PLANT FACT SHEET

Vachellia gerrardii (Benth.) P.J.H. Hunter

GENUS *Vachellia* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Red thorn, Grey-haired acacia

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Bark, Gum, Vegetable

The bark is used in soup.

DESCRIPTION

A small tree. It grows up to 15 m tall. It has a flattened crown. The bark is rough and dark grey. It has very short thorns. They are in pairs. The leaves are divided twice. There are 5-12 pairs of larger leaflets and 12-18 pairs of small leaflets. The flowers are in round heads and are cream coloured. The fruit are brown pods. The pods are 22 cm long and slightly curved. The pods are about 2 cm across. They occur in clusters. There are 3 recognised varieties.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows at 1,300-2,000 m altitude in Uganda. It can grow in arid and semi-arid areas.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It is grown from seeds. The seeds can be sown direct or in nurseries and transplanted. The seeds need to be treated by putting them in hot water then allowing it to cool and the seeds to soak for 24 hours before sowing.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It grows quickly in there is sufficient groundwater.

NOTES

There are about 1,350 Acacia species. Over 1,000 occur in Australia. The bark of this one is used in medicine. Because of the thorns, it should not be planted near homesteads. Also as Mimosaceae.

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