PLANT FACT SHEET

Justicia ladanoides Lam.

GENUS *Justicia* **FAMILY** Acanthaceae

COMMON NAMES Justicia

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Vegetable, flower - nectar

The leaves are cooked and eaten as a vegetable. They are used in soups and stews.

DESCRIPTION

A herb. It grows for one or two years. It grows 2 m tall. It can be hairy. The base is often swollen and has aerial roots. The leaves are opposite and each pair is at right angles to the next. The leaf stalk is up to 6 cm long. The leaves are narrowly oval and 1-11 cm long by 1-5 cm wide. The flowers have both sexes. They are usually bright red. The fruit is an oval capsule. It is 10 mm long by 3 mm wide. It splits open with force. There are 4 seeds.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows well in places with temperatures between 20°-35°C. It is in areas with a rainfall of 1,000-2,000 mm per year. It can tolerate shade. It grows in savannah woodland.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown by seeds or cuttings. Stem cuttings about 15 cm long are used. Plants need to be 30-40 cm apart. Because fruit split open the seeds get scattered so seed collection is difficult.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It grows slowly. Plants can be harvested by pulling them out after 3-5 weeks of cut off the tips when plants are 20-25 cm high. Harvesting can be carried out at 10 day intervals.

NOTES

It is similar to Justicia whytei.

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French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

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