PLANT FACT SHEET

Limonia acidissima L.

GENUS *Limonia* **FAMILY** Rutaceae

COMMON NAMES Wood apple

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves

The ripe fruit pulp is eaten raw and used for jam. The fruit can be eaten raw but is more often used to make drinks, jellies or chutneys. The fruit is best mixed with sugar.
The young leaves can be eaten raw.

DESCRIPTION

A small deciduous tree. It grows 4-15 m tall. It has many slender branches. The branches have straight spines 4 cm long. It has thorns. The needle like spines are 3-8 cm long. The leaves are up to 12 cm long. The leaves are made up of leaflets with a leaflet at the end. There are 2-3 pairs of opposite leaflets. They are 4 cm long. They have oil glands and a slight smell when crushed. They smell of aniseed. The flowers are small. They have 5 petals. The anthers are large and brown. The flowers are white, greenish or purple. They occur in lax flower arrangements either in the axils or at the end of branches. The fruit has a hard shell. It is round and 10 cm across. The pulp is soft and red. It is edible. There are many seeds. The seeds are 5-6 mm long and hairy. It is brown when ripe. Fruit size and sweetness vary.

HABITAT

It is a tropical and subtropical plant. It grows in monsoonal or seasonally dry climates in the tropics. It is common on the drier Deccan in India. It grows up to 1500 m altitude. It needs a fertile, well-drained soil. It needs full sun. It grows in drier regions. It can tolerate some salinity. It grows up to 450 m altitude in the western Himalayas. It suits hardiness zones 9-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed. It can also be grown from root-cuttings and by budding. Seeds germinate after 2-3 weeks.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Trees grow slowly. They can take 15 years until fruit are produced. Budded plants are shorter and bear more quickly. They can produce in 4 years. A well grown tree can produce 225-250 fruits in one year.

NOTES

There is only one Limonia species.

There is confusion over Limonia acidissima and Feronia limonia.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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