PLANT FACT SHEET

Poisonous

This plant, or parts of it, can be poisonous. Do not eat it unless you know which parts are safe and how they must be prepared.

Euphorbia heterophylla L.

GENUS *Euphorbia* **FAMILY** Euphorbiaceae

COMMON NAMES Mexican Fire plant, Mole plant

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves

Caution: All Euphorbias or spurges have irritating sap and many have chemicals that can cause cancer.
The leaves are used as a famine food. They are also used in curries.

DESCRIPTION

A woody herb. It grows up to 2 m high. The young shoots are hairy with long purple hairs. The stems are green. The leaf stalks have a reddish tinge. The leaf is dark green on the upper surface and dull green underneath. The flowers are cream of light green. They occur closely together at the ends of branches. The fruit are green. The seeds are grey. They are almost round and are rough.

HABITAT

A tropical and subtropical plant. It can grow in arid places. In Zimbabwe it grows up to 1,500 m above sea level. In Argentina it grows from sea level to 1,000 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

Harvesting and Seed Production

In Australia, plants flower and fruit in May.

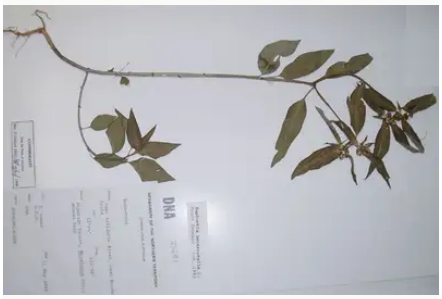
NOTES

There are about 2000 Euphorbia species. Most Euphorbias have sap which irritates the skin.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

REFERENCES

Achigan-Dako, E, et al (Eds), 2009, Catalogue of Traditional Vegetables in Benin. International Foundation for Science.

Burkill, I.H., 1966, A Dictionary of the Economic Products of the Malay Peninsula. Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Vol 1 (A-H) p 994

Codjia, J. T. C., et al, 2003, Diversity and local valorisation of vegetal edible products in Benin. Cahiers Agricultures 12:1-12

Cowie, I, 2006, A Survey of Flora and vegetation of the proposed Jaco-Tutuala-Lore National Park. Timor-Lests (East Timor) www.territorystories.nt/gov.au p 47

Flora of Solomon Islands

Fowler, D. G., 2007, Zambian Plants: Their Vernacular Names and Uses. Kew. p 26

Franklin, J., Keppel, G., & Whistler, W., 2008, The vegetation and flora of Lakeba, Nayau and Aiwa Islands, Central Lau Group, Fiji. Micronesica 40(1/2): 169–225, 2008

Henty, E.E., & Pritchard, G.S., 1973, Weeds of New Guinea and their control. Botany Bulletin No 7, Division of Botany, Lae, PNG. p 102

Hussey, B.M.J., Keighery, G.J., Cousens, R.D., Dodd, J., Lloyd, S.G., 1997, Western Weeds. A guide to the weeds of Western Australia. Plant Protection Society of Western Australia. p 144

Jackes, B.R., 2001, Plants of the Tropics. Rainforest to Heath. An Identification Guide. James Cook University. p 52

Jackes, B. R., 2010, Plants of Magnetic Island. 3rd Edition. James Cook University, Australia. p 60

Kenneally, K.E., Edinger, D. C., and Willing T., 1996, Broome and Beyond, Plants and People of the Dampier Peninsula, Kimberley, Western Australia. Department of Conservation and Land Management. p 102

Lazarides, M. & Hince, B., 1993, Handbook of Economic Plants of Australia, CSIRO. p 111

Lord, E.E., & Willis, J.H., 1999, Shrubs and Trees for Australian gardens. Lothian. p 228

Martin, F.W. & Ruberte, R.M., 1979, Edible Leaves of the Tropics. Antillian College Press, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. p 192

Paczkowska, G. & Chapman, A.R., 2000, The Western Australian Flora. A Descriptive Catalogue. Western Australian Herbarium. p 246

Peekel, P.G., 1984, (Translation E.E.Henty), Flora of the Bismarck Archipelago for Naturalists, Division of Botany, Lae, PNG. p 317, 318

Pickering, H., & Roe, E., 2009, Wild Flowers of the Victoria Falls Area. Helen Pickering, London. p 62

Plants of Haiti Smithsonian Institute http://botany.si.edu/antilles/West Indies

Rao, P. V., et al, 2021, Wild edible plants used by different tribal communities of Bhadradri Kothagudem district of Telangana state, India. Bioscience Discovery, 12(4):184-200, Oct. - 2021

Reddy, K. N. et al, 2007, Traditional knowledge on wild food plants in Andhra Pradesh. Indian Journal of Traditional Knowledge. Vol. 6(1): 223-229

Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (1999). Survey of Economic Plants for Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (SEPASAL) database. Published on the Internet; http://www.rbgkew.org.uk/ceb/sepasal/internet [Accessed 16th April 2011]

Sujanapal, P., & Sankaran, K. V., 2016, Common Plants of Maldives. FAO & Kerala FRI, p 123

Terra, G.J.A., 1973, Tropical Vegetables. Communication 54e Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam, p 46

Vernon, R., 1983, Field Guide to Important Arable Weeds of Zambia. Dept of Agriculture, Chilanga, Zambia. p 44

Wheeler, J.R.(ed.), 1992, Flora of the Kimberley Region. CALM, Western Australian Herbarium, p 605

World Checklist of Useful Plant Species 2020. Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

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/7cfcd6f6-9996-485b-9443-1dc08709cece