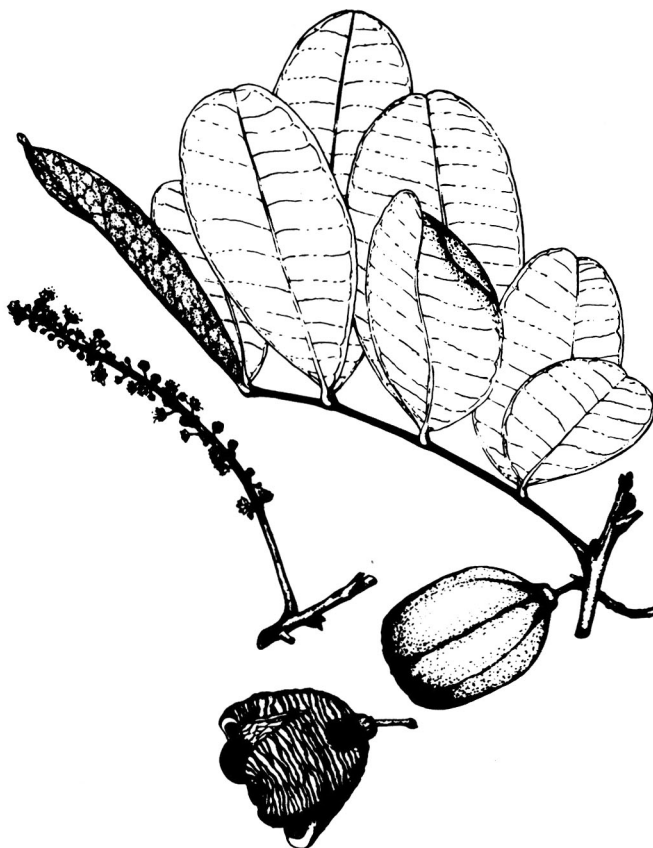


57. *BLIGHIA SAPIDA* Koenig (SAPINDACEAE) — Akee Apples, Seso Vegetal, Ackee

The walnut-like aril of this fruit is eaten only when exactly ripe, and may be eaten raw, roasted, or in soups. In the West Indies it is fried in butter or oil and served with salted fish, considered a delicacy known as "Codfish- or Saltfish-and-akees". Europeans like it roasted as a dessert nut. The fragrant flowers are the source of perfumed water, used as a cosmetic by natives in Africa.³ Fruits give a good lather when rubbed in water and are used in washing clothes to fix colors. Rind used as a fish poison.⁵⁶ Dried husks and seeds are burned and their ashes used to make soap; ashes are rich in potash of a good quality. Sapwood is light-colored; and heartwood reddish-brown; timber is light in weight, hard, durable, suitable for chairs, beds, oars, boxes, and charcoal, and is used for piles and building materials; it is said to be resistant to termites. Frequently grown as an ornamental shade tree, suitable for avenues.

Colombians and Cubans use the leaf (and bark) decoctions as stomachic; Jamaicans for colds and pyorrhea. Ground arils are used in folk remedies for dysentery and fever.⁴² Described as anodyne, antidote, antiemetic, poison and stimulant, akee is used in folk medicine for conjunctivitis, edema, epilepsy, migraine, ophthalmia, orchitis, smallpox, sores, tumors, ulcers, yaws, and yellow-fever.³² Bark-pulp is used as a liniment for edemas and intercostal pains. Seasoned with Guinea-grains and ginger it is eaten to allay orchitis pains. Pulp of leafy tips is applied to cure migraine, and the juice of crushed leaves is used as eye-drops for conjunctivitis and ophthalmia.¹⁰⁷ A paste made of crushed leaves is applied to ulcers in yaws. Jamaicans rub boiled leaves on as an anodyne, using the tea for colds, salted as a mouthwash for pyorrhea.⁷² Cataplasms of the fruits are applied to tumors of the mammary glands and testicles.⁴ Arils are cooked in hot ashes to make vulnerary poultices.⁴²