PLANT FACT SHEET

Monanthotaxis obovata (Benth.) P. K. Hoekstra

GENUS *Monanthotaxis* **FAMILY** Annonaceae

COMMON NAMES Northern dwaba-berry, Monkey's fingers

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit

The ripe fruit are eaten. They have a tart taste. They can be stewed. They are also used for jams and jellies. They are also fermented into wine.
The fruit can be dried and then later soaked in water before eating.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub. It tends to scramble. It can be a small tree up to 7 m high. It has spreading or drooping branches. The bark is dark grey. The leaves are simple and alternate. They are oval and 4.5-7.4 cm long by 2.5-7.5 cm wide. The tip is usually rounded and the base can be rounded or notched. They are papery and bluish-green above and paler underneath. There are usually hairs underneath. They are on short leaf stalks. The flowers usually occur singly above the leaf axil. There are leaf like bracts below the flower. Flowers contain both sexes. The petals are in two layers and the inner ones curl over the centre. They are cream. The fruit are 3-9 sausage like fruit in a string. The fruit hangs downwards. It is made up of 3-9 segments bunched together. They are 5 cm long and constricted between the seeds. These contain 1-3 seeds which are crimson when ripe. The seeds are edible. They are bright red. The fruit are edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in the lowlands. It grows in open woodland and grassland on termite mounds and along streams. It grows in Miombo woodland. It grows in areas with an annual rainfall between 500-1,270 m above sea level. It can grow in arid places. In Tanzania it grows between 400-1,200 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

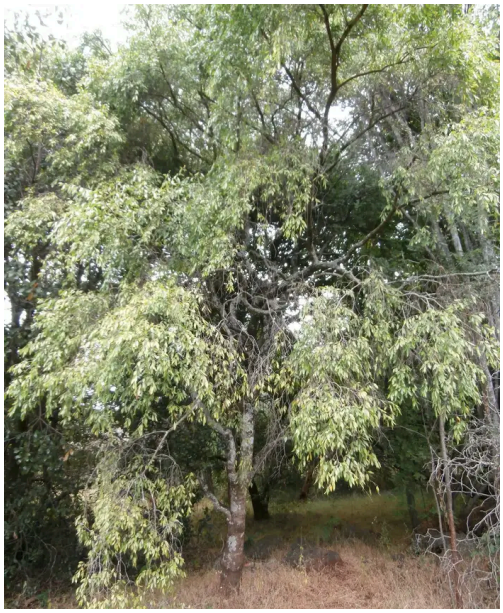
Cultivation

The plants can be grown from fresh seed. The hard seed coat needs to be cracked before planting.

Harvesting and Seed Production

In Tanzania fruit are collected from April to June.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

REFERENCES

Facciola, S., 1998, Cornucopia 2: a Source Book of Edible Plants. Kampong Publications, p 14 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

FAO. 1983, Food and fruit-bearing forest species 1: Examples from Eastern Africa. FAO Food and Forestry Paper 44/1 p 51 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Fowler, D. G., 2007, Zambian Plants: Their Vernacular Names and Uses. Kew. p 8 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Fox, F. W. & Young, M. E. N., 1982, Food from the Veld. Delta Books. p 84 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Grivetti, L. E., 1980, Agricultural development: present and potential role of edible wild plants. Part 2: Sub-Saharan Africa, Report to the Department of State Agency for International Development. p 66, 72 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Jardin, C., 1970, List of Foods Used In Africa, FAO Nutrition Information Document Series No 2.p 155 (As Popowia obovata)

Makonda, F. B. S., & Ruffo, C. K., 2011, Species List. NAFORMA, Tanzania (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Malaisse, F., 1997, Se nourrir en floret claire africaine. Approche ecologique et nutritionnelle. CTA., p 63 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Mannheimer, C. A. & Curtis. B.A. (eds), 2009, Le Roux and Muller's Field Guide to the Trees and Shrubs of Namibia. Windhoek: Macmillan Education Namibia. p 48 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Mgalula, M. E., 2024, An ethnobotanical study of wild edible fruits in miombo woodlands of Tabora region in Western Tanzania. Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine. 20:23 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Mpasiwakomu, R. A., 2017, The Diversity and Utilization of Wild Edible and Medicinal Plant Species found in Uvinza Miombo Woodlands, Tanzania. M. Sc. thesis University of Tanzania. (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Njana, M. A., et al, 2013, Are miombo woodlands vital to livelihoods of rural households? Evidence from Urumwa and surrounding communities, Tabora, Tanzania. Forests, Trees and Livelihoods, 22:2, 124-140 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Palgrave, K.C., 1996, Trees of Southern Africa. Struik Publishers. p 167 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Palmer, E and Pitman, N., 1972, Trees of Southern Africa. Vol. 1. A.A. Balkema, Cape Town p 578 (As Popowia obovata)

Peters, C. R., O'Brien, E. M., and Drummond, R.B., 1992, Edible Wild plants of Sub-saharan Africa. Kew. p 54 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Pickering, H., & Roe, E., 2009, Wild Flowers of the Victoria Falls Area. Helen Pickering, London. p 25 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Plowes, N. J. & Taylor, F. W., 1997, The Processing of Indigenous Fruits and other Wildfoods of Southern Africa. in Smartt, L. & Haq. (Eds) Domestication, Production and Utilization of New Crops. ICUC p 191 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Roodt, V., 1998, Trees & Shrubs of the Okavango Delta. Medicinal Uses and Nutritional value. The Shell Field Guide Series: Part 1. Shell Botswana. p 193 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (1999). Survey of Economic Plants for Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (SEPASAL) database. Published on the Internet; http://www.rbgkew.org.uk/ceb/sepasal/internet [Accessed 28th March 2011] (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Ruiters-Welcome, A. K., 2019, Food plants of southern Africa. Ph.D. thesis. Univ. of Johannesburg p 18 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Ruffo, C. K., Birnie, A. & Tengnas, B., 2002, Edible Wild Plants of Tanzania. RELMA p 338 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Scudder, 1971, (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Tredgold, M.H., 1986, Food Plants of Zimbabwe. Mambo Press. p 69 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Van Wyck, B., & Van Wyck, P, 1997, Field Guide to Trees of Southern Africa. Struik. p 158 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Welcome, A. K. & Van Wyk, B.-E., 2019, An inventory and analysis of the food plants of southern Africa. South African Journal of Botany 122 (2019) 136–179 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

Williamson, J., 2005, Useful Plants of Malawi. 3rd. Edition. Mdadzi Book Trust. p 120 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

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

www.zimbabweflora.co.zw 2011 (As Friesodielsia obovata)

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/13b7188f-8b1c-43cd-94e0-b8dd35159127