

37000 - 37016 Dragon's Blood, Resina Dracaena

(from "Pitman's Common Commodities and Industries, GUMS & RESINS – by Ernest J. Parry, London; Printed by Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, Ltd, Bath, England, v-(1465E and other editors))

CAS No.: 9000-19-5
EINECS: 232-530-5
C.I. Number: Natural Red 31.75200

The resin known as dragon's blood or "Sanguis draconis" is the product of a large species of rattan palm, *Daemonorops draco*, a native of the islands of the Indian Archipelago, but principally produced in Sumatra and Borneo. This variety is known as "Palm dragon's blood".

Socotra dragon's blood is the produce of *Dracaena cinnabari*, and is produced in Socotra, South Eastern Asia and the West Indies.

Dragon's blood is imported in the form of cylindrical rolls about 1 in thick and 10 to 12 in long, wrapped in palm leaves, in small balls, lumps. The constituents of dragon's blood are resin acids, alcohols, and esters, of very complex constitution.

The red resin was used as varnish, medicine, incense, and dye in ancient times. The dragon's blood known to the ancient Romans was mostly collected from *D. cinnabari*, and is mentioned in the 1st century Periplus (30: 10. 17) as one of the products of Socotra. Socotra had been an important trading centre since at least the time of the Ptolemies. Dragon's blood of both *Daemonorops draco* and *Dracaena cinnabari* were used as a source of varnish for 18th century Italian violinmakers.

The resin is quite dark, red in color, and opaque is used principally as a stain or red spirit varnish. When powdered it yields a crimson-colored powder. It is entirely soluble in alcohol, except for the presence of a small amount of mechanical impurities, such as vegetable fiber or sand.

According to Dietrich, palm dragon's blood, which is the finest variety, alone answers to the "draco-alban" test, which thus discriminates between Sumatra and Socotra dragon's blood. The test is as follows: ten grams of powdered dragon's blood are extracted with ether, and the ethereal extract poured into absolute alcohol. If the resin is Sumatra dragon's blood, a white resinous precipitate is formed, which is not the case with Socotra resin.

The saponification value of dragon's blood varies from 135 to 145. Colophony can be detected by the Storch-Morawski reaction.

37000 Dragon's Blood, Powder (Natural Red 31)

From *Daemonorops draco* and other rattan palms, produced in Sumatra

37011 Dragon's Blood, plates, from Socotra (Natural Red 31)

This resin is of the *Dracaena cinnabari* tree and other rattan palms.

37012 Dragon's Blood, pressed, from Socotra (Natural Red 31)

This resin is of the *Dracaena cinnabari* tree and other rattan palms.

37014 Dragon's Blood IYDAHA, flat cake, from Socotra (Natural Red 31)

This resin is a processed bark-resin of the *Dracaena cinnabari* tree and other rattan palms. It is cooked and moulded into flat cakes of about one kilo. The cakes contain a lot of impurities and can develop mould - e.g. if packed in plastic bags. The dye is extracted from the cake by dissolving in ethyl alcohol. This Dragon's Blood is locally called "Iydaha".

1 cake, approx. 800 - 1000 g, packed in a cotton bag.

37016 Dragon's Blood EMZOLO, pieces, from Socotra (Natural Red 31)

Pure lumps of resin that exudes naturally from the base of the leaf rosettes of the *Dracaena Cinnabari* tree in the great heat of the summer. Deep red, locally called "Emzolo" or "Edah Amsello", small pieces. The color of the Dragon's blood solution is less brown and very similar to the Madder lake.