PLANT FACT SHEET

Urtica massaica Mildbr. ex Peter

GENUS *Urtica* **FAMILY** Urticaceae

COMMON NAMES Maasai stinging nettle

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Vegetable

The young leaves are wilted, boiled and eaten as a vegetable.

DESCRIPTION

It is a stinging nettle. It is like Urtica simensis but is more robust and has double teeth around the edges of the leaves. It is a herb that keeps growing from year to year. It grows 2 m high. The stinging hairs are 2 mm long. The leaf stalks are 4.5 cm long. The leaf blades are 7-13 cm long by 6-11 cm wide. There are double teeth along the edge. The flowers are of one sex. The fruit is oval, flattened and dry. It is 1 mm long.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. In Kenya it grows in moist bushland between 1,500-3,250 m altitude. It grows in loose soils with plenty of organic matter.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed or sections of rhizomes. Old plants can be cut back to stimulate new leaves.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Leaves are harvested with gloves to protect the hands. They are collected during the rainy season.

NOTES

Caution: It can be a serious weed problem.

REFERENCES

Agea, J. G., et al 2011, Wild and Semi-wild Food Plants of Bunyoro-Kitara Kingdom of Uganda: etc. Environmental Research Journal 5(2) 74-86

Bosch, C.H., 2004. Urtica simensis Hochst. ex A.Rich. [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 23 October 2009

East African Herbarium records, 1981,

Glover, et al, 1966b,

Godfrey, J. et al, 2013, Harvesting, preparation and preservation of commonly consumed wild and semi-wild food plants in Bunyoro-Kitara Kingdom, Uganda. Int. J. Med. Arom. Plants. Vol.3 No.2 pp 262-282

Goode, P., 1989, Edible Plants of Uganda. FAO p 54

Grivetti, L. E., 1980, Agricultural development: present and potential role of edible wild plants. Part 2: Sub-Saharan Africa, Report to the Department of State Agency for International Development. p 45

Grubben, G. J. H. and Denton, O. A. (eds), 2004, Plant Resources of Tropical Africa 2. Vegetables. PROTA, Wageningen, Netherlands. p 540

Jardin, C., 1970, List of Foods Used In Africa, FAO Nutrition Information Document Series No 2.p 109

Martin, F.W. & Ruberte, R.M., 1979, Edible Leaves of the Tropics. Antillian College Press, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. p 223

Marshall, F., Agriculture and Use of Wild and Weedy Greens by the Piik ap Oom Okiek of Kenya. Economic Botany, Vo. 55, No. 1, pp. 32-47

Maundu, P. et al, 1999, Traditional Food Plants of Kenya. National Museum of Kenya. 288p

Mutie, F. M., et al, 2023, Important Medicinal and Food Taxa (Orders and Families) in Kenya, Based on Three Quantitative Approaches. Plants 2023, 12, 1145

Nzigidahera, B., 2006, Assessment of Socio-cultural, Economic Characteristics and Livelihood of Riparian Population of the Kibira National Park. (Rukoma-Mutana locality). UNDP p 30

Peters, C. R., O'Brien, E. M., and Drummond, R.B., 1992, Edible Wild plants of Sub-saharan Africa. Kew. p 197

Ulian, T., et al, 2020, Unlocking plant resources to support food security and promote sustainable agriculture. Plants, People, Planet. 2020;2:421–445.

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/59ff2ebf-8226-4230-94dc-b58c63f65213