PLANT FACT SHEET

Commiphora pyracanthoides Engl.

GENUS *Commiphora* **FAMILY** Burseraceae

COMMON NAMES Common corkwood, Firethorn corkwood

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Tuber, Root, Gum

The gum is bitter but eaten.
The roots are chewed for the sweet, fresh water.
Caution: The fruit is not edible and can irritate the mouth.

DESCRIPTION

A sprawling, spiny shrub. It grows to 8 m high. The bark is grey, green, yellow or red and flakes in small papery strips. The leaves are clustered on short spiny branches. The leaves are compound but have a single leaflet. It is narrowly oval and 7.5 cm long by 3.2 cm wide. They are bright green above and paler underneath. The flowers are small and pink. They are in clusters on very small branches. The fruit are oval and about 10 mm long. The stone has a 3 or 4 armed false seed layer.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It occurs at low altitudes in dry woodland. It grows in areas with a rainfall below 100 mm per year. It can tolerate frost. It suits hot arid areas. It grows on sandy or stony soils often over limestone rocks. It can tolerate drought. It grows between 150-1,800 m above sea level. It can grow in arid places.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be cut back and will re-grow.

NOTES

There are about 165 Commiphora species.

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