PLANT FACT SHEET

Combretum hereroense Schinz

GENUS *Combretum* **FAMILY** Combretaceae

COMMON NAMES Russet bush-willow, Mouse-eared combretum

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves - tea, Gum

The dried fruit are used as a tea substitute. The seeds are considered poisonous and are removed.
The fruit are also eaten fresh.
The leaves are dried and used for tea.

DESCRIPTION

A small tree. It can be up to 11 m tall, but is often 3-5 m tall. The trunk is often crooked and can be 23 cm across. The leaves can be oval or heart shaped. The leaves are 1.9-5 cm long by 1.3-2.5 cm wide. The are dark green and shiny above and yellow-green underneath. Often there are dense velvety hairs underneath. The flowers are small and white or greenish-yellow. They occur in long spikes. The fruit are 2.5 cm long by 1.9 cm wide. They have 4 wings. They are bright red.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It often grows in stony and shallow soils. It grows at medium to low altitudes in open wooded grassland. It can grow in salty soils. It can tolerate drought. It grows between 30-1,465 m above sea level. It can grow in arid places.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds. The seeds are best removed from the outer covering and soaked in water for a few hours. Seeds germinate in 1-2 weeks. Seedlings can be transplanted at the 3 leaf stage. It can be cut back and will re-grow.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is slow growing. Seedlings can reach one metre in 18-24 months.

NOTES

There are about 255 Combretum species.

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