PLANT FACT SHEET

Stenocereus thurberi (Engelm.) Buxb.

GENUS *Stenocereus* **FAMILY** Cactaceae

COMMON NAMES Organ pipe cactus

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Seeds, flower

The fruit are eaten. They are also dried and stored and eaten as sweets. The pulp is boiled and used like jam. The seeds are parched and stored and used to make meal cakes. The seeds are dried and ground into a meal. The fruit are eaten fresh, skin and all. They are also dried or made into wines or syrups.
The petals are also eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A branched columnar cactus. It is greyish-green. The stems have red spines. The stems can be 2-3 m tall and 12 cm across. They form a cluster from the base. There are 12-17 prominent ribs. The spine spots are 1-2 cm apart. There are 7-9 spines which radiate out and are 1 cm long. And there are 1-3 central spines which are 2-5 cm long. The flowers are pink and 7 cm across. The fruit are edible. The fruit are 4 cm long. They lose their spines when ripe They are red outside and red or yellow inside

HABITAT

It is a subtropical plant. It needs bright sunlight. Mature plants can tolerate heavy frosts with only tip damage. Seedlings are damaged by frost. Plants need temperatures above 10°C to grow. It grows in arid and semiarid zones in the Sonoran Desert. It can grow in arid places. It suits hardiness zones 9-10.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seeds or cuttings. It can be cultivated as a hedge.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

REFERENCES

Anderson, E.F., 2001, The Cactus Family, Timber Press. p 55, 648

Andersohn, G., 1983, Cacti and Succulents. EP Publishing. p 68 (As Lemaireocereus thurberi)

Anderson, M., 2002, The World Encyclopedia of Cacti and Succulents. Hermes House, New York. p 110

Bot. Stud. 12:101. 1961

Cundall, P., (ed.), 2004, Gardening Australia: flora: the gardener's bible. ABC Books. p 1371

Facciola, S., 1998, Cornucopia 2: a Source Book of Edible Plants. Kampong Publications, p 64 (As Lemaireocereus thurberi)

Felger, R.S., Ancient Crops for the Twenty first century, in Rickie, G.A., (ed), 1979, New Agricultural Crops, AAAS Selected Symposium 38. Westview Press, Colarado. p 10 (As Lemaireocereus thurberi)

Hedrick, U.P., 1919, (Ed.), Sturtevant's edible plants of the world. p 182

Innes, C. and Glass, C., 1997, The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Cacti. Sandstone Books. p 279

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 837

Martin, F. W., et al, 1987, Perennial Edible Fruits of the Tropics. USDA Handbook 642 p 88 (As Lemaireocereus thurberi)

Moerman, D. F., 2010, Native American Ethnobotany. Timber Press. p 543

Nabhan, G. P., et al, 2022, Reviving the Arid American Diet in the Face of Climate Change: Assessing its Composition, Links to the Mesomerican Diet and Potential to Advance Indigenous Health and Diabetes Prevention. International Journal of Water Resources and Arid Environments 11(2): 81-112

Pimienta-Barrios, E., and Nobel, P. S., 1994, Piyaya (Stenocereus spp., Cactaceae): An Ancient and Modern Fruit Crop of Mexico. Economic Botany, 48(1):76-83

Pio-Leon, J. F., et al, 2017, Prioritizing Wild Edible Plants of potential new crops based on Deciduous Forest traditional knowledge by a Rancher community. Botanical Sciences 95(1): 47-59

Plant Ecology - Reviews of Research. 1955, Arid Zone Research VI. UNESCO p 97 (As Lemaireocereus thurberi)

Saunders, C.F., 1948, Edible and Useful Wild Plants. Dover. New York. p 110 (As Cereus thurberi)

Segura, S., et al, 2018, The edible fruit species in Mexico. Genet Resour Crop Evol (2018) 65:1767–1793

Tozer, F., 2007, The Uses of Wild Plants. Green Man Publishing. p 120

Wiersema, J. H. & Leon, B., 2013, World Economic Plants. A Standard Reference CRC Press. 2nd Ed. p 660

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

www.desert-tropicals.com

Yetman, D., 2002, The Guarijios of the Sierra Madre: Hidden People of Northwestern Mexico. University of New Mexico Press. p 190

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/8eea25b4-baca-48ff-93ca-cc4f522267c2