PLANT FACT SHEET

Use with caution

This plant can be harmful if it is eaten raw, in large amounts or without the right preparation. Read the whole fact sheet before use.

Spirostachys africana Sond.

GENUS *Spirostachys* **FAMILY** Euphorbiaceae

COMMON NAMES African mahogany tree, African sandalwood, Jumping bean

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Resin

Caution: The whole plant is poisonous.
The resin is recorded as being eaten. It causes diarrhoea and is better not eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub or tree. It loses its leaves during the year. It can grow 10-20 m high. The bark is grey and rough and cracks into squares. The leaves are small and narrowly oval. They have rounded teeth along the edge. The leaves turn red before falling. The leaf stalks have 2 small glands towards the end near the leaf. The flowers are in long groups and appear before the leaves. Male and female flowers are separate on the same tree. The fruit is a small capsule with 3 lobes. They split open into 3 segments suddenly and noisily. The seeds are round with a papery covering.

HABITAT

It is a subtropical plant. It can grow in poor and salty soils. It grows between 60-1,370 m above sea level. It can grow in arid places.

PRODUCTION

Harvesting and Seed Production

It grows slowly.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

REFERENCES

Cheikhyoussef, A & Embashu, W., 2013, Ethnobotanical knowledge on Indigenous fruits in Ohangwena and Oshito regions in Northern Namibia. Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine 9:34

Grivetti, L. E., 1980, Agricultural development: present and potential role of edible wild plants. Part 2: Sub-Saharan Africa, Report to the Department of State Agency for International Development. p 80

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 16th April 2011]

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/76dbe11e-cf64-4a48-9753-a174a48dcdc4