PLANT FACT SHEET

Erythroxylum pictum E. Mey. ex Sond.

GENUS *Erythroxylum* **FAMILY** Erythroxylaceae

COMMON NAMES Forest coca tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves

The fruit are eaten when ripe.
The leaves are cooked as a vegetable.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub or medium sized tree. It can grow up to 13-18 m tall. It has many spreading branches. The bark is light grey and has cracks along it. The knobbly twigs are very flattened. The leaves are 4-7.5 cm long. They are oval with a rounded or notched tip. The upper surface is dark green and shiny and the lower surface light green. The midrib is raised under the leaf and about 10 pairs of hard to see veins loop around to the leaf edge. The leaves are on stalks 8 mm long. They have a pointed leafy structure (stipule) near the stalk which soon falls off. The flowers are cream and small. They are in the axils of leaves. The fruit is small and oval. It is about 1.3 cm long and bright red. The fruit are edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in forests and on the edge of forests. In South Africa it grows from sea level up to 1700 m altitude.

NOTES

There are about 250 Erythroxylum species.

REFERENCES

Fox, F. W. & Young, M. E. N., 1982, Food from the Veld. Delta Books. p 188

Palgrave, K.C., 1996, Trees of Southern Africa. Struik Publishers. p 336

Palmer, E and Pitman, N., 1972, Trees of Southern Africa. Vol. 2. A.A. Balkema, Cape Town p 969

Plowes, N. J. & Taylor, F. W., 1997, The Processing of Indigenous Fruits and other Wildfoods of Southern Africa. in Smartt, L. & Haq. (Eds) Domestication, Production and Utilization of New Crops. ICUC p 191

Ruiters-Welcome, A. K., 2019, Food plants of southern Africa. Ph.D. thesis. Univ. of Johannesburg p 53

Welcome, A. K. & Van Wyk, B.-E., 2019, An inventory and analysis of the food plants of southern Africa. South African Journal of Botany 122 (2019) 136–179

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/790f94cd-e10c-403f-842e-cc0478f52740