PLANT FACT SHEET

Laportea ovalifolia (Schumach. & Thonn.) Chew

GENUS *Laportea* **FAMILY** Urticaceae

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Vegetable

The leaves are cooked as a vegetable. They are often mixed with other vegetables.

DESCRIPTION

A herb. It keeps growing from year to year and has runners. It has scattered stinging hairs. The main stem usually lies along the ground and has erect shoots. It grows 2 m tall. The leaves are alternate and simple. The leaf stalk is 5-10 cm long and the leaf blade is 8-10 cm long by 4-6 cm wide. It is rounded at the base and tapers to the tip. There are rounded teeth along the edge. The flowers are of separate sexes. The male flowers are on fleshy pink erect stalks 50 cm long. These arise from the leaf axils of underground stems. They are in clusters 1 cm across. Female flowers are on stalks 5 cm tall. The fruit are 3 mm long.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in forest and along streams. It grows from 900-2,000 m altitude.

PRODUCTION

Harvesting and Seed Production

The leaves are collected in the rainy season.

NOTES

There are about 22 Laportea species.

REFERENCES

Bosch, C.H., 2004. Laportea ovalifolia (Schumach.) Chew. [Internet] Record from Protabase. Grubben, G.J.H. & Denton, O.A. (Editors). PROTA (Plant Resources of Tropical Africa), Wageningen, Netherlands. < http://database.prota.org/search.htm>. Accessed 16 October 2009.

Burkill, H. M., 1985, The useful plants of west tropical Africa, Vol. 5. Kew.

East African Herbarium records, 1981,

Goode, P., 1989, Edible Plants of Uganda. FAO p 30 (As Fleurya ovalifolia)

Grubben, G. J. H. and Denton, O. A. (eds), 2004, Plant Resources of Tropical Africa 2. Vegetables. PROTA, Wageningen, Netherlands. p 359

Harris, D. J., 2002, The vascular plants of the Dzanga-Sangha Reserve, Central African Republic. National Botanic Garden of Belgium, 2002. – 274 pages p 210

Jardin, C., 1970, List of Foods Used In Africa, FAO Nutrition Information Document Series No 2.p 78

Martin, F.W. & Ruberte, R.M., 1979, Edible Leaves of the Tropics. Antillian College Press, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. p 223 (Also as Laportea podocarpa)

Peters, C. R., O'Brien, E. M., and Drummond, R.B., 1992, Edible Wild plants of Sub-saharan Africa. Kew. p 196

Ruffo, C. K., Birnie, A. & Tengnas, B., 2002, Edible Wild Plants of Tanzania. RELMA p 432

Terashima, H., & Ichikawa, M., 2003, A comparative ethnobotany of the Mbuti and Efe hunter-gatherers in the Ituri Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. African Study Monographs, 24 (1, 2): 1-168, March 2003

World Checklist of Useful Plant Species 2020. Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

PROVIDED BY **Food Plants International**

French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

LICENCE CC BY-NC-SA 3.0

ONLINE FACT SHEET https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/52ce4ca5-be5d-4a7f-8945-a103216e6ea1