PLANT FACT SHEET

Ampelocissus africana (Lour.) Merr.

GENUS *Ampelocissus* **FAMILY** Vitaceae

COMMON NAMES Simple-leaved wild grape

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Root - flavouring, Leaves

The root is used in sauces and for flavouring.
The ripe fruit are eaten as a dessert fruit. It is also eaten raw as a snack.
The young leaves are cooked and used as a sauce or side dish.

DESCRIPTION

A large climbing herb. It grows 2-8 m high. It has soft stems. These arise from a large fairly soft underground rootstock. The young branches are densely hairy. It has tendrils. The leaves are simple. The leaf blade is 20 cm across. It is broadly oval. There are teeth along the edge. The base is heart shaped. The flowers are in clusters. They are small and greenish-yellow. The fruit is 1 cm across. The fruit are blackish berries. The fruit have large seeds. The seeds are shiny and brown. They are 7 mm long by 4 mm wide.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in savanna in rocky places. It does not grow in humid soils. It grows in woodland and at the edges of forests. It is most common in the lowlands. In Zimbabwe it grows in areas with a rainfall between 500-650 mm per year. It can grow in arid places. It grows in hot, dry climates.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds or by cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The vines emerge, grow, flower and fruit within 3 months. In Tanzania fruit are collected between April and August. The stems are cut to harvest the leaves.

NOTES

There are about 95 Ampelocissus species.

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