PLANT FACT SHEET

Dioscorea transversa R. Br.

GENUS *Dioscorea* **FAMILY** Dioscoreaceae

COMMON NAMES Long yam, Pencil yam, Rainforest long yam

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Tubers, Root

The yam tuber is cooked and eaten. They need to be leached in running water for several hours before cooking. The aerial bulbils along the vine are also used.

DESCRIPTION

A yam. A twining climbing plant. It has a large tuber underground from which it re-grows each year. The tuber can be 50 cm long and 5 cm wide. It has scattered hairs. The leaves are alternate and heart-shaped. There are small poorly developed lobes at the base of the leaf. The leaves are 5-10 cm long by 3-6 cm wide. The leaves have prominent veins. The male flowers occur in clusters in the axils of leaves and the female flowers are single in the clusters of leaves. The flowers are pale green and have a strong scent. The fruit is a 3 winged capsule. It is 2.5 cm wide and 1.5 cm long. They are light brown. The seeds are 3 and round. They are 1.5 cm across. It can have aerial bulbils.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows naturally in monsoonal vine forests. It needs rich, moist soils and a protected, sunny position. It is damaged by drought or frost. It grows from sea level to 1,000 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed or by dividing the yam.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It grows vigorously in the wet season.

NOTES

There are about 650 species of Dioscorea.

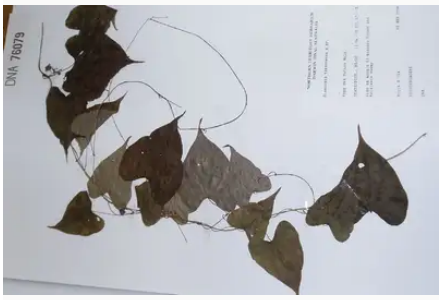
PICTURES



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