PLANT FACT SHEET

Cordia dichotoma G. Forst.

GENUS *Cordia* **FAMILY** Boraginaceae

COMMON NAMES Bird Lime Tree, Clammy-cherry

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Leaves, Fruit, Flowers, Oil

The pulpy portion of the ripe fruit is eaten raw or stewed. Immature fruit are pickled or eaten in curries.
The seeds are also claimed to be edible, but it is not sure if treatment was needed before eating.
Oil is extracted from the seeds and used in cooking.
The young leaves and shoots are cooked as a vegetable. The flowers are also eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A medium sized tree, that loses its leaves at some times of the year. They are 5 to 15 m high. It can grow up to 27 m tall and be 50 cm across in the trunk. The tree has spreading branches. The bark is 2 cm thick and grey. It is deeply cracked. The leaves are alternate, smooth and pointed at both ends. They have 2-3, easy to see, veins. The veins are hairy on the underside. They are 5-8 cm long and 2-4 cm wide. The leaf stalk is 3-4 cm long. The flowers are white or yellow, and borne in flower clusters at the ends of branches. The flower clusters are 1-5 cm across, while individual flowers are 2 mm across. The flowers are orange, and funnel shaped at the base. Male and both sex flowers occur on separate trees. The fruit are yellowish white or pink, and soft but with a hard stone. They are 2 cm across and contain a sticky juice. The fruit is sweet and edible.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows near rainforests and near the coast. It suits humid locations. It can tolerate wind and salt spray. It is very sensitive to frost. It requires a well drained soil, in a sunny position. They are common and widely distributed in secondary forest and open places at low altitudes in the Philippines. In Nepal it grows between 300-1400 m altitude. In India is grows in all warmer parts of the subcontinent. It can grow in arid places. In Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. The seed should be sown fresh. It can also be grown from semi-ripe cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants are fairly slow growing. In Nagaland fruit are available June to August.

NOTES

There are about 300 Cordia species. It is used in medicine.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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