PLANT FACT SHEET

Lannea schweinfurthii (Engl.) Engl.

GENUS *Lannea* **FAMILY** Anacardiaceae

COMMON NAMES False marula

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Seeds, Nuts, Bark - tea

The fruit are eaten raw. The skin is removed.
The seeds are crushed then boiled with salt and eaten as a relish.
The bark is made into a nourishing tea like drink.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub or small deciduous tree. It can grow up to 12 m tall. The trunk can be 30 cm across. Often it is smaller and spreading and drooping. It usually grows 3-5 m tall. The branches are irregular and grey. The crown is rounded and the tips of the small branches droop. The bark is dark grey and fairly smooth but flakes off when older. The bark flakes off in rectangular pieces showing creamy-orange colour below. The leaves are large, shiny and compound. They are produced on long stalks on small branches. The leaves consist of 1-4 pairs of opposite leaflets and a leaflet at the end. They are oval to round and bluntly pointed. The side leaflets are somewhat lopsided. The leaflets are 4-6 cm long by 1.3-4 cm wide. They turn bright yellow in autumn. The leaf stalk is grooved. The flowers are small and cream in colour. They hang in spikes up to 20 cm long. They have a strong scent. Trees are separately male and female.
The fruit are oval and slightly flattened. They are 0.8-2.5 cm long. They have 3 small knobs at the top. The fruit are green but turn purple. The skin easily comes off revealing orange slimy flesh. They are edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in the lowlands. It is common in wooded grassland in Africa. In Uganda it grows between 700 and 1,600 m altitude. It may be extinct in Swaziland. It is frost sensitive. It often grows on flat sandy, or gravely soil. It can grow in arid places.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seeds. They can also be grown from root suckers. Seeds germinate well and grow within 45 days. Seeds only remain viable for a few weeks so should be sown fresh. Plants can be pruned back to regrow.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It grows quickly.

NOTES

The roots are used for medicine.

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