PLANT FACT SHEET

Podocarpus macrophyllus (Thunb.) Sweet

GENUS *Podocarpus* **FAMILY** Podocarpaceae

COMMON NAMES Japanese Yew, Bigleaf yew tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit

The fruit are eaten fresh. They can also be used for pies and cakes.
Caution: The seeds are not eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A tree. It grows to 20 m tall. The trunk is 60 cm across. The bark is greyish brown and peels off in large flakes. The branches are erect and spreading. The leaves are arranged in spirals and without leaf stalks. The leaves are dark green on top and pale green underneath. They are 1.7-12 cm long by 2-10 mm wide. The leaves are leathery. The pollen cones are in the axils of leaves and often in groups of 3-5. They are spike like and 3-5 cm long. The seeds are oval and about 1 cm across. The seeds are on a swollen receptacle which becomes red and fleshy.

HABITAT

It is a temperate to subtropical plant. It is native to S China and Japan. It grows in forests and open thickets from sea level to 1000 m altitude in S China. It can tolerate sea winds and salt spray. It suits hardiness zones 7-11. Arboretum Tasmania. Hobart Botanical Gardens. Melbourne Botanical Gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown as a hedge plant.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Trees can live for hundreds of years. The fruit are left on the tree over winter and they become black and ripe and can be eaten.

NOTES

There are about 100 Podocarpus species. They are mostly in the tropics and subtropics.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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