PLANT FACT SHEET

Rhus coriaria L.

GENUS *Rhus* **FAMILY** Anacardiaceae

COMMON NAMES Sumach, Elm-leaved sumach

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Herb, Spice, Leaves, Flowers, Seeds, Oil

The fruit are used to give a red colour to dishes. They are slightly sour.
The fruit are dried and used whole or ground in sauces.
The fruit are soaked in milk to make a drink.
Immature fruit are used as a caper substitute.
The crushed fruit along with Origanum syriacum are used in a common spice mixture in the Middle East.
CAUTION: Many plants in the Rhus genus are poisonous.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub or small tree. It grows 2-3 m tall. The leaves are dark green and somewhat like fronds. The tree loses its leaves during the year. The fruit are red berries. The flowers are in dense bunches or small white flowers. The fruit are tightly bunched in cone shaped clusters. These are 8-10 cm long and 2 cm across at the widest point near the base. Each berry is a little larger than a pepper corn. It is green and covered with a hairy layer. The berries ripen to a pinkish red.

HABITAT

It is a Mediterranean climate plant. It grows on mountainsides and open woodland. It is especially on limestone soils.

PRODUCTION

Harvesting and Seed Production

The berries are harvested and then dried in the sun for 2-3 days. They are then crushed to a powder.

NOTES

There are about 200 Rhus species.

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