PLANT FACT SHEET

Dovyalis abyssinica (A. Rich.) Warb.

GENUS *Dovyalis* **FAMILY** Salicaceae

COMMON NAMES Dovyalis (Abyssinian), African gooseberry

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit

The ripe fruit is eaten fresh and used in jam. It is also used for jelly and fruit punch.

DESCRIPTION

A medium sized shrub. It grows up to 10 m tall. It has many branches. The trunk is up to 20 cm thick. Young branches can have spines. The bark is grey brown. There are many raised lenticels. The leaves are oval and slender. They are 2.5-9 cm long by 2-5 cm wide. The edges of the leaves can be wavy or jagged. Plants are separately male and female. Flowers are green. Male flowers are covered in soft hairs. They are in clusters in the axils of leaves. Female flowers occur singly. The fruit are small and orange. They are round and have pale dots. They are up to 2 cm across. The flesh is yellow. They are very acid and have a strong smell. The seeds are few and flat.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It is native to NE Africa. Plants grow between 1000 and 3000 m altitude in Ethiopia and between 2000 and 2700 m altitude in Kenya. A rainfall between 1000 and 1700 mm is probably suitable. It suits hot dry climates. It grows poorly on limestone soils.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown by seed or cuttings. Fruit are normally picked from the tree. Fruits do not store well and bruise easily.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It takes 7-8 months between flowering and fruit maturity. In Tanzania fruit are collected from April to June.

NOTES

The fruit are rich in Vitamin C. There are about 15-22 Dovyalis species. Most have edible fruit. They are mostly in Africa and Sri Lanka. Also put in the Flacourtiaceae family.

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