PLANT FACT SHEET

Gardenia ternifolia Schum. et Thonn.

GENUS *Gardenia* **FAMILY** Rubiaceae

COMMON NAMES Large-leaved common gardenia

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves

CAUTION: The fruit can cause diarrhoea.
The ripe fruit are eaten raw.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub or small spreading tree. It grows to 7 m high. The bark is grey or yellowish-brown and smooth. The small branches occur in rings or 3 at right angles to the branches. They are covered with rusty coloured powder. The leaves are opposite or in rings of 3. They are crowded near the ends of small branches. They are oblong and 13 cm long by 8 cm wide. They are yellowish-green to shiny dark green above. They are paler underneath. There are short hairs on both surfaces. The edges of the leaf is wavy. The flowers are white but turn yellow with age. They are 4 cm across. They have a tube up to 4.5 cm long. The fruit is oval and 5 cm long by 3.5 cm wide. They are finely velvety. They are yellowish-brown when mature. There is the remains of the calyx lobes at the end.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in wooded grassland. In East Africa it grows from sea level to 2,100 m altitude. It grows in the Sahel. It can grow in arid places.

NOTES

There are about 200 Gardenia species.

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