PLANT FACT SHEET

Rhamnus prinoides L'Her.

GENUS *Rhamnus* **FAMILY** Rhamnaceae

COMMON NAMES Shiny leaf, South African dogwood

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Fruit, Root, Stem

The fruit are eaten raw.
The dried leaves are used to flavour drinks.
The stems are used as a substitute for hops in beer making.
The roots and stems are used in tonic soups.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub. It can scramble. It can also be a small tree. It can grow to 7-15 m high. The bark is brown. The leaves are alternate and simple. They are oblong and 3-10 cm long by 1.5-4 cm wide. They are very glossy dark green above and dull green below. The edges are finely toothed. The flowers are small and green. They are on slender stalks. They occur in sparse clusters in the axils of leaves. There are 2-10 flowers in a group. The fruit is berry-like. It is oval and 5 mm across. The fruit are red. They are edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows at medium and high altitudes in South Africa. It is often near rivers and on the edges of evergeen forest. Plants are hardy. In Zimbabwe it grows between 1,340-2,270 m above sea level. Mt Lofty Botanical Gardens. It suits hardiness zones 9-11.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seeds. Seeds are collected fresh from fruit off a tree and the flesh removed. Seed germinate easily. They germinate in 6-8 weeks.

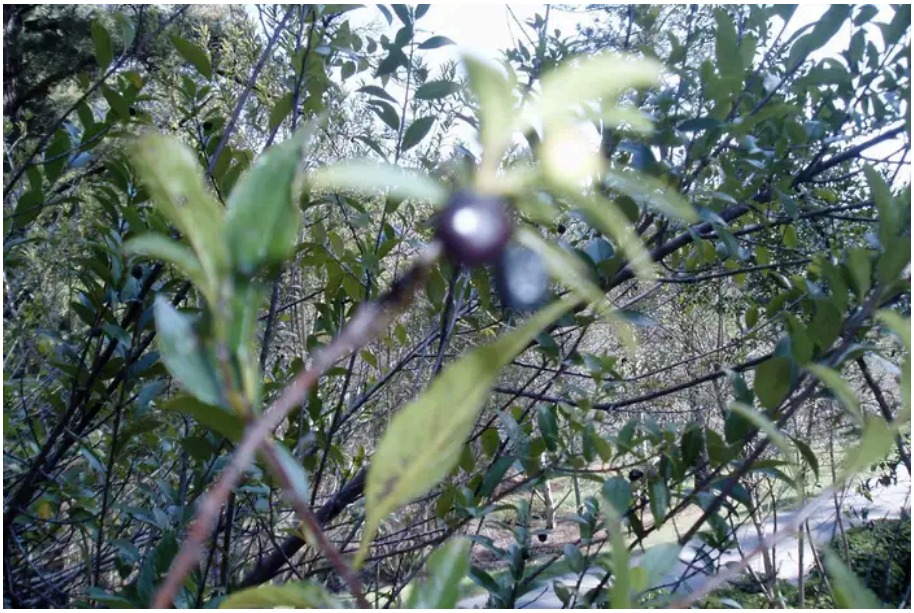
Harvesting and Seed Production

Trees grow quickly. Trees are harvested 3 times a year by stripping off the leaves, except the growing tips. Harvesting is started when trees are 3 years old. Trees can continue to be harvested for 50 years. A fruit weighs about 0.3 g.

NOTES

There are over 100 Rhamnus species.

PICTURES



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