PLANT FACT SHEET

Triplochiton scleroxylon K. Schum.

GENUS *Triplochiton* **FAMILY** Malvaceae

COMMON NAMES African whitewood

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves

The leaves are cooked as a vegetable. It is also used in a sauce.

DESCRIPTION

A large tree. It grows 35-65 m tall. The trunk is 7 m around. It has large buttresses. It loses its leaves during the year. The bark is grey and fairly smooth. The leaves are 10-20 cm long. The leaves have lobes arranged like fingers on a hand. There are 5-7 lobes. The leaf stalk is 3.5-10 cm long. The flowers are in short panicles. The petals are white but reddish-purple at the base. They are densely hairy. The flowers are saucer shaped. The fruit have wings. The fruit are 6 cm long with 1-5 wings.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows in the lowland rainforests. It suits humid locations. It is common in drier disturbed forest. It grows in rich soils with high pH.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are usually grown by seeds. Seeds germinate in 1-2 weeks. Many seed do not germinate. Seeds can be stored for several years. Plants can be grown from cuttings under mist. Air layering is possible. It can be grown from stumps.

NOTES

It has also been put in the families Sterculiaceae and Helicteraceae. It is an important timber species.

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