

Non-timber Forest Products

Pandanus Handicrafts: examples of woven pandanus products from Asia

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Mangrove Action Project



"Partnering with mangrove forest communities, grassroots NGOs, researchers and local governments to conserve and restore mangrove forests and related coastal ecosystems, while promoting community-based, sustainable management of coastal resources."

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Pandanus odoratissimus

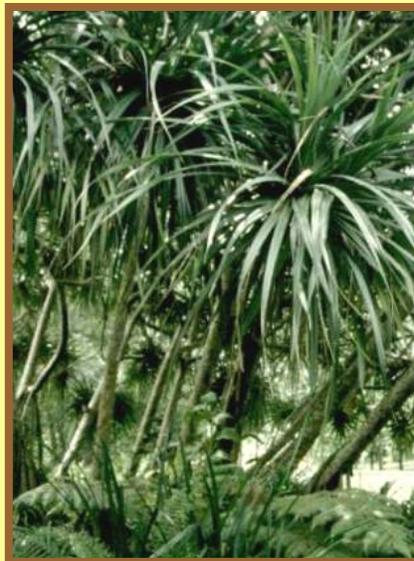
Pandanus odoratissimus is part of the *Pandanceae* family of plants, commonly referred to as screw pine. It is native to peninsular Southeast and South Asia and is one of the main wetland species of plants to be used to make handicraft products in this region.

It is found in the back mangroves and has large prop roots and long, thin, spiny leaves. The leaves make a good fibre for weaving, as they are long, thick and durable.

Pandanus can be used to make a variety of woven handicraft products including bags, boxes, baskets, mats and slippers. The sale of these products can be an important source of supplementary income for women's groups in coastal villages and can also encourage wetlands conservation.



Young Pandanus plant



A stand of Pandanus



Pandanus growing naturally

Preparation of Pandanus



The leaves are cut from the Pandanus tree and carried to the village



The thin outer layer of the leaf is peeled off to remove the spines



Once dried, the leaves are stripped into fine strands



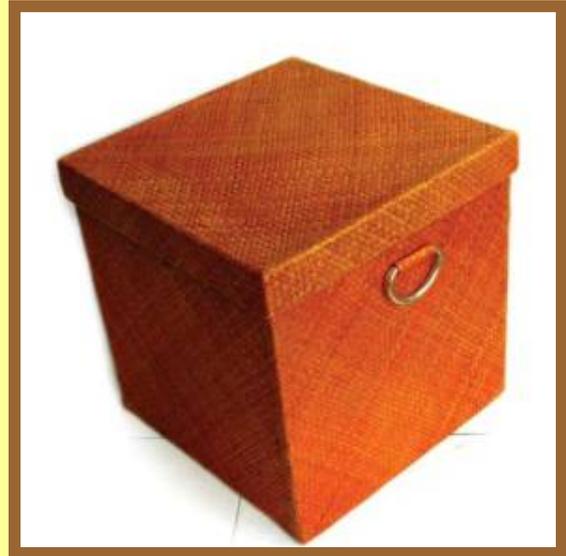
The strands can be dyed allowing a mixture of colours to be woven together.



A mat being made from Pandanus fibre

To prepare the leaves for weaving the spines must first be removed and the leaves must be rolled out to dry in the sun. The dried leaves are then stripped into fine strands. Pandanus fibre can be coloured using chemical or natural dyes allowing a diversity of colourful patterns to be created to produce unique designs.

Boxes



The flexibility of the fibre means that many shapes and sizes can be easily formed. This allows a variety of decorative boxes to be produced with different functions. Examples include tissue boxes, waste paper baskets and jewellery boxes.



Bags and Purses



Attractive purses can be made with different dyes and patterns and using zippers and clasps as fasteners. The durability of pandanus also enables good quality bags to be produced. Designs can be kept simple or made more elaborate with the addition of handles and other features made from natural materials such as wood.



Other Items



Mats and Pillow Cases



Sandals & Slippers



Fans



Eyeglass Cases



Photo Album Cover



Document Folder



Card/Cigarette Packet Holders