

Schefflera morototoni (Aubl.) Maguire, Steyerl. & Frodin

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ARALIACEAE (GINSENG FAMILY)

Didymopanax morototoni

Ambay guasu, ambay guazu, aralie grandes feuilles, arriero, bois canot, bois trembler, cacheta, chancaro blanco, costilla de danto, gavalan, gorgoran, mandioqueira, mangabe, matchwood, mountain trumpet, morototo, palo de sable, pava, pavilla, probado, roble blanco, sable, sablito, trembler, trompette male, yagrumo macho, zapaton

Schefflera morototoni is naturally dispersed in Mexico, Panamá, Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay, and northeastern Argentina. It thrives in the tropical-subtropical broadleaf forests of tropical America.

Schefflera morototoni is a tree that can reach 25 m in height and 40 to 80 cm d.b.h. The smooth, cream-colored bark has big lenticels. The trunk has many rings which are formed by leaf scars. The crown has an umbrella shape; the foliage appears as clusters of leaves in the upper part of the branches. Leaves are alternate and palmate with 9 to 13 oblong leaflets, each with a long petiole. The leaves measure 25 to 40 cm long by 15 to 35 cm wide; the leaflets measure 8 to 25 cm long by 4 to 12 cm wide. The upper face of the leaves is dark green; the inside face is gray-white and downy. A sun-loving species, *S.*

morototoni requires deep, semihumid, and mesohygrophilic soils. It grows where annual precipitation is 1500 mm or more. In the subtropics, the species will tolerate a few low-intensity frosts; elsewhere, it grows where the mean annual temperature is 18 °C. The species has average longevity.

The wood is light brown, sometimes grayish with gold glints; has a medium density of 450 kg per m³; and is very useful for veneer and plywood. The wood does not perform well outdoors because it does not resist fungal attacks.

The inflorescence is a raceme 5 to 12 cm long with umbels 1 to 5 cm long; the greenish-white flowers are 3- to 6-mm-long hermaphrodites. The fruit, a rounded drupe 5 to 10 mm in diameter and grayish in color, contains 2 to 3 seeds.

