PLANT FACT SHEET

Antidesma acidum Retz.

GENUS *Antidesma* **FAMILY** Phyllanthaceae

COMMON NAMES China laurel, Sour currant shrub

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Fruit, Stem

The ripe fruit are eaten fresh or pickled. They are acidic.
The young leaves are used in curries to give them a sour taste. They are a substitute for tamarind.
The leaves can be preserved for later use. They are used for pickles.
The fresh harvested leaves can only be stored for 3-4 days.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub 2-3 m tall. It can be a tree 13 m high. The branches are round with fine hairs but become smooth and grey. The leaves are alternate. They are broadly oval and 3.5-9 cm long by 2-6 cm wide. The leaf stalk is hairy and 2-5 mm long. The flower arrangement is like a spike. It can be at the end of branches or in the axils of upper leaves. It is hairy and 3-10 cm long. Male and female flowers are on separate plants. Flowers are about 1.5 mm wide. The fruit is fleshy with a stone inside. It is flattened and hairy. It is 4 mm long. It turns blue when ripe. The stone has a netlike surface. It is 3.5 mm across.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in secondary forest. In Nepal it grows from 150-1300 m altitude. In Yunnan in China it grows between 200-1500 m above sea level. It grows in secondary forest. In Sichuan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed.

Harvesting and Seed Production

In NE Thailand fruit are available March to September.

NOTES

There are about 100-170 Antidesma species. These were previously in the Euphorbiaceae.

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