PLANT FACT SHEET

Dendrolobium umbellatum (L.) Benth.

GENUS *Dendrolobium* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Horse bush tree, Sea vetch tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Fruit

The young leaves are used as a vegetable.
The roasted fruit are eaten in the Andaman Islands.

DESCRIPTION

A small tree or shrub. It can grow between 1.5 and 12.5 m tall. The stems are grey brown and finely rough. The leaves have 3 leaflets. They tend to be oval and 5.5-14 cm long by 1.6-10 cm wide. The leaflets are oval with silky hairs underneath. The leaflets are 3-5 cm long by 1.5-3 cm wide. The tip tends to be rounded. The leaf stalk is 2-3 cm long. The flowers are 1.5-2 cm long and have a scent. The flower clusters occur in the axils of leaves on very short stalks. The petals can be white or yellow and often there is a greenish patch near the base of the standard. They are 1 cm across. The fruit are pods 1-5 cm long. They become hard and woody. There are 2-7 segments in the pod. They are only slightly indented along the edge. It does not split open.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. In Papua New Guinea it occurs from sea level to 180 m altitude. It grows along intertidal rivers and sandy shores and in lowland forests. It needs well drained soil. It needs a sunny position in the drier tropics. It grows near sea shores. It grows on sandy soils and also grows on soils with high pH. It is drought tolerant.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It can grow quickly.

NOTES

There are about 350 Desmodium species. They are mostly in the tropics.

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