

Ethnobotany

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Lecture 16

Outline

- 1 Sugar plants
 - Sugar palms

Sugar plants

Sugar palms

Arenga sugar palm, *Arenga pinnata*

- Belongs to palm family, Palmae
- The source of “gur” sugar and also wine
- Inflorescences are used for taking sap (17–20% of sucrose)

Arenga sugar palm



Arenga sugar palm features and history

- Syrup are very easily inverted (hydrolyzed into glucose and fructose) and should be evaporated as soon as possible
- Every day, palm tree gives 5–7 liters of sap; the season is up to 8 weeks
- Old Indian culture spread into south-east Asia

Collection of palm sap



Toddy, *Caryota urens*

- African sugar palm, one of the largest palms
- Monocarpic tree, dies after flowering
- Since the sap is fermented fast, it mostly used as a source of palm wine ($\approx 1\%$ of alcohol)
- Starred in groundbreaking novel “The Palm Wine Drinkard” by Nigerian author Amos Tutuola

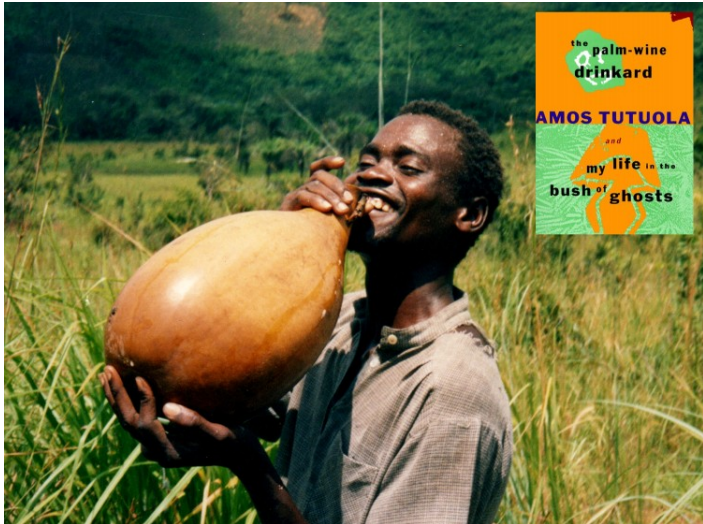
Toddy palm



Toddy palm on flowering stage



Palm-wine drinkard



For Further Reading



A. Shipunov.

Ethnobotany [Electronic resource].

2011—onwards.

Mode of access:

http://ashipunov.info/shipunov/school/biol_310



P. M. Zhukovskij.

Cultivated plants and their wild relatives [Electronic resource].

Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux, 1962. Abridged translation from Russian.

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http://ashipunov.info/shipunov/school/biol_310/zhukovskij1962_cultivated_plants.pdf.