



Schizostachyum pergracile

Schizostachyum pergracile (previously *Cephalostachyum pergracile*) is a beautiful medium sized clumping bamboo native to India and Indochina. The common name for this bamboos species is **Tinwa Bamboo** and the plant has good quality canes which can be used extensively for cooking and baking sticky rice, the poles are also used for construction.

Schizostachyum pergracile is a priority bamboo and cultivated both within and outside its native range for its useful canes and as an ornamental.

Summary

Plant Info	
Scientific name	Schizostachyum pergracile
Synonyms	Cephalostachyum pergracile
Common names	Tinwa Bamboo
Family	Poaceae
Tribe	Bambuseae
Genus	Schizostachyum
Height	10 - 15 m
Diameter	50 - 75 mm
Growth Habit	Dense Clumping
Climate	Tropical - Subtropical
Hardiness	-6°C
Edibility	(1 of 5)
Flowering Cycle	7-15 years
Origin	Bangladesh, China, India, Laos, Nepal, Myanmar
Uses	Construction, Cooking Pots, Fishing Rods, Basketry, Mat Making, Handicrafts, Paper Pulp, Ornamental, Landscaping, Screening



Photos





Rhizomes

Schizostachyum pergracile has short rhizomes which means that it grows in dense clumps.

Culms

Schizostachyum pergracile has erect culms that slightly bend toward the top. The culms are on average 10-15 m tall (although 30 m has been reported in optimal conditions), and have average diameter of 50-75 mm. The internodes are thin walled and on average 30-45 cm long. Nodes are slightly thickened and basal nodes do not present aerial roots.

The colour of the culms is bluish-green (somewhat whitish below the nodes when young), and greyish-green when mature. Young shoots have an orange-yellow colour.

Culm Sheaths

The culm sheaths of Schizostachyum pergracile are 10-15 cm long and cover about half the length of the internode. They have a typical orange-brown colour and are covered with black hairs.

Branches

Schizostachyum pergracile has many short thin branches at each node, which are about equal in size and 0,5-1 m long. Branches usually arise from the higher nodes, but occasionally culms have rudimentary branches on the lower part of the culm as well.

Leaves

Leaves are lance shaped and 15-35 cm long by 25-32 mm wide. The leaf surface is rough on both sides and has 14-26 secondary veins. Usually there are 5–8 leaves per branchlet.

Habitat

Schizostachyum pergracile is a tropical lowland bamboo. It grows best on lower hills, in mountain valleys, and in mixed deciduous forests near streams up to an altitude of 1000 m. This bamboo thrives on well-drained loamy soils, but is also suitable for sandy, heavy clay and red soils.

Schizostachyum pergracile is vigorous in moist forests where it co-exists with Teak, Bambusa polymorpha or Dendrocalamus membranaceus, but in the drier forests where Dendrocalamus strictus is the prevailing bamboo, it is stunted.

Flowering

Schizostachyum pergracile flowers sporadically almost every year. When it flowers sporadically, it generally does not produce viable seed. Schizostachyum pergracile does produce viable seeds when it flowers gregariously over extensive areas. The gregarious flowering cycle for this bamboo varies from 7-15 years.



Local ethnic villagers of Manipur have a superstitious belief that bamboo flowering is a bad omen to the particular village or to a particular homestead.

People generally destruct bamboo clumps immediately after flowering. But *Schizostachyum pergracile* clumps develop very slowly; under favourable conditions they take 12-15 years to produce full-sized culms, while under unfavourable conditions this may take up to 30 years.

Spacing

Suitable spacing varies according to the purpose of planting. For wind-breaks and fences 3-4 m x 3-4 m is used, for plantations 8 m x 8 m is recommended.

Yield

Yield figures are scarce. About 7 t/ha of air-dried culms per year are reported from India and Burma (Myanmar) from a crop with a cutting cycle of 3 years.

Uses

Schizostachyum pergracile belongs to the list of priority species and is an important bamboo in its native habitat because it is widely harvested from the wild for its useful canes. It is often planted around houses and villages in Myanmar and Thailand because many local people prefer this bamboo over conventional pots to cook and eat glutinous rice.

Freshly cut internodes of 1-year-old culms are used as cooking vessels. The green canes of *S. pergracile* withstand fire and add a unique fragrant flavour to the meal. The bamboo casing also acts as a convenient container in which the cooked food can be carried while traveling or working in the forest.

The canes are also used in light construction (as house posts, roof frames, walling mats, shingles etc.), as fishing rods, and for making handicrafts (especially lacquerware).

Schizostachyum pergracile has green outer layer is easily split into thin strips which are used for basketry and mat making. The culms are also used as a raw material for paper pulp.

Schizostachyum pergracile is also recommended as an ornamental for landscaping or screening because of its beautiful greyish-green culms with reddish-brown culm sheaths.

Young shoots are edible but have a bitter taste.



Origin



Native to:

Assam, Bangladesh, China South-Central, East Himalaya, India, Laos, and Myanmar.

