



Scientific Name	<i>Helicteres isora</i> L.
Common Names	Indian Screw Tree, ഇടമ്പിരി വലമ്പിരി
Family	Malvaceae
Plant description	<i>H. isora</i> is a small tree or large shrub, five to eight metres in height. It has grey bark and alternately arranged, hairy, ovate leaves with serrate margins. Its flowers are brick red or orange-red, and its fruits are green when raw, brown or grey when dried, and twisted, with a screw at its pointed end. Seeds of the plant are black or brown and are highly polished, roughly rhomboid, and rectangular or triangular. The red flowers are pollinated mainly by sunbirds, butterflies, and Hymenoptera.
Distribution	It is a tropical Asian plant. It is found throughout India and Pakistan, Nepal, Myanmar, Thailand, and Sri Lanka. It also grows in dry deciduous forests of central and western India on hill slopes. It is also found on the Malay Peninsula, Java, and Australia.
Uses	It is a rich source of antioxidants, calcium, carbohydrates, proteins, fibre and iron. The fruits and roots are valued in treatment of a wide variety of conditions, including gastrointestinal disorders, diabetes, cancer, and infections. There appear to have been no scientific investigations of these beliefs. However, laboratory studies have confirmed that both bacteria and cancer cells may survive less well in the presence of extracts of the fruits. Animal studies have shown that extracts of the roots can improve glucose tolerance in diabetic rats.

Flowering and Fruiting time	September to March