PLANT FACT SHEET

Combretum erythrophyllum (Burch.) Sond.

GENUS *Combretum* **FAMILY** Combretaceae

COMMON NAMES Bush-willow, River bushwillow

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Gum

Caution: The fruit and seeds are poisonous.
The gum is eaten as a snack.

DESCRIPTION

A medium sized tree. It is spreading. It grows to 12 m high. The crown is densely covered with leaves. There are often several stems from the base. The trunk can recline and overhang the water. The bark is pale grey and smooth and flaking. As it flakes paler patches are exposed giving it a mottled appearance. The leaves can be in rings of 3. They are oval and 10 cm long by 5 cm wide. The lower surface is hairy. The young leaves are yellowish while the mature leaves are green. They can turn red in autumn. They taper to both ends. The flowers are yellow and in dense spikes in the axils of leaves. They almost form round heads and are 10 mm across. The fruit have 4 wings. They are 1-1.5 cm long and with a peg at the end. The young fruit are shiny but dry to a brown colour.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows along river banks and can form thick stands. It is drought resistant. It will grow in most soils. It needs a sunny position. It is damaged by frost. It grows between 15-1,525 m above sea level. It can grow in arid places. It suits hardiness zones 10-11. In Brisbane Botanical Garden.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds. The seeds germinate easily. It can also be grown from cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The plants grow quickly.

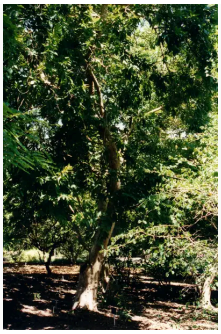
NOTES

There are about 255 Combretum species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

REFERENCES

Bodkin, F., 1991, Encyclopedia Botanica. Cornstalk publishing, p 274

Drummond, R. B., 1981, Common Trees of the Central Watershed Woodlands of Zimbabwe, National Herbarium Salisbury. p 156

Etherington, K., & Imwold, D., (Eds), 2001, Botanica's Trees & Shrubs. The illustrated A-Z of over 8500 trees and shrubs. Random House, Australia. p 222

Grivetti, 1976, 1979,

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 79

Linnaea 23:43. 1850

Lord, E.E., & Willis, J.H., 1999, Shrubs and Trees for Australian gardens. Lothian. p 217

Palgrave, K.C., 1996, Trees of Southern Africa. Struik Publishers. p 667

Peters, C. R., O'Brien, E. M., and Drummond, R.B., 1992, Edible Wild plants of Sub-saharan Africa. Kew. p 85

Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (1999). Survey of Economic Plants for Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (SEPASAL) database. Published on the Internet; http://www.rbgkew.org.uk/ceb/sepasal/internet [Accessed 10th April 2011]

Ruiters-Welcome, A. K., 2019, Food plants of southern Africa. Ph.D. thesis. Univ. of Johannesburg p 45

Swaziland's Flora Database http://www.sntc.org.sz/flora

Welcome, A. K. & Van Wyk, B.-E., 2019, An inventory and analysis of the food plants of southern Africa. South African Journal of Botany 122 (2019) 136–179

Wiersema, J. H. & Leon, B., 2013, World Economic Plants. A Standard Reference CRC Press. 2nd Ed. p 193

World Checklist of Useful Plant Species 2020. Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

www.zimbabweflora.co.zw 2011

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/60ac5a1d-0381-4a13-9e6e-f5ccaa4f99ad