PLANT FACT SHEET

Erythroxylum coca Lam.

GENUS *Erythroxylum* **FAMILY** Erythroxylaceae

COMMON NAMES Coca, Cocaine

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves - tea

The dried leaves yield a substance called cocaine which is a stimulant.
The leaves are used to make coca "wine".
The leaves are chewed as a masticatory.
The extract from the nut is used to flavour drinks, candy and alcoholic drinks. Caution: Alcohol is a cause of cancer.

DESCRIPTION

An erect evergreen shrub. It grows 3.5 m tall. It spreads about 1.5 m wide. The trunk is slender and branching. The leaves are oval but taper to a short tip. They are bright green and 6 cm long. The flowers have five petals and are yellowish-white. They are 6 mm across and are carried in the axils of the leaves. The fruit is soft and fleshy and 8 mm long. They are red berries.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It suits hardiness zones 10-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown by cuttings.

NOTES

There are about 250 Erythroxylum species. It contains tropane alkaloids.

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