PLANT FACT SHEET

Smilax anceps Willd.

GENUS *Smilax* **FAMILY** Smilacaceae

COMMON NAMES Leg-ripper, Thorny rope

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Root, Rhizome, Tuberous root - flavouring, Fruit, Vegetable

The tubers are cooked and eaten as a starchy staple. They are cut into small pieces, soaked in water for 3 days then dried and crushed.
The leaves are eaten raw. The shoots are also cooked.

DESCRIPTION

A tall climber. The stems have many small hooks. The leaves occur singly and are alternate. They are broadly oval and 8 cm long by 6 cm wide. There are a pair of unbranched tendrils. The male and female flowers are on separate plants. The flowering groups are in the axils of the leaves. The flowers form a dense round cluster. The fruit is round and fleshy. It is 1 cm across.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in savannah and forests in West Africa. It is often along the edges of rivers.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds.

NOTES

There are about 300 Smilax species.

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