PLANT FACT SHEET

Guibourtia coleosperma (Benth.) J. Leonard

GENUS *Guibourtia* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Bushman bean, Large false mopane

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Fruit, seeds - aril, Oil

The red layer (aril) around the seed is eaten either mixed with porridge or made into a drink.
The seed are roasted and ground and eaten. They are used in soups and porridges.

DESCRIPTION

A tree which keeps its leaves most of the year. It grows up to 19 m tall. It has a large crown and the branches tend to hang downwards. The trunk has buttresses. The bark is grey to red-brown and becomes rough with age. The leaves are made up of 2 wing like leaflets. These are up to 10 cm long and 2 cm wide. They are slightly curved. They are smooth and glossy and have fine transparent dots. The leaflets have short stalks and are not hinged together. The whole leaf is carried on a stalk about 1.9 cm long. The flowers are small and white. The pods are small, shiny and shaped like a half circle. They are dark and have a stalk on one side. They have one brown seed enclosed in a scarlet skin. This red layer (aril) is edible. The seeds are edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It often grows on sand dunes in the desert. It can grow in salty soils. It grows between 900-1,100 m above sea level. In Zimbabwe it grows between 750-1,400 m above sea level. It grows in areas with an annual rainfall of about 400 mm. It can grow in arid places. It has deep roots that enable it to tolerate dry periods.

PRODUCTION

Harvesting and Seed Production

It grows slowly.

NOTES

Also as Caesalpinaceae.

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