PLANT FACT SHEET

Margaritaria discoidea (Baill.) Webster

GENUS *Margaritaria* **FAMILY** Phyllanthaceae

COMMON NAMES Common pheasant-berry, Peacock berry

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Wood ash - salt

The fruit are eaten raw or cooked.
The branches are burnt as a spice.

DESCRIPTION

It can be a shrub but also a large tree. It can be 8 m high or 20 m high. The bark is pale grey and smooth. In large trees with buttresses the bark can be rough. The leaves are oval and 2-8 cm long by 1.3-4 cm wide. They can be larger in large trees. The leaves are bright green. The edges roll under. The flowers are small and greenish-yellow. The sexes are on different trees. Male flowers are many and in the axils of leaves. Female flowers occur in pairs in the axils of leaves. The fruit is a 3 lobed capsule. It is yellow and 10 mm across. They turn blue when ripe. There are 6-8 seeds per fruit. There are several varieties.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows in damper sites of the savannah and closed secondary forest in West Africa. In Zimbabwe it grows up to 1,700 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seeds. The seeds are soaked in water overnight before planting.

NOTES

There are about 14 Margaritaria species. They grow in the tropics. It is a host to a fungus that can damage cacao.

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