

The Colonial Woodsmyth

Common Name: Purpleheart

Botanical Name: *Peltogyne porphyrocardia*



Other Common Names: Purpleheart, Amarante, Amaranth, Guarabã, Koroboreli, Morado, Nazareno, Palo morado, Pau roxo, Pelo morado, Purperhart, Saka, Sakavalli, Tananeo, Violetwood

Common Uses: Billiard-cue butts, Boat building, Bridge construction, Cabinetmaking, Carvings, Construction, Decorative veneer, Dockwork, Fine furniture, Flooring, Inlay work, Marquetry, Parquet flooring, Piling, Shafts/Handles, Shipbuilding, Specialty items, Tool handles, Turnery, Vats, Veneer

Region: Central America, Latin America

Country: Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, French Guiana, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Suriname, Venezuela

Tree Data: Mature Purpleheart trees are usually tall and attain a height of about 100 to 150 feet (30 to 45 m), and a diameter of up to 48 inches (120 cm), usually between 18 and 36 inches (45 and 90 cm).



Sapwood Color: The sapwood is creamy white or off-white in color, and is very distinct from the heartwood. The color has also been described as pinkish cinnamon with light brown streaks, and is usually about 2 to 4 inches (5 to 10 cm) wide.

Heartwood Color: The heartwood is initially dull brown, but it rapidly changes to a bright, vibrant purple. Prolonged exposure darkens the wood to a dark-purplish brown or dark brown, but the original color can be restored by recutting the wood. Color variation between boards is reported to be moderate to high. Presence of minerals in some boards may cause uneven coloration and steaming is reported to affect the color. *Peltogyne* timbers are reported to vary widely in color between, and probably within, species.

Light & Air-Induced Changes: Treatment against the effects of ultra-violet rays has been suggested to maintain the original color of the wood. A treatment with Armorall, the car finish product, under lacquer is reported to hold the color well.

Grain: The grain is typically straight, sometimes wavy, roey, or irregular.

Texture: The wood has a medium to fine texture.

Luster: The wood exhibits a medium to high luster.