PLANT FACT SHEET

Vaccinium myrtillus L.

GENUS *Vaccinium* **FAMILY** Ericaceae

COMMON NAMES Whortleberry, Bilberry, European blueberry

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Shoots, Leaves, Leaves - tea, Flowers

The fruit are eaten in jams, pies, and wine. The fruit are also eaten raw with sugar and cream.
The leaves are dried and used for herbal tea. The young leaves are also chewed. They are added to soups.
The fruit are used in a side dish with game and meat.

DESCRIPTION

A small shrubby bush. It loses its leaves during the year. It is round and grows to 45 cm high and spreads 90 cm wide. The leaves are 25 mm long and have fine teeth along the edge. There are hairs on the veins underneath. The flowers are in small clusters. They are green when they open but turn red. The fruit are blue-black berries. They are blue inside. They are 6 mm across. They are edible.

HABITAT

It grows in north temperate regions. It can grow on poor stony soils. It can tolerate strong winds and frost. In Kazakhstan it grows in conifer forest with a good humus layer. In China it grows in high mountains in northern China. It grows in acidic and wet soils. It suits hardiness zones 3-9.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants grow easily from seed. They can also be grown vegetatively.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Bushes produce fruit after 3 years. Bushes keep growing for 25 years.

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