PLANT FACT SHEET

Milicia excelsa (Welw.) C. C. Berg

GENUS *Milicia* **FAMILY** Moraceae

COMMON NAMES African teak

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Fruit

The ripe fruit are eaten. The fruit juice is used for flavouring.
The cooked young leaves are eaten. They are used in soup.

DESCRIPTION

A large tree. It grows to 50 m tall. The bark is pale whitish grey. It is rough and scaly. It has buttresses. The trunk is straight. The leaves are simple and alternate. They are large and oblong. They are 12-18 cm long by 6.5-9.5 cm wide. They are green on top and paler and finely hairy underneath. The old leaves become bright yellow. The base of the leaf is lobed. The edges are wavy. The male and female flowers occur separately on separate trees. The male spike is long and slender. It is 6-14 cm long by 0.5 cm wide. The flowers are white. The female spikes are short and thick. They are 2-3 cm long by 1 cm wide. They are greenish. The fruit is a small nutlet. It has fleshy lobes around it. These occur close together like a mulberry.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in low altitude evergreen forest. It grows in the transitional areas between dense forest and grassland. It can grow in a wide range of conditions in tropical regions. It can grow in arid places. in Zimbabwe it grows between 300-500 m above sea level. In Nigeria it is recorded up to 1,360 m above sea level. It suits hardiness zones 11-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown by fresh seeds. It takes 2-3 weeks and needs light. The fruit are soaked for 6 hours in water and then the seeds squeezed out.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It grows quickly.

NOTES

There are 2 Milicia species. They occur in tropical Africa. It is an important timber tree.

REFERENCES

Abbiw, D.K., 1990, Useful Plants of Ghana. West African uses of wild and cultivated plants. Intermediate Technology Publications and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. p 41

Alyegba, S. S. et al, 2013, Ethnobotanical Survey of Edible Wild Plants in Tiv Communities of Benue State, Nigeria. Journal of Natural Sciences Research. Vol.3, No.7

Ambasta, S.P. (Ed.), 2000, The Useful Plants of India. CSIR India. p 120 (As Chlorophora excelsa)

Babalola, F. D., Borokini, T. I. and Onefeli, A. O., 2013, Socio-Economic Benefits of Iroko Trees (Milicia excelsa (Welw.) C.C. Berg) in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria, International Journal of African and Asian Studies - An Open Access International Journal Vol.1, pp. 11-13.

Bull. Jard. Bot. Belg. 52:227. 1982

Codjia, J. T. C., et al, 2003, Diversity and local valorisation of vegetal edible products in Benin. Cahiers Agricultures 12:1-12

Dansi, A., et al, 2008, Traditional leafy vegetables and their use in the Benin Republic. Genet Resour Crop Evol (2008) 55:1239–1256

Dansi, A., et al, 2009, Traditional leafy vegetables in Benin: folk nomenclature, species under threat and domestication. Acta Bot. Gallica 156(2), 183-199

Etherington, K., & Imwold, D., (Eds), 2001, Botanica's Trees & Shrubs. The illustrated A-Z of over 8500 trees and shrubs. Random House, Australia. p 480
Gen. pl. 3:363. 1883 (As Chlorophora excelsa)

Harris, D. J., 2002, The vascular plants of the Dzanga-Sangha Reserve, Central African Republic. National Botanic Garden of Belgium, 2002. – 274 pages p 145

Jardin, C., 1970, List of Foods Used In Africa, FAO Nutrition Information Document Series No 2.p 66 (As Chlorophora excelsa)

Latham, P., 2004, Useful Plants of Bas-Congo province. Salvation Army & DFID p 186

Latham, P & Mbuta, A., 2017, Useful Plants of Central Province, Democratic Republic of Congo. Volume 2. Salvation Army p 34

Mansfeld (As Chlorophora excelsa)

Martin, F.W. & Ruberte, R.M., 1979, Edible Leaves of the Tropics. Antillian College Press, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. p 205 (As Chlorophora excelsa)

Ofori, D.A., 2007. Milicia excelsa (Welw.) C.C.Berg. [Internet] Record from Protabase. Louppe, D., Oteng-Amoako, A.A. & Brink, M. (Editors). PROTA (Plant Resources of Tropical Africa), Wageningen, Netherlands. < http://database.prota.org/search.htm>. Accessed 19 October 2009.

Okigbo, B.N., Vegetables in Tropical Africa, in Opena, R.T. & Kyomo, M.L., 1990, Vegetable Research and development in SADCC countries. Asian Vegetable Research and development Centre. Taiwan. p 44 (As Chlorophora excelsa)

Oteng-Amoako, A. A. (Ed.), 2006, 100 Tropical African Timber Trees from Ghana. Forestry Research Institute of Ghana. p 178

Palgrave, K.C., 1996, Trees of Southern Africa. Struik Publishers. p 101 (As Chlorophora excelsa)

Polansky, C., 2018, Annex: Tree Identification and Propagation Images and text for 29 species found in Nimba County, Liberia. ACDI p 45

Purseglove, J.W., 1968, Tropical Crops Dicotyledons, Longmans. p 378 (As Chlorophora excelsa)

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 4th May 2011]

Sukarya, D. G., (Ed.) 2013, 3,500 Plant Species of the Botanic Gardens of Indonesia. LIPI p 398

Toensmeier, E., 2022, Trees with Edible Leaves. Perennial Agriculture Institute. p 58

Vivien, J. & Faure, J.J., 1985, Abres des forets dense d'Afrique Centrale. Agence de Cooperation Culturelle et Technique. Paris. p 306 (As Chlorophora excelsa)

White, F., Dowsett-Lemaire, F. and Chapman, J. D., 2001, Evergreen Forest Flora of Malawi. Kew. p 3

Williamson, J., 2005, Useful Plants of Malawi. 3rd. Edition. Mdadzi Book Trust. p 63 (As Chlorophora excelsa)

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

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/67e79b86-d8a7-4cac-b4c1-fe428874a516