

Species of the Month 1/2024 || Nyatoh Puteh

5 Jan 2024 || TO NUS Community

The Nyatoh Puteh (White Gutta) is a tall forest tree 🌳 that can grow up to 40m, taller than a 12-storey HDB block!

Like other Palaquium trees, it yields the sticky white latex known in its processed form as gutta percha, a valuable trading commodity for Singapore in the past, and which is still used nowadays as dental fillings! 😊🦷

Read more about this heritage tree below.

Let us know what species you would like to see featured by [voting for the next Species of the Month](#).

CAMPUS IN A TROPICAL RAINFOREST

SPECIES OF THE MONTH

ISSUE 86 | JANUARY 2024




Photo by Collin Chua

NYATOH PUTEH

Palaquium obovatum

APPEARANCE

- A native forest tree capable of reaching up to 40 metres in height!
- It has a heavy crown with deeply fissured bark.
- Its leaves are large, leathery and are set in close rosettes of spiral arrangement.

HABITAT

- In Singapore, it can be found in freshwater swamp forests and disturbed secondary forests.
- It is also suitable for landscaping along roads and in parks!

POLLINATOR

- The flowers of Nyatoh Puteh are presumably pollinated by insects.
- It has also been observed that the Lesser Dog-faced Fruit Bat aids in the pollination and seed dispersal of this species.

FUN FACT

The processed latex from Palaquium trees, including the Nyatoh Puteh, is called gutta percha, which was used in the 1820s to make machete handles and whips. Today, gutta percha is used as dental fillings!

Brought to you by:



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS SPECIES ON OUR IG @NUSSAVEBIODIVERSITY
CATCH US AGAIN NEXT MONTH WITH THE NEXT FEATURED SPECIES!