PLANT FACT SHEET

Melodinus australis (F. Muell.) Pierre

GENUS *Melodinus* **FAMILY** Apocynaceae

COMMON NAMES Bellbird vine, Apple vine, Harlequin Fruit

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit

The ripe fruit is edible

DESCRIPTION

A climbing vine or twiner. It grows up to 3 to 8 m tall. The leaves are simple and 3-16 cm long and 0.5-6 cm wide. The leaves are darker green on top and paler beneath. The broken leaves and twigs drip milky sap. The branched flower stalk occurs in the angles between leaves and stem in the upper leaves. The flowers are 0.4-0.7 cm across. They are pale yellow. They have a strong smell. The fruit are 4-15 cm long and 2-4 cm wide. They hang singly or in bunches in the axils of leaves. The fruit are green but then turn yellow then orange. The fruit often have several colours. The fruit have many seeds which are 5-7 mm long. The pulp around the seed is edible. It is green in colour. The fruit are also eaten by cockatoos and cassowaries.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It occurs in coastal tropical rainforests. It grows in Australia, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. It occurs at low to moderate heights above sea level. It grows from sea level to 1200 m altitude.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from seed or from cuttings taken from firm wood. Seed should be sown fresh. It grows best with partial shade but if kept well watered can grow in full sun. It can tolerate a slight frost.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Fruiting is December to April. Flowers and fruit can occur at the same time on a plant.

NOTES

There are about 75 Melodinus species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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ONLINE FACT SHEET https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/5f129e7a-738c-4606-b3de-3226186b22ee