PLANT FACT SHEET

Kleinhovia hospita L.

GENUS *Kleinhovia* **FAMILY** Malvaceae

COMMON NAMES Guest Tree, Timanga tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Flowers, Stems, Vegetable

The young leaves and flowers are cooked and eaten.
CAUTION The older leaves are also recorded as having medicinal uses. They contain hydrocyanic acid. (This disappears on cooking)

DESCRIPTION

A medium sized tree with a round dense crown and the trunk often has buttresses and suckers at the base. It can grow 3-15 m high. The young twigs are velvety. The leaves are simple, oval and alternate. They are thin and paler beneath. They are hairless but the young ones are finely woolly. The leaves are up to 20 cm long by 15 cm wide. The leaf stalks can be 10 cm long. It produces sprays of pink flowers at the ends of the branches. The flowers are small and finely woolly on the inside. The fruit is a pinkish brown five shouldered capsule. The capsule is like a pliable sheet and hangs down. It is inflated and an irregular oval shape. The seeds are round and brown and roughened with abnormal growths. There are 1 or 2 seeds in each cell.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. They are common throughout the Philippines in areas of shrub. Trees grow in coastal areas up to about 500 m altitude. They occur near banks of streams and in open country. Seedlings need to be in a sunny position. It can grow in arid places. It suits hardiness zones 9-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Trees are self sown from seed. They can be grown from fresh seed. They can also be grown from layers or suckers. It can be grown by cuttings.

NOTES

There is only one Kleinhovia species. It has also been put in the family Byttneriaceae.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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