and roots of the plant have been used to treat hemorrhoids, cuts and wounds, toothache. A decoction of roots and leaves is given to women after childbirth.