

ASK A LIBRARIAN FEATURED
QUESTION OF THE WEEK

August 24, 2020

Question: What is Ylang Ylang and where does it come from?

Response:

Ylang Ylang (pronounced “e-lang e-lang”) is a beautifully scented tree (*Cananga odorata*) native to the Malay peninsula and the Philippines.

Here it is in full flowering glory:



The oil is extracted through a process of steam distillation. In the Victorian era, it was used to make the hair oil known as macassar. In the early 20th century, researchers found that the oil could be effective against malaria, typhus, and intestinal infections. Aromatherapists today use it as a calming, soothing agent; some recommend its aphrodisiac effects.

It is used in many popular perfumes, including Chanel No. 5, Joy Perfume, and Pure X5 For Her Paco Rabanne.