PLANT FACT SHEET

Boscia foetida Schinz

GENUS *Boscia* **FAMILY** Capparaceae

COMMON NAMES Smelly boscia, Smelly shepherd's tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Root, Fruit, Flowers

The fruit are eaten raw.
The root is occasionally used as a chicory substitute for coffee like drinks. They are roasted for this.
The roots are pounded and also used in porridge.

DESCRIPTION

An untidy shrub. It can grow 5 m tall. It has many stems from the base. The stems are smooth and grey. The branches are thickly set with small hard leaves. The leaves grow in tufts on short knobs. The leaves are about 8 mm long. They are oval and taper to the base. The twigs and branches can have spines at their tips. The flowers are small and green, They have a horrid smell. The fruit are round and hairy and the size of a cherry. They are light brown when ripe. There are 1-3 seeds inside. They have a sweet oily pulp. They are edible. There are some subspecies.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in arid areas and on sand dunes. It grows in areas with a rainfall of about 50 mm. It grows between 50-1,400 m above sea level. It can grow in desert places. It is drought tolerant. It can grow in arid places. It is often on termite mounds.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Trees can be grown from seed. They can also be grown by layering branches. This occurs naturally in areas with higher rainfall. Plants can be cut back and will re-grow.

NOTES

There are 37 Boscia species.

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