PLANT FACT SHEET

Hamelia patens Jacq.

GENUS *Hamelia* **FAMILY** Rubiaceae

COMMON NAMES Butterfly bush, Fire bush

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, flower - nectar

The fruit are edible. They are acidic.
They are also fermented to make an alcoholic drink. Caution: Alcohol is a cause of cancer.

DESCRIPTION

An erect shrub or small tree. It grows 7 m tall. It spreads 2-5 m wide. The leaves are simple and dull green. They are 5-10 cm long and broadly oval. They are softly hairy. The flowers are orange-scarlet. They are 2 cm across. They are downy and tube shaped. The fruit are berries and are 8 mm across. They are fleshy and red to purple.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. They prefer a rich, moist but well-drained soil. It can tolerate some salt spray. In Argentina it grows from sea level to 1,500 m above sea level. It suits hardiness zones 10-12. In XTBG Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed or by half ripened cuttings under glass. They can also be grown using air layering.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is fast growing.

NOTES

There are about 16 (40) Hamelia species. They grow in tropical and subtropical America. It is used in medicine.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

REFERENCES

Arora, R. K., 2014, Diversity in Underutilized Plant Species - An Asia-Pacific Perspective. Bioversity International. p 74

Barwick, M., 2004, Tropical and Subtropical Trees. A Worldwide Encyclopedic Guide. Thames and Hudson p 214

Brack, P., et al, 2020, Frutas nativas do Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil: riqueza e potencial alimentício.
Native fruits of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil: richness and potential as food. Rodriguésia 71: e03102018

Condit, R., et al, 2011, Trees of Panama and Costa Rica. Princeton Field Guides. p 396

Engel, D.H., & Phummai, S., 2000, A Field Guide to Tropical Plants of Asia. Timber Press. p 127

Enum. syst. pl. 16. 1760 (Select. stirp. amer. hist. 72, t. 50. 1763)

Etherington, K., & Imwold, D., (Eds), 2001, Botanica's Trees & Shrubs. The illustrated A-Z of over 8500 trees and shrubs. Random House, Australia. p 370

Flora of Pakistan. www.eFloras.org

Grandtner, M. M., 2008, World Dictionary of Trees. Wood and Forest Science Department. Laval University, Quebec, Qc Canada. (Internet database http://www.wdt.qc.ca)

Grandtner, M. M. & Chevrette, J., 2013, Dictionary of Trees, Volume 2: South America: Nomenclature, Taxonomy and Ecology. Academic Press p 288

Hibbert, M., 2002, The Aussie Plant Finder 2002, Florilegium. p 119

Hellmuth, N. M., 2013, Maya Ethnobotany. Complete Inventory of plants. Associacion FLAAR Mesoamerica. Thirteenth edition. p

http://www.ntbg.org/plants/plant details.php

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 404

Kew Plants of the World On line

Little, E. L., et al, 1974, Trees of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. USDA Handbook 449. Forestry Service. p 946

Llamas, K.A., 2003, Tropical Flowering Plants. Timber Press. p 327

Miguel, E., et al, 1989, A checklist of the cultivated plants of Cuba. Kulturpflanze 37. 1989, 211-357

Morton, J., 1961, Plants for survival in South Florida. Florida State Horticultural Society. p 328

Piedra-Malagón, E. M., et al, 2022, Edible native plants of the Gulf of Mexico Province. Biodiversity Data Journal 10: e80565 p 29

Plants of Haiti Smithsonian Institute http://botany.si.edu/antilles/West Indies

Roa, J. A. G. & Boada, D. S. G., 2018, Fundación para el Fortalecimiento de la Fruticultura y Plantas Alimenticias no Convencionales en Colombia.

Segura, S., et al, 2018, The edible fruit species in Mexico. Genet Resour Crop Evol (2018) 65:1767–1793

Standley, P. C. & Record, S. J., 1936, The Forests and Flora of British Honduras. (Belize). p 381

Staples, G.W. and Herbst, D.R., 2005, A tropical Garden Flora. Bishop Museum Press, Honolulu, Hawaii. p 490

Steggerda, M., Some Ethnological Data Concerning One Hundred Yucatan Plants. Smithsonian Institution Anthropological Papers, No. 29

Sukarya, D. G., (Ed.) 2013, 3,500 Plant Species of the Botanic Gardens of Indonesia. LIPI p 639

Torre, de la, L., et al, 2008, Enciclopedia de las Plantas Útiles del Ecuador. Herbario QCA. Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador. p 547

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

www.colecionandofrutas.org

Zuchowski W., 2007, Tropical Plants of Costa Rica. A Zona Tropical Publication, Comstock Publishing. p 101

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/11a699c2-3562-418f-9bc9-9d6dc30f8386