PLANT FACT SHEET

Celtis occidentalis L.

GENUS *Celtis* **FAMILY** Cannabaceae

COMMON NAMES Common Hackberry, Sugarberry

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Seeds

The fruit can be eaten fresh. They are also used for jellies and jams.
The fruit can be pounded with parched corn and fat and also used for flavouring meat.

DESCRIPTION

A tree. It grows to 12-18 m high. It spreads 16 m wide. The trunk is 50 cm across. The young bark is smooth but it becomes rough as the tree matures. The leaves are alternate and simple. They are in 2 rows along the twigs. The leaves vary in shape and size. They are 6-9 cm long and widest towards the base. The base is unequal on opposite sides. The tip is long and tapering. There are teeth along the edge of the leaf. The leaves turn pale yellow in autumn. The flowers are small and greenish. The male and female flowers are separate on the same tree. Flowers are wind pollinated. The fruit are pea sized. They are berry like with a hard stone inside. This is pitted. The fruit ripen through red to purple. The fruit are edible.

HABITAT

It is native to North America. It grows naturally in deep, rich, alluvial soils. It can tolerate some shade, but does best in a sunny location. It will grow with a range of soil pH and can tolerate pollution. It is cold hardy. It suits hardiness zones 3-10. Arboretum Tasmania.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown by seed, cuttings or grafting.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Trees are fast growing. Trees live for 150 years.

NOTES

There are 70-100 Celtis species. They are mostly in the tropics. There are 8-10 species in tropical America. Also put in the family Ulmaceae.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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