



## 戶外通識教室：假蘋婆同牛郎織女有關？

Nature's Classroom: Lance-leaved sterculia (*Sterculia lanceolata*)

假蘋婆又叫七姐果，乃本地原生常綠小喬木，單葉互生，呈橢圓形，葉質像紙及面有光澤。在本地它有一種奇特的習性，就是仲夏時會突然短暫落葉。其花紅色，細小。它的果實成掌形放射簇生，有5個蓇葖果，先青轉黃，熟後紅色，可稱得上是本地最美麗的果實，也是高雞冠等林鳥喜愛的食物。

七姐就是民間傳說中與牛郎天各一方的織女。他們每年七月初七乞巧節（七姐誕）才能靠喜鵲在銀河築起鵲橋相會一次以解相思！過去習俗是以蘋婆果實作為其中一種拜祭七姐之果品，若沒有便會用假蘋婆果實代替。現今拜七姐之習俗已式微，但每年夏天七姐果仍會在郊外展現她的艷紅外衣呢！



Lance-leaved sterculia, or Scarlet Sterculia—Small native tree & quite unique, it drops its leaves in mid-summer, sometimes becoming leafless for a short period. Its fruits are among the most beautiful fruits in HK, are the favourite food of bulbuls & other birds.

Its name in Chinese, known as fruit of the 7<sup>th</sup> Sister—a fairy in Chinese legend “the Cowherd and the Girl Weaver”. They are separated by the celestial beings and can only meet once a year on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month when sympathetic magpies form a bridge to let them cross the Milky Way. In old days, the 7<sup>th</sup> Sister Festival was a big day for single woman to pray for looking a good lover.