PLANT FACT SHEET

Grewia occidentalis L.

GENUS *Grewia* **FAMILY** Malvaceae

COMMON NAMES Bow wood, Cross-berry, Four Corners

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves

The ripe fruit are eaten raw. The juice is used fresh or fermented.
They are also cooked in milk to make a drink.
The leaves are cooked as a vegetable.

DESCRIPTION

A scrambling shrub. It grows up to 6 m tall. The stems are flexible. They become four angled with age. The leaves are 2-8 cm long by 1.3-4 cm wide. The leaves are sword shaped. They have irregular blunt teeth along the edge. The flowers are pink to red. They are 2.5 cm across. Flowers occur as 1-3 together on slender stalks opposite the leaf. The fruit have 4 lobes. They are 2.5 cm across. The fruit is purple when ripe. Each lobe contains one seed. The fruit is edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It is common in forest and scrub. It grows in areas with modest rainfall. It grows from sea level to 1500 m altitude in South Africa. In Zimbabwe it grows above 1,400 m above sea level. Plants can grow in the sun or partial shade. It needs fertile, well-drained soil. It can tolerate frost. It suits hardiness zones 9-11. In Brisbane Botanical Gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from seed. Seeds germinate easily and plants transplant easily. Plants can also be grown from cuttings or layering.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is fast growing in the early stage. A fruit weighs about 1 g.

NOTES

There are about 200 Grewia species. They are mostly tropical. The fruit of most may be edible. These were in the Sparrmanniaceae and the Tiliaceae.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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