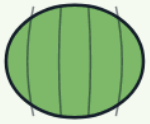
That is why

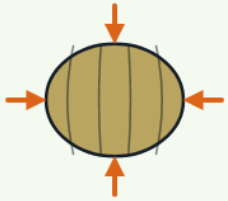
Why does sandbox tree fruit explode?

As the fruit dries, its layers pull against each other until the shell snaps and flings the seeds.

A How the fruit loads



1 Fresh
Green, moist and flexible.



2 Drying in the sun
Inner layers shrink faster than the woody shell, so tension builds inside.



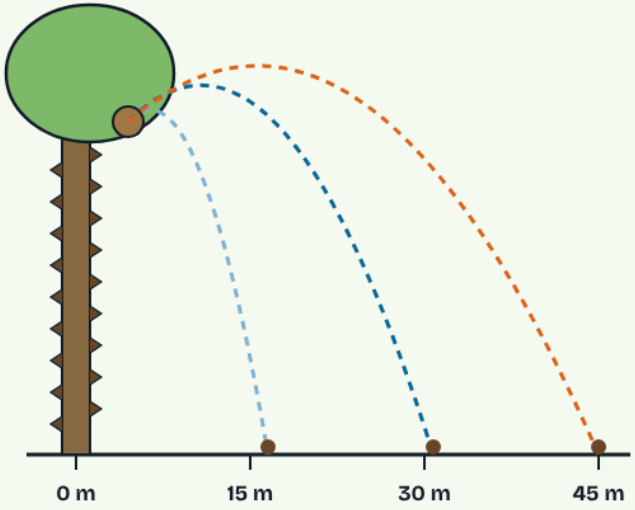
3 Snap
The shell splits along its seams in a split second.

B The launch

Seeds the size of a coin, faster than a car on a highway

Average launch: about 43 m/s (155 km/h)

Fastest measured: about 70 m/s (250 km/h)



Seeds land up to about 45 m from the tree

C Why so violent?

1 Escape the shade
Seeds that drop under the parent compete with it for light. Thrown far, they land in open patches.

2 No trigger, no chemicals
Only drying and time. It is stored mechanical tension, like an over-tightened jar lid.

3 Built to stay shut
A spiky trunk and toxic sap keep animals off while the fruit slowly loads its spring.

Hura crepitans, tropical Americas.
Also called the dynamite tree.

Store tension slowly, release it all at once.

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Diagram: https://thatiswhy.com/diagrams/why-sandbox-tree-explodes/ · Full guide: https://thatiswhy.com/why-sandbox-tree-turns-seed-dispersal-into-an-explosion/