PLANT FACT SHEET

Use with caution

This plant can be harmful if it is eaten raw, in large amounts or without the right preparation. Read the whole fact sheet before use.

Detarium senegalense J. F. Gmelin

GENUS *Detarium* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Tallow tree, Dattock

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Fruit, Nuts, Leaves, Vegetable

The sweet pulp of the fruit is eaten fresh. It is also dried.
CAUTION: The seeds are said to be poisonous. There are toxic and non toxic varieties. They are cooked for a drink.
Sweet pulp from the roots is used as a substitute for sugar.

DESCRIPTION

A small tree. It grows to 5-7 m high in savannah areas. It can be 36 m high. It has a short trunk and a spreading crown. The bark is grey and rough. It flakes off in angular sections. The bark is hard to cut. The leaves are made up of 5-12 leaflets along a stalk. The leaves are 6-10 cm long and 2.5-5 cm wide. They are rounded at the base. The leaves are pale green and leathery. The leaflet stalk is stout and 3-5 mm long. The flowers are creamy white. They occur in clusters. Individual flowers are 10 mm across. The fruit are round or oval and 4 cm across. They contain one seed. The flesh is edible. The flesh is green and a fibrous network attaches to the hard shell of the seed. The kernel of the seed is a deep purple brown.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in tropical Africa. It grows in savannah woodland. It occurs where the rainfall is 900-1600 mm per year. It also grows near beaches and coastal sand dunes.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown by seed.

NOTES

Also as Caesalpinaceae.

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