PLANT FACT SHEET

Balanites pedicellaris Mildbr. & Schltr.

GENUS *Balanites* **FAMILY** Zygophyllaceae

COMMON NAMES Torchwood minor, Small torchwood

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Seeds

The fruit are reported to be eaten after very long boiling. They are boiled for 8-9 hours with the water being changed about 10 times.
The inner part of the seeds are cooked and eaten.
Caution: Eating fresh fruit causes dizziness and vomiting.

DESCRIPTION

A very dense shrub. It can grow to 9 m high. It has thin drooping branches. These have long un-forked spines. The bark is light grey and often spiny. The leaves are made up of 2 leaflets without stalks. They leaves are grey-green. The leaflets are oval and 4 cm long with rounded tips. They narrow towards the base. The leaves dry with obvious wrinkles. The small branches end with spines and often leaves grow on these. The buds are small and triangular. They occur in bunches in the axils of leaves. The flowers are greenish-yellow and long fairly stout stalks. The fruit are 2.5 cm long. They are brilliant orange-red when ripe. They are edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in tropical and warm places. It can grow in dry salty soils. It grows from sea level to 1,700 m altitude. It can grow in arid places.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seeds. It is best to plant the seeds directly in the field.

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