



戶外通識教室：家有羅漢松，一世唔會窮？

Nature's Classroom: Buddhist Pine (*Podocarpus macrophyllus*)

羅漢松喜植於有遮蔽處，四季常青，形態優美，故多作觀賞盆栽。俗云：「家有羅漢松，一世唔會窮」，大陸近年由於經濟比較富裕，喜高價收購羅漢松植於門前作為風水樹。



為甚麼叫羅漢松？看圖中成熟後的紫紅色漿果是否像極千百羅漢穿上紅色僧袍(紅色為肉質果托，綠色才是果實)；在蓮座松中合什誦經的樣子？另一說是其果實酷似羅漢身上佩戴的法器，故名。Many “Buddhist monks” praying on the pine!

Podocarpus macrophyllus (known as Kusamaki or Inumaki in Japan), its old English name is "Buddhist Pine", is a conifer in the genus *Podocarpus*, family Podocarpaceae. It is the northernmost species of the genus, native to southern China & southern Japan. It is a small to medium size evergreen tree, growing up to 20m tall at a slow rate. The leaves are alternate, strap-shaped, 6-12 cm long & about 1 cm broad, with a central midrib. The cones are borne on a short stem, and have 2-4 scales, usually only one (sometimes two) fertile, each fertile scale bearing a single apical seed 10-15 mm. When mature, the scales swell up and become reddish purple, fleshy and berry-like, 10-20 mm long; they are then eaten by birds, which disperse the seeds in their droppings. The plant prefers light (sandy), medium (loamy) & heavy (clay) soils & requires well-drained soil. The plant prefers acid and neutral soils. It can grow in semi-shade (light woodland) or no shade. It requires moist soil. Buddhist Pine in HK is regarded as a Fung Shui tree, thus having a very high market value. In recent years, the illegal digging of Buddhist Pine has become a problem in the city.

