PLANT FACT SHEET

Chrysolepis chrysophylla (Douglas. ex Hook.) Hjelmq.

GENUS *Chrysolepis* **FAMILY** Fagaceae

COMMON NAMES Golden chinkapin, Golden chestnut

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Nuts

The kernel or nut is roasted and eaten.

DESCRIPTION

An evergreen tree. It grows 9-30 m high. The trunk can be 1 m across. The tree is broadly cone shape. The bark is grey and furrowed. The leaves are oblong to sword shaped and 10 cm long by 2.5 cm wide. They are rigid and leathery. They do not have teeth. They are glossy dark green above and hairy underneath. The male and female flowers are separate but usually on the same spike. They are creamy white and in catkins about 4 cm long. They have a scent. The fruit are a spiny husk about 4 cm across. These contain 1-3 brown nuts. They are edible.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. They are native to the western United States. They grow in woods and thickets in coastal mountains. It can grow in poor soil conditions. It suits hardiness zones 6-9.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from fresh seed. They can be grown from cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants grow quickly in their early stages. Trees take 3-6 years to start fruiting. Trees can live for 400 years. Trees often produce larger crops every second or more years. Nuts are best picked when ripe but just before the husk has fully opened. Not all nuts ripen at the same time.

NOTES

There are 2 (or 1) Chrysolepis species. (There are also said to be 100 Chrysolepis species, but this includes Castanopsis species.)

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