PLANT FACT SHEET

Schotia afra (L.) Thunb.

GENUS *Schotia* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES African schotia, Karoo boer-bean

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Pods, Seeds

The seeds are eaten raw or cooked. The outer bitter skin is removed. Sometimes the seed are ground into flour.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub or much branched small tree. It grows up to 6 m tall. It has several stout, thick, twisted stems. The leaves are usually dark green. The smooth grey twigs can be seen among the leaves. The leaves divide once. There is a pair of leaflets at the end and the leaflets tend to fold up along the midrib. The midrib is sometimes winged. There are 6-8 pairs of leaflets. They vary from 6-25 mm long. The flowers are red. They occur in bunches on short woody side twigs. The flowers have 5 petals. The pods are 5-13 cm long and 4 cm wide. They are hard and woody. There are several round brown seeds. They are edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in coastal districts in South Africa. It grows in dry stony soils. It grows between sea level and 1,250 m above sea level. It is tolerant to drought and frost. It can grow in arid places. Brisbane Botanical Gardens. Hobart Botanical Gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Trees can be grown from seed. The seeds germinate irregularly. Seedlings transplant easily.

NOTES

There are 4-5 Schotia species. They are in southern Africa. Also as Caesalpinaceae.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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