PLANT FACT SHEET

Monodora myristica (Gaertn.) Dunal

GENUS *Monodora* **FAMILY** Annonaceae

COMMON NAMES Calabash nutmeg, African nutmeg

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: seeds, Spice, Nuts, Bark - tea

The seeds are roasted and eaten and have a nutmeg flavour.
The seeds are roasted and used for flavouring. They are used to flavour soups and other foods.
The bark is cooked to make a tea drink.

DESCRIPTION

A tree. It grows 35 m tall. The trunk is clear and can be 2 m around. The branches are horizontal. The bark is thin and smooth. The leaves droop. They are thick and alternate. The leaves are larger than M. tenuifolia. The leaf stalk is thick and 1 cm long. The leaf blade is oblong and 45 cm long by 20 cm wide. There are 20 pairs of side veins. The flowers occur singly at the base of new shoots. The flower stalk is 20 cm long. It has a leaf like bract about 1/3 from the top. The flowers are large and hang down. The flowers are red and yellow and hang from the stalks. They have a smell. The petals can be 10 cm long and have red, yellow or green spots. The fruit are the size of a softball. It can be 20 cm across. It hangs on a long stalk. It has several seeds embedded in whitish, sweet smelling pulp. The seeds are oblong and 1.5 cm long. They are pale brown. The seeds are edible. Flowers are pollinated by insects.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows naturally in West Africa. It grows in evergreen and deciduous forests. Trees grow well and flower in Indonesia but do not sett fruit. (The female flowers are ready to be pollinated before male flowers of the same plant are ready to produce pollen. Additional varieties are needed.) In Brisbane Botanical Gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from seeds, root cuttings, suckers or layers. Plants can be budded. Plants can be grown from stem cuttings. The seeds are extracted from ripe, dried fruit. They are soaked in water for 12 hours.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It grows at a moderate rate. In Liberia the nuts are produced from January to April. In Central African Republic plants flower in April.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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