Breadfruit

Artocarpus altilis

Code: XIM-T-039 **Location:** XIM University Campus **Local / Vernacular name:** ନୀରୁ ଫଣସ

Description

XIM University campus biodiversity register (2026–27). Recorded individuals: 1; abundance rank: 47.

Botanical Details

Leaf habit: In its natural tropical habitat, the breadfruit tree is generally evergreen, maintaining its leaves throughout the year and continuously contributing to photosynthesis and green cover. In areas with distinct dry seasons, it may become semi-deciduous and shed some leaves in response to drought stress, but this is largely dependent on local climatic conditions. Flowers / Fruits: Breadfruit trees are monoecious, meaning they bear both male and female flowers on the same tree. The flowers develop into a unique compound fruit that is typically large, round to oblong, and starchy, with a creamy white to yellow pulp that is rich in complex carbohydrates. Breadfruit fruits can vary in size and shape depending on the cultivar and are often eaten cooked; they may be roasted, boiled, baked, fried, dried, or even fermented for preservation. Both seedless and seeded varieties exist. Native range: The breadfruit tree is native to the western Pacific region, particularly in areas such as New Guinea and surrounding islands in Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. It was domesticated in these regions more than 3,000 years ago and later spread across tropical Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and the Americas through human cultivation due to its valuable nutritional and cultural importance.

Uses & Importance

Ecological: The breadfruit tree plays a valuable ecological role in tropical landscapes. Its large, evergreen canopy provides shade and habitat for birds, insects, and small animals, helping to support local biodiversity. The nutritious fruits serve as food for a variety of wildlife, and animals that consume the fruits help in seed dispersal, facilitating natural regeneration. Breadfruit trees also contribute to soil stability and carbon sequestration, and their presence in agroforestry systems enhances ecological diversity and resilience.

Medicinal: Various parts of the breadfruit tree have been used in traditional medicine across tropical cultures. The leaves, bark, flowers, latex, and fruit have a range of folk medicinal applications, such as treating high blood pressure, diabetes, skin infections, respiratory problems, digestive issues, and pain from sprains or bruises. Leaf teas, latex poultices, and extracts are used in different traditional remedies, and ongoing research shows the presence of active compounds that may support these uses.

Cultural: The breadfruit tree has deep cultural significance in the Pacific Islands and other tropical regions where it has been cultivated for thousands of years. It is a staple food crop deeply woven into local traditions, cuisines, and community life, often symbolizing abundance and sustenance. The wood is traditionally used for canoes, housing, and tools, while the fibers and latex have been utilized for rope, cloth, and adhesive materials in indigenous crafts and daily life.

Location

GPS: 20.15860192, 85.76535449

Directions: https://www.google.com/maps/dir/?api=1&travelmode=walking&destination=20.15860192%2C85.76535449