PLANT FACT SHEET

Osmanthus fragrans Lour.

GENUS *Osmanthus* **FAMILY** Oleaceae

COMMON NAMES Sweet olive, Fragrant Olive, Sweet Osmanthus

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Flowers, Flowers - tea

The flowers have been used for scenting tea. They are also used to flavour wines, liqueurs, and sweets such as lotus seed soup, pastries and steamed pears.
The unripe fruit are preserved in brine like olives.
The fruit are eaten.

DESCRIPTION

An evergreen shrub or small tree. It grows 3-5 m high and sometimes to 10 m high. The leaf stalk is 0.8-2 cm long. The leaf blade is narrowly oval and 5-9 cm long by 2-3 cm wide. It is leathery. The base is broadly rounded or wedge shaped and it narrows to a long tip. There are often teeth along the top edge. The veins are raised underneath. The flowers are in the axils of leaves. There are many flowers in a group. They are yellowish or orange. The flowers have a sweet scent. The fruit is a fleshy fruit with a hard covering over the seed. The fruit is purple black and oval. It is 1-1.5 cm across.

HABITAT

It is a temperate to subtropical plant. It grows in S China. In Pakistan it grows in the temperate Himalayas between 1,200-2,200 m altitude. It suits hardiness zones 7-11. Melbourne Botanical gardens. Kyneton Botanical Gardens. In Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from half hardened cuttings.

NOTES

There are about 15-30 Osmanthus species.

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

Ambasta, S.P. (Ed.), 2000, The Useful Plants of India. CSIR India. p 416

Arora, R. K., 2014, Diversity in Underutilized Plant Species - An Asia-Pacific Perspective. Bioversity International. p 106

Bodkin, F., 1991, Encyclopedia Botanica. Cornstalk publishing, p 748

Brickell, C. (Ed.), 1999, The Royal Horticultural Society A-Z Encyclopedia of Garden Plants. Convent Garden Books. p 732

Chang Mei-chen, Qiu Lian-qing, Green, P.S., Oleaceae. Flora of China.

Cundall, P., (ed.), 2004, Gardening Australia: flora: the gardener's bible. ABC Books. p 961

Etherington, K., & Imwold, D., (Eds), 2001, Botanica's Trees & Shrubs. The illustrated A-Z of over 8500 trees and shrubs. Random House, Australia. p 503

Facciola, S., 1998, Cornucopia 2: a Source Book of Edible Plants. Kampong Publications, p 163

Fang, Q., et al, 2024, Wild edible plants of the Yao people in Jianghua, China: plant‐associated traditional knowledge and practice vital for food security and ecosystem service. Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine (2024) 20:80

Fl. cochinch. 1:29. 1790

Green, P. S., 2003, Synopsis of the Oleaceae from the Indian Sub-Continent. Kew Bulletin, Vol. 58, No. 2 (2003), pp. 257-295

Hedrick, U.P., 1919, (Ed.), Sturtevant's edible plants of the world. p 455

Hibbert, M., 2002, The Aussie Plant Finder 2002, Florilegium. p 215

http://www.botanic-gardens-ljubljana.com/en/plants

Hu, Shiu-ying, 2005, Food Plants of China. The Chinese University Press. p 627

Kermath, B. M., et al, 2014, Food Plants in the Americas: A survey of the domesticated, cultivated and wild plants used for Human food in North, Central and South America and the Caribbean. On line draft. p 593

Liu, Yi-tao, & Long, Chun-Lin, 2002, Studies on Edible Flowers Consumed by Ethnic Groups in Yunnan. Acta Botanica Yunnanica. 24(1):41-56

Lord, E.E., & Willis, J.H., 1999, Shrubs and Trees for Australian gardens. Lothian. p 248

Plants for a Future database, The Field, Penpol, Lostwithiel, Cornwall, PL22 0NG, UK. http://www.scs.leeds.ac.uk/pfaf/

Ryan, S., 2008, Dicksonia. Rare Plants Manual. Hyland House. p 44

Singh, V. B., et al, (Ed.) Horticulture for Sustainable Income and Environmental Protection. Vol. 1 p 217

Staples, G.W. and Herbst, D.R., 2005, A tropical Garden Flora. Bishop Museum Press, Honolulu, Hawaii. p 443

Sukarya, D. G., (Ed.) 2013, 3,500 Plant Species of the Botanic Gardens of Indonesia. LIPI p 426

Tanaka,

Upreti, K., et al, 2010, Diversity and Distribution of Wild Edible Fruit Plants of Uttarakhand. Bioversity Potentials of the Himalaya. p 179

Valder, P., 1999, The Garden Plants of China. Florilegium. p 313

Wiersema, J. H. & Leon, B., 2013, World Economic Plants. A Standard Reference CRC Press. 2nd Ed. p 484

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

Zeng, Y., et al, 2014, Evaluation of antioxidant activities of extracts from 19 Chinese edible flowers. SpringerPlus 2014, 3:315

Zeven, A. C. & de West, J. M. J., 1982, Dictionary of cultivated plants and their regions of diversity. Wageningen. p 41

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/8618bdcc-8589-4806-8990-ded37b0c4cc2