PLANT FACT SHEET

Banksia dentata L.f

GENUS *Banksia* **FAMILY** Proteaceae

COMMON NAMES Bottle brush, Northern Banksia, Swamp Banksia, Tropical Banksia

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: flower - nectar

The flowers at the yellow stage are broken off and the sweet sap which drips out is collected and eaten. CAUTION Cribb in Wild Foods in Australia suggests headaches and nausea can result from sucking too much bottle brush sap.

DESCRIPTION

A small tree. In the forest it is often a straggling miss-shapen tree. It grows to 8 m tall and spreads to 4 m wide. The stem is erect. The bark is dark grey and rough. It has a widely branching crown. The leaves are coarsely toothed along the edge, blue green on top and whitish underneath. They are wedge shaped and 25 cm long by 3-6 cm wide. The flowers are yellow when young then turn brown, dry and hard. Flower spikes can be 15-20 cm long. The flowers are in cylindrical spikes. Seeds are black and winged. These are in large woody fruiting cones. The seed are expelled from the cone.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It occurs in dry coastal areas. It is suited to warm areas in sandy acid soil. It often grows near the edges of swamps. It is drought and frost resistant. It can grow on poor soils. It suits hardiness zones 11-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Seeds grow easily. Young seedlings transplant easily. Under good conditions young plants grow rapidly.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Flowers are produced irregularly throughout the year but with a main season in mid June.

NOTES

There are about 75 Banksia species. They are mostly in Australia.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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