PLANT FACT SHEET

Scutia myrtina (Burm. f.) Kurz.

GENUS *Scutia* **FAMILY** Rhamnaceae

COMMON NAMES Dry-my-throat, Cat thorn

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves, Roots

The ripe fruit are especially enjoyed by children. They dry the throat. The fruit are eaten raw.
The roots are used in soups.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub, small tree or climber. As a tree is grows to 6 m high. It usually has many stems. The trunk is rough with corky bark. The branches are slender. The twigs are smooth. The branches have small, strong, curved thorns in the axils of leaves. The leaves are smooth, shiny and leathery. They are nearly opposite one another. They are often 1-2.5 cm long but can be 7 cm long. They vary from oblong to egg shaped and the tips can be rounded or pointed. The edges of the leaves are often rolled backwards. There are 5-8 pairs of secondary veins. The leaves are shiny on top and duller below. They have short stalks. The flowers are small and greenish-white. They have a sweet scent. They occur in small short bunches in the axils of leaves. The fruit are egg shaped and very small (0.5 cm). The fruit are green when young and turn red or black when ripe. They have a thin layer of flesh and 2 stones. The fruit are edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows from sea level to 1,200 m in South Africa. It grows on coastal sand dunes. It also grows on the edge of evergreen forest. In Kenya it grows from sea level to 2,700 m altitude. It can grow in arid places. In Yunnan. It occurs in the Western Ghats in India.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are easily grown by seeds. It is grown as a hedge plant.

NOTES

There are 3 Scutia species.

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French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

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