PLANT FACT SHEET

Use with caution

This plant can be harmful if it is eaten raw, in large amounts or without the right preparation. Read the whole fact sheet before use.

Ilex vomitoria Sol. ex Aiton

GENUS *Ilex* **FAMILY** Aquifoliaceae

COMMON NAMES Black Drink Plant, Carolina tea, Cassena, Cassine, Christmas tree bush, Yaupon

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Leaves - tea

The leaves are toasted then boiled to make tea. It contains caffeine.
The leaves are also used for a syrup used in soft drinks. They are also used to flavour ice cream.
Caution: The berries can cause vomiting. It should probably not be eaten in large amounts.

DESCRIPTION

A holly. It is a woody evergreen shrub. It grows 2-3 m high. The bark is grey. The leaves are shiny dark green above and paler underneath. They are 2-3 cm long by 6-12 mm wide. The leaves have a blunt tip and a rounded base. There are finely wavy teeth along the edge. The flowers are 5 mm wide. Male and female flowers are on separate plants. The fruit are orange yellow berries.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It suits hardiness zones 6-10. Arboretum Tasmania.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed or cuttings.

NOTES

There are about 400 Ilex species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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