PLANT FACT SHEET

Myrica esculenta Buch.-Ham. ex D.Don

GENUS *Myrica* **FAMILY** Myricaceae

COMMON NAMES Box myrtle, Bay berry

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit

The ripe fruit are eaten raw. They are also used for a drink and desserts. It is also used in distilling. They are also pickled.

DESCRIPTION

An evergreen tree. It grows to 4-12 m high. The trunk is 40 cm across. The bark is grey. The trunk branches early and in usually not straight. The young branches are hairy. The leaves have stalks. The stalks are 0.3-2 cm long. They are hairy. The leaves are 3-15 cm long by 1-4.5 cm wide. They are sword shaped but broader near the base. They are dark green on top and paler underneath. There can be teeth along the edge towards the tip. The flowers are of one sex. The male flowering cluster is much branched and are erect but can hang over at the tip. They are 4-9 cm long. The female flowering stalks are erect and 1-3.5 cm long with many flowers. They are greenish or slightly red. The fruit is oval and red when ripe. They are edible.

HABITAT

A subtropical plant. In Nepal it grows between 1300-2100 m altitude. It grows in open places. In China it grows in open forests on mountain slopes between 300-2500 m altitude in S China. It grows in tropical evergreen forest. It is light demanding and slightly drought tolerant. It occurs between 100-1,500 m altitude in Vietnam. It grows in subtropical broad-leaved evergreen forest.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed.

Harvesting and Seed Production

In India fruit are available March to May.

NOTES

There are about 50 Myrica species.
Possibly now Morella.

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