PLANT FACT SHEET

Opuntia maxima Mill.

GENUS *Opuntia* **FAMILY** Cactaceae

COMMON NAMES Prickly pear

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Stems, Flower - nectar

The fruit are peeled and eaten raw.
The flowers are sucked.
The flat stems (cladodes) are used in stews.

DESCRIPTION

A cactus. It is a shrubby plant. The stem segments are oblong and dark green. They are 30-40 cm long. The leaves have sharp points and are red. There are 1-4 spines. They are less than 3 cm long. The flowers are yellow. The fruit are juicy. When ripe they are light greenish-yellow.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant.

NOTES

There are about 180 Opuntia species. Probably all are edible. They grow in arid regions.

REFERENCES

Anderson, E.F., 2001, The Cactus Family, Timber Press. p 486 (As Opuntia amyclea)

Gonzalez, J. A., et al, 2011, The consumption of wild and semi-domesticated edible plants in the Arribes del Duero (Salamanca-Zamora, Spain): an analysis of traditional knowledge. Genetic. Resour Crop Evolution 58:991-1006

Hermandez Bermejo, J.E., and Leon, J. (Eds.), 1994, Neglected Crops. 1492 from a different perspective. FAO Plant Production and Protection Series No 26. FAO, Rome. p14 (As Opuntia amyclea)

Kermath, B. M., et al, 2014, Food Plants in the Americas: A survey of the domesticated, cultivated and wild plants used for Human food in North, Central and South America and the Caribbean. On line draft. p 583 (As Opuntia amyclea)

Kiple, K.F. & Ornelas, K.C., (eds), 2000, The Cambridge World History of Food. CUP p 1839 (As Opuntia amyclea)

Rodriguez-Felix, A. & Cantwell, M., 1988, Developmental changes in composition and quality of prickly pear cactus cladodes (nopalitos). Plant Foods for Human Nutrition 38:83-93 (As Opuntia amyclea)

Tardio, J., et al, Ethnobotanical review of wild edible plants in Spain. Botanical J. Linnean Soc. 152 (2006), 27-71

World Checklist of Useful Plant Species 2020. Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

PROVIDED BY **Food Plants International**

French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

LICENCE CC BY-NC-SA 3.0

ONLINE FACT SHEET https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/0df42b44-3186-4fb3-b1ec-0170b981626c