PLANT FACT SHEET

Ritchiea albersii Gilg.

GENUS *Ritchiea* **FAMILY** Capparaceae

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Roots, Fruit

The roots are boiled and eaten as a famine food. They are peeled, soaked in water for several days and then dried in the sun. The dried tubers are pounded into flour that is used to make porridge.
Caution: It contains toxic materials that have to be removed during preparation.
The ripe fruit are eaten raw.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub or small branched tree. It grows 20 m tall. The bark is dark brown. The leaves are simple and can have 3-5 lobes or leaflets. The leaves are alternate. The leaf stalk is 2-12 cm long. The leaf blade can be 20 cm long by 8 cm wide. They are wedge shaped at the base and taper to the tip. The flowers are near the ends of branches. The fruit are brown oval capsules 4.5 cm long. They split open to release the seeds.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows in dry mountain forest. In Tanzania it grows between, 1,100-2,400 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds or cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Tubers are dug during the rainy season. The flour can be stored for several weeks.

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