PLANT FACT SHEET

Xylopia aethiopica (Dunal) A. Rich.

GENUS *Xylopia* **FAMILY** Annonaceae

COMMON NAMES Guinea Pepper, Large red-fingers

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Spice, Fruit, Shoots

The fruit and seeds are used for an aromatic peppery spice. It is used to flavour coffee, wine and other food dishes.
They are cooked in soup for flavouring and as a spice.
The shoots are cooked as a vegetable.

DESCRIPTION

A tall evergreen tree. It grows to 30 m tall. It has many branches and is aromatic. The bark is grey-brown. It peels easily. The leaves are oblong and 8-16.5 cm long by 2.8-6.5 cm wide. They are leathery and bluish-green. They have fine hairs underneath. The base tapers and runs into the leaf stalk. The flowers are single and in twisted branched spikes. These are 5.5 cm long by 0,4 cm wide. They are creamy-green in colour. The fruit has 7-24 carpels each one like a pod. They are 6 cm long and form dense clusters. They are green to red in colour and red inside. They are succulent and split when ripe. The seeds are black and 10 mm long. They have a yellow papery seed layer.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It occurs in evergreen forest at low altitude. It grows in both lowland rainforest and on the edges of forests in the savannah zones. It can grow on the edges of mangroves and in palm groves. It can grow in seasonally flooded forests. It suits humid locations.

PRODUCTION

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants flower in January, April and September and fruit in April, June and July.

NOTES

There are 170 Xylopia species. They are a widespread tropical genus.

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