PLANT FACT SHEET

Malus sylvestris (L.) Miller

GENUS *Malus* **FAMILY** Rosaceae

COMMON NAMES Common crab apple, European crab apple

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Flowers - tea

The unselected fruit is bitter and is used for jelly, jam and wine. Unripe fruit can be used as a yeast in dough for bread. The fruit are eaten raw and also dried and stored to be eaten later.
It can be used for vinegar.
The flowers can be crystallised.
The flowers are dried and used for tea drinks.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub like tree. It grows to about 9 m high. There are many cultivated varieties. The leaves are alternate and oval and 4-10 cm long. The point is blunt. The base is rounded. There are fine teeth along the edge. The upper surface is dark green and it is densely hairy underneath. The wild crab apple has thorns. The flowers are white or pink. They are 3 cm wide and have 5 rounded petals. The fruit is the familiar apple. It can be a cultivated plant or a self sown or wild plant. It is 5-9 cm across and shiny red or yellow. It is sunken at the ends. The centre is a star shaped core. There can be 10 seeds.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It grows in moist soils near houses. In Argentina it grows between 1,000-1,500 m above sea level. It suits hardiness zones 3-9. Arboretum Tasmania.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Seedling trees normally have poorer fruit. Grafted varieties are used for selected kinds.

NOTES

There are about 35 Malus species and very many cultivated varieties.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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