PLANT FACT SHEET

Vitex fischeri var. keniensis (Turrill) Meerts

GENUS *Vitex* **FAMILY** Lamiaceae

COMMON NAMES Meru oak

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit

DESCRIPTION

A tree which loses its leaves. It grows 20 m high. It can be 30 m high along river banks. The trunk is clear and straight. The bark is pale brown. It has narrow grooves along it. The leaves are compound. They have 5 leaflets which are light green. The leaf stalk is long and hairy. The leaves droop when young. They have a pointed tip. The leaflets are pale underneath with velvety hairs. The flowers are small and cream with one mauve petal lobe. The flowers are 1 cm long and occur in large heads. The fruit are rounded and 1.5 cm across. They are green but become black when ripe. The fruit are edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in the lowlands and the highlands. In East Africa it grows between 1,300-2,100 m above sea level. It suits the seasonally dry tropics.

NOTES

Also put in the family Verbenaceae.

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