PLANT FACT SHEET

Tabernaemontana elegans Stapf

GENUS *Tabernaemontana* **FAMILY** Apocynaceae

COMMON NAMES Lowveld toad tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves

The fruit pulp is eaten.
The leaves (and fruit) are used to curdle milk.
Caution: Some plants in this family are poisonous.

DESCRIPTION

A small tree. It grows 3-5 m tall. It can reach 10 m tall. The bark is thick and pale cream. It is corky and deeply cracked. The small branches have tough stringy bark. The leaves are oblong and 9-20 cm long by 5-7 cm wide. They are thinly leathery, The are glossy dark green above and paler underneath. The flowers are white to cream and 2.5 cm across. They occur in loose heads in the axils of leaves or at the ends of branches. The fruit are paired. Each section is almost round and joined at the base. They are 6-7 cm long by 4-5 cm wide. They are ridged with the tip turned down into a beak. They are dark green dotted with pale grey warts. They split when mature to expose bright orange pulp with many brown seeds. The pulp is edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It is native from East Africa to South Africa. It grows at low altitudes on the ends of evergreen forests near rivers. It can be in coastal scrub forest. It is often in rocky places. In East Africa it grows from sea level to 850 m above sea level. It can grow in arid places. It suits hardiness zones 9-12.

PRODUCTION

Harvesting and Seed Production

In southern Africa plants flower September to March and fruit February to August.

NOTES

There are 99-110 Tabernaemontana species. They are tropical and subtropical.

REFERENCES

Allen, D. J., 2007, Wildflowers and Common Trees of East Africa. Camerapix Publishers p 134

Barwick, M., 2004, Tropical and Subtropical Trees. A Worldwide Encyclopedic Guide. Thames and Hudson p 401

Bull. Misc. Inform. Kew 1894:24. 1894

Cundall, P., (ed.), 2004, Gardening Australia: flora: the gardener's bible. ABC Books. p 1396

Cunningham, 1985,

Facciola, S., 1998, Cornucopia 2: a Source Book of Edible Plants. Kampong Publications, p 23

Fox, F. W. & Young, M. E. N., 1982, Food from the Veld. Delta Books. p 92

https://growwild.co.za Edible Indigenous plants

Liengme, C. A., 1981, Plants used by the Tsonga people of Gazankulu. Bothalia 13, 3 & 4: 501-518

Long, C., 2005, Swaziland's Flora - siSwati names and Uses http://www.sntc.org.sz/flora/

Magwede, K., van Wyk, B.-E., & van Wyk, A. E., 2019, An inventory of Vhavenda useful plants. South African Journal of Botany 122 (2019) 57–89

Mutie, F. M., et al, 2023, Important Medicinal and Food Taxa (Orders and Families) in Kenya, Based on Three Quantitative Approaches. Plants 2023, 12, 1145

Palgrave, K.C., 1996, Trees of Southern Africa. Struik Publishers. p 788

Peters, C. R., O'Brien, E. M., and Drummond, R.B., 1992, Edible Wild plants of Sub-saharan Africa. Kew. p 60

Planz Africa.com

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 28th March 2011]

Ruiters-Welcome, A. K., 2019, Food plants of southern Africa. Ph.D. thesis. Univ. of Johannesburg p 28

Schmidt, E., Lotter, M., & McCleland, W., 2007, Trees and shrubs of Mpumalanga and Kruger National Park. Jacana Media p 566

Swaziland's Flora Database http://www.sntc.org.sz/flora

Tredgold, M.H., 1986, Food Plants of Zimbabwe. Mambo Press. p 126

van Wyk, B, van Wyk, P, and van Wyk B., 2000, Photographic guide to Trees of Southern Africa. Briza. p 303

Welcome, A. K. & Van Wyk, B.-E., 2019, An inventory and analysis of the food plants of southern Africa. South African Journal of Botany 122 (2019) 136–179

White, F., Dowsett-Lemaire, F. and Chapman, J. D., 2001, Evergreen Forest Flora of Malawi. Kew. p 146

Williamson, J., 2005, Useful Plants of Malawi. 3rd. Edition. Mdadzi Book Trust. p 79

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/8db5eae6-a71e-4e68-87f8-2091dd536a5b