PLANT FACT SHEET

Maerua racemulosa (A. DC.) Gilg. et Bened.

GENUS *Maerua* **FAMILY** Capparaceae

COMMON NAMES Forest bush-cherry

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Roots, Coffee

The root is eaten in times of food scarcity. It is peeled crushed and boiled in water. Milk is added.
It is also sometimes used as a substitute for coffee.

DESCRIPTION

A climber or scrambling shrub. It grows 1-3 m tall. The twigs are slender and have knobs along them. The leaves are simple but can occasionally have 2 or 3 leaflets. They are oval and 12 cm long by 5 cm wide. They vary in shape. They are often pointed. The midrib and veins are prominent under the leaf. The edges can be wavy and with teeth. The flowers are small and white. The grow in groups in the axils of leaves towards the ends of branches. The fruit is a yellow round berry. It is on a long stalk and can be the size of a cherry. There are 1-3 light coloured seeds inside.

HABITAT

It is a subtropical plant. It grows as an undershrub. It occurs in South Africa from sea level to 900 m altitude. It grows in dry soils. It can grow in arid places.

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