PLANT FACT SHEET

Lantana camara L.

GENUS *Lantana* **FAMILY** Verbenaceae

COMMON NAMES Lantana, English sage bush

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves, Leaves - tea, Root - tea

The ripe fruit are eaten raw.
CAUTION: The fruit are reported as poisonous. The plant contains the alkaloid lantanin.
The leaves are used for flavouring.
The flowers are eaten in salads.

DESCRIPTION

An evergreen shrub. It grows to 3 m high and spreads to 3 m across but under some conditions can be much more spreading and pose problems. The stem is erect and woody at the base. The stem has 4 angles and prickles which curve backwards. The leaves are small and oval. They are 1.5-8.5 cm long by 0.8-6 cm wide. They have a rough surface. The flowers are pale cream and very small. They are arranged in dense heads which are 2.5 cm across. The fruit are berries which turn black when ripe. The ripe fruit are edible. Various cultivated varieties have been produced with attractive coloured flowers. Some of the orange coloured forms are poisonous to animals.

HABITAT

It is a tropical and subtropical plant. It is drought resistant but can be damaged by frost. They need a temperature above 10°C. In Nepal they grow to about 1500 m altitude. In PNG it grows from sea level to 2,200 m above sea level. It needs a well-drained soil. It can grow in full or part sun. In Tanzania it grows up to 2,000 m above sea level and in areas with a rainfall between 1,100-1,800 mm. It suits hardiness zones 9-12. In Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed or by cuttings. It can be grown as a hedge.

Harvesting and Seed Production

In Tanzania fruit are collected from September to December. The ripe fruit are picked off the bush. In southern India plants flower and fruit April to June. In NE India June to February. A plant can produce 300 g of fruit in a year.

NOTES

It can become a serious weed in warm temperate and subtropical climates. It can be invasive. There are about 150 Lantana species. They come from tropical and subtropical America.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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