PLANT FACT SHEET

# *Mussaenda arcuata* Lam. ex Poir.

**GENUS** *Mussaenda* **FAMILY** Rubiaceae

**COMMON NAMES** Wild handkerchief bush, Forest star, Savanna gooseberry

## EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

**Edible parts:** Fruit, Leaves, Vegetable

The fruit can be eaten fresh. They can be used for jam.
The leaves are sometimes eaten as a spinach.

## DESCRIPTION

A shrub. It grows 2-3 m high. It can be a creeper 8-10 m long. The stems can be 12 cm across. The leaves are broadly oval. They are leathery and shiny. The flowers are yellow and tube shaped. They have a scent. The sepals are red and pointed and slightly downy. The fruit are almost round. They are edible.

## HABITAT

A tropical plant. It is often in forests near streams. In Zimbabwe it grows between 350-1,800 m above sea level. In Kenya it grows from 1,050-1,650 m above sea level. It suits hardiness zones 10-12.

## PRODUCTION

### Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed or cuttings.

### Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants grown from seed flower after 2 years.

## NOTES

There are about 190 Mussaenda species. They grow in tropical Africa and Asia.

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