PLANT FACT SHEET

Sarothamnus scoparius (L.) Wimmer ex Koch

GENUS *Sarothamnus* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Broom, English broom, Scotch broom

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Flowers, Seeds-coffee, Flower buds-flavouring, Shoots

The tops have been used to flavour beer in place of hops.
The flower buds are pickled and used as a substitute for capers. They are also added to salads and wines.
The seeds are roasted and used as a coffee substitute.
CAUTION: The plant including flowers and seeds contain cystisine a poisonous alkaloid which affects the nervous system.

DESCRIPTION

A medium sized shrub with many branches. It grows 2 m high and spreads 2 m wide. The stems are green and slender. These are green and photosynthesise. The leaves are small and scale like. It does not have spines. The lower leaves have 3 leaflets. The flowers occur singly. The flower standard is yellow and the keel yellow or red-brown. The fruit is a black pod. It has brown hairs along its edge. The seeds are hard and yellow-brown. The pods explode scattering seed.

HABITAT

It grows very easily in Mediterranean climates. It suits hardiness zones 5-9. Tasmania Herbarium.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. Seeds can live for 80 years.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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ONLINE FACT SHEET https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/768681c9-66bc-45df-bc91-74e1728bb1dd