PLANT FACT SHEET

Searsia leptodictya (Diels) T. S. Yi, A. J. Mill. & J. Wen

GENUS *Searsia* **FAMILY** Anacardiaceae

COMMON NAMES Mountain karee, Rock rhus

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Fruit - wine

The fruit are edible and have a sour taste.
The fruit is used for making an alcoholic drink. Caution: Alcohol is a cause of cancer.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub or small tree. It is usually 3-4 m tall, but can be 8 m tall. It has several stems. The bark is dark and rough. The branches hang down. The leaves have 3 leaflets. The leaflets are sword shaped and the end one is largest and 4-14 cm long by 1-3.5 cm wide. The side leaflets are one third smaller. The edges are toothed or scalloped. The leaf stalk is 4 cm long. The leaves are dull green above and paler underneath. Male and female flowers are on separate plants. The flowers are very small and pale yellow. They occur in fine heads which are 15 cm long. They can be in the axils of leaves or at the ends of branches. The fruit are flattened and slightly unequal. They are 5 mm across. They The flowers are very small and pale yellow. They are in fine heads up to 12 cm long. These are in the axils of leaves or near the ends of branches. The fruit are diamond shaped and 5 mm across. They are yellowish-brown to orange.

HABITAT

It is a subtropical and tropical plant. It grows in places with a dry season. It can tolerate frost. It suits hot arid places. It grows in open woodland, at the edges of forest and on hillsides and in rocky places. It grows in dry sandy soils and amongst rocks. In southern Africa it grows between 50-2,000 m above sea level. It can tolerate drought. It can grow in arid places.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds. Seeds germinate in 6-8 days. It is best to soak the seeds overnight before planting. Seedlings can be planted in a nursery and transplanted at the 2 leaf stage. The bush can be cut back and will re-grow.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It grows quickly. It grows 1 m in a year.

NOTES

There are about 200 Rhus species.

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