

**44682. PERSEA SCHIEDEANA** Nees. Lauraceæ.**Coyó.**

From Guatemala. Bud wood collected by Mr. Wilson Popenoe, agricultural explorer. Received April 26, 1917.

"In the mountains of northern and eastern Guatemala there grows a fruit closely resembling the avocado yet sufficiently different in foliage and flower to indicate that it is a distinct species. In eastern Guatemala, around Zacapa, Gualan, Chiquimula, and El Rancho, it is called *shucte*, *chucte*, or sometimes *chaucte*, while in the northern part of the Republic, immediately across the great Sierra de las Minas, it is known under the names *coyó* and *coyocté*. These latter names have been thought by some to indicate two distinct fruits, perhaps distinct species, but an examination of several trees in the Alta Vera Paz shows that they are in reality the same. Apparently the Indians call the cultivated fruit (for it is often grown in their gardens and around their huts) *coyó*, and the wild tree, which is abundant in the mountains, *coyocté*. The suffix *té* in the Kekchi language is said to mean tree; *coyocté* would therefore mean nothing more than *coyó* tree.

"In some sections of the Alta Vera Paz the *coyó* is fully as common as the avocado and seems to be held by the Indians in practically the same high esteem. An American coffee planter who lives in this region tells me that he considers the *coyó* even superior to the avocado in flavor, and after testing it I am inclined to agree with him.

"The *coyó* must be considered, then, an unusually interesting new fruit, but it has certain defects which make it seem, on the whole, inferior to the avocado. It has, for example, a large seed in most cases, and the flesh is sometimes disagreeably fibrous. But it is quite variable, like its relative the avocado, and some *coyós* are much superior to others.

"The *coyó* tree looks, at first glance, much like an avocado tree and usually reaches about the same size. It is distinguishable from the avocado by the character of its leaves which, upon close examination, differ from those of the avocado in form, are larger, and have more or less brownish pubescence on the lower surface, especially along the midrib. The flowers, when seen from a distance, look like those of the avocado.

"The fruits are remarkably similar in general appearance to avocados of the West Indian race, such as are grown in Florida. Like avocados, they vary greatly in form. Most commonly they are pyriform, with a well-defined neck, but they are sometimes obovoid, sometimes broadly pyriform, and sometimes long and slender. They are also quite variable in size, but the majority seem to be from three-quarters of a pound to 1½ pounds in weight. I have heard of *coyós* weighing 2 to 3 pounds. The surface is about as smooth as that of a West Indian avocado and often of similar color, yellowish green, but sometimes it is purplish or bronze. The skin is thicker than that of any of the avocados except those of the Guatemalan race; it is not hard, however, as in the latter, but leathery and pliable. Frequently it adheres to the flesh, which is of a peculiar brownish white color, gives off a milklike juice when squeezed, and is of fine, oily texture like the flesh of an avocado. Usually there are numerous fibers running through the flesh, although some *coyós* are said to be practically free from fiber. The flavor is strongly suggestive of the avocado, being of the same rich, nutty character, but is nevertheless distinct; it has a richness and nuttiness of its own, which suggest to me the flavor of a ripe coconut. The seed is larger in comparison to the size of the fruit than it is in the best of our budded varieties of the avocado, but it is no larger than in many seedling avocados. In general appearance it resembles an avocado seed, but the cotyledons when cut are a dull rose pink instead of whitish. The