PLANT FACT SHEET

Searsia pendulina (Jacq. ex Willd.)

GENUS *Searsia* **FAMILY** Anacardiaceae

COMMON NAMES White karee

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit

The fruit are eaten. They are tasty when dried.
They are also soaked overnight in milk or are mixed with the gum of Acacia karoo to make a sticky sweet.
The fruit are mixed with the gum or Acacia karoo to make a sticky sweet.
They are also used for beer.

DESCRIPTION

An evergreen shrub or small tree. It grows 4-10 m high. It has a single stem but can have several stems. It can form thickets. It often loses many leaves during the year. The crown is round with drooping branches. The bark is grey-brown. The side shoots on young stems often have spines. The leaves are alternate. The leaves have 3 leaflets. The leaflets do not have stalks. The leaves are dull green above. The leaf stalks are 4 cm long. The end leaflet is sword shaped. It is 3-9 cm long by 0.6-1.5 cm wide. It tapers to the tip. The flowers are in panicles. They are small and greenish-yellow. Male and female flowers are on separate plants. They are in branched groups in the axils of leaves or near the ends of branches. These are 9 cm long and are furry. The fruit is fleshy with a stone inside. It is round and red but dries black. They are 3 mm across.

HABITAT

It is a subtropical plant. It grows in places with a marked dry season. It is often on soils that are regularly waterlogged. It can tolerate frost. In southern Africa it grows from 360-900 m above sea level. It can grow in arid places. It grows in semi-desert areas mainly along river banks. It is reasonably drought resistant.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds or cuttings. Fresh seeds germinate easily. Seeds germinate in 8-14 days. Seedlings can be transplanted at the 2 leaf stage. It can be cut back and re-grows. It can be grown from cuttings. Cuttings 10-20 cm long are suitable.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants grow quickly. It grows 1 m in a year.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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