PLANT FACT SHEET

Hibiscus diversifolius Jacq.

GENUS *Hibiscus* **FAMILY** Malvaceae

COMMON NAMES Yellow Hibiscus, Prickly tree hibiscus

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Flowers, Leaves, Root, Vegetable, Seeds

The flowers are cooked and eaten.
The leaves may have to be used with caution. They are bitter and sour. They are wilted in the sun then chopped and cooked.

DESCRIPTION

A small shrub. It is often scrambling. It is often 1-2 m high but can be a medium sized tree up to 10 m tall. The bark is brownish-grey. The young branches are hairy and densely covered with prickles. The leaves are oval or round and 16 cm long by 16 cm wide. There are 3-7 distinct lobes. There are hairs on both surfaces, those underneath being longer. The edges of the leaves are irregularly toothed or scalloped. The leaf stalk is 12 cm long and hairy. The flowers are yellow or purplish, with a dark red centre. They are 8 cm long. The flowers occur singly in the axils of leaves. They can appear to be in groups towards the ends of branches. The fruit is an oval capsule. It is 2 cm long. It is sharply pointed. It is densely covered with silky golden hairs.

HABITAT

It grows in warm temperate regions and can grow in the subtropics. It grows in damp places along rivers and near the edges of lakes. The soil needs to be well drained but wet. It can stand light frosts. In Tanzania it grows from sea level to 1,800 m above sea level. It grows in areas with a rainfall between 1,400-2,100 mm. It grows well in deep clay soils with permanent moisture. It suits hardiness zones 10-12. Adelaide Botanical Gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed or cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Leaves are collected from swamps in the dry season.

NOTES

There are about 220 Hibiscus species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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