PLANT FACT SHEET

Diospyros lycioides Desf.

GENUS *Diospyros* **FAMILY** Ebenaceae

COMMON NAMES Red star apple, Bluebush star-apple, Karoo blue bush, Quilted bluebush

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds - coffee, Fruit

The fruit are eaten sometimes by children. They are bitter.
The fruit are also fermented and distilled to produce brandy.
The seeds are roasted for coffee.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub or small evergreen tree. It can be 3-7 m tall. The bark is dark grey and smooth. It can have several stems. There are 4 different types base on leaf shape and venation. The leaves are simple and alternate. They are leathery. They are usually crowded near the ends of branches. The flowers are bell-shaped. They are white or yellow. The flowers have a sweet smell and hand downwards. The fruit are round or oblong and 2 cm long. They are bright red and fleshy. The seeds are oblong and smooth with a groove along them. There are 2 subspecies.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It can tolerate drought and frost. It grows between 600-1,000 m above sea level in southern Africa, It does well in a sandy soil. It can grow in slightly salty soils. It can grow in arid places. It grows in Miombo woodland in Africa. It suits hardiness zones 9-11. Wittunga Botanical Gardens. Mt Lofty Botanical Gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds. Seeds germinate fairly easily. It can be cut back and will re-grow.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It has a fast growth rate.

NOTES

There are about 485 species of Diospyros mostly in the tropics.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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