

Decaisnea
fargesii
Dead Man's
Fingers



Family:

Lardizabalaceae

Genus and species:

Decaisnea fargesii

Description:

Decaisnea fargesii is commonly known as dead man's fingers or the blue bean tree. This shrub is native to western China and other western Asia countries such as Nepal, Bhutan, and northeastern parts of India, though its common names originate from Ireland. This shrub is often as wide as it is tall, and this particular measured to 7m in the winter of 2014. It commonly flowers in the summer while its fruit ripen in the fall around Halloween. This plant is distinctive for its blue sausage-shaped fruit, which give its various common names. Although the fruit is edible, the tree mostly serves an ornamental or decorative purpose when grown in non-native parts of the world.

Habitat:

Decaisnea fargesii is naturally found in the southern Himalayan regions of Western China, Nepal, and the state of Sikkim in India. The plants are found in mixed forest along

mountain slopes and in moist areas. However, the plant has also been successfully planted in many other parts of the world.

Origin, history, and uses:

D. fargesii is native to the southern Himalayan regions in Asia, but it has reached many other parts of the world such as the United Kingdom or the United States. When grown outside the native grounds, these plants typically serve an ornamental purpose.



In Chinese folk medicine, the blue bean tree root has long been used as an antirheumatic or antiussive drug. Its fruit is sometimes used to treat swollen carbuncles. Possible other medicinal purposes have been studied

for preliminary data showing anti-tumor characteristics (Kong et al). The Chinese name is 猫儿屎属 , meaning cat feces. In the Sikkim state of India, aboriginal Lepchas relish the fruit, though it is rarely eaten anywhere else outside the region.

