PLANT FACT SHEET

Opuntia robusta H. L. Wendl. ex Pfeiff.

GENUS *Opuntia* **FAMILY** Cactaceae

COMMON NAMES Wheel cactus

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, stem

The young circular pads are eaten. They are cooked with onions, peppers, cheese, eggs and spices and used as fillings in tacos. They are also marinated and eaten in salads or cooked with other foods.
The fruit are eaten raw or pureed or made into jellies, jams and pies.
They are also used for syrup and fermented drinks.

DESCRIPTION

A tree like cactus. It grows to 2-5 m tall. The joints are flat and almost round. They are greyish-green and 30 cm wide. They are covered with slender spines which are 5 cm long. Several spines can occur together. The flowers are yellow. They are about 7 cm across. The fruit are deep red.

HABITAT

It is a warm temperate plant. It needs bright sunlight. It needs a temperature above 10°C. In Argentina it grows between 300-2,100 m above sea level. Melbourne Botanical Gardens. Adelaide Botanical Gardens. It can grow in arid places.

NOTES

There are about 250 Opuntia species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

REFERENCES

Anderson, E.F., 2001, The Cactus Family, Timber Press. p 516

Chapman, P and Martin, M., 1989, Exotic Cacti, HP Books p 41

Chavez-Santoscoy, R. A. et al, 2009, Phenolic Composition, Antioxidant Capacity and InVitro Cancer Cell Cytotoxicity of Nine Prickly Pear (Opuntia spp.) Juices. Plant Foods fod Nutrition 64:146-152

Crawford, M., 2012, How to grow Perennial Vegetables. Green Books. p 139

Creasey, R., 2000, Edible Mexican Garden. Periplus p 51

Cruz, I. M., et al, 2015, Edible fruits and seeds in the State of Mexico. Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Agricolas. Vol. 6. Num. 2 pp 331-346

Desert Survivors Online Plant Database

Enum. diagn. Cact. 165. 1837 (H. L. Wendland, Cat. hort. Herrnh. 1835, num. nud.?)

Facciola, S., 1998, Cornucopia 2: a Source Book of Edible Plants. Kampong Publications, p 65

Gallegos-Vazquez, C., et al, 2012, Morphological diversity of xoconostles (Opuntia spp.) or acidic cactus pears: A Mexican contribution to functional foods. Fruits, Vol. 67, p. 109-220

Hermandez Bermejo, J.E., and Leon, J. (Eds.), 1994, Neglected Crops. 1492 from a different perspective. FAO Plant Production and Protection Series No 26. FAO, Rome. p15

http://www.botanic-gardens-ljubljana.com/en/plants

Innes, C. and Glass, C., 1997, The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Cacti. Sandstone Books. p 221

Kermath, B. M., et al, 2014, Food Plants in the Americas: A survey of the domesticated, cultivated and wild plants used for Human food in North, Central and South America and the Caribbean. On line draft. p 589

Lamp, C & Collet F., 1989, Field Guide to Weeds in Australia. Inkata Press. p 190

Morley, B.D., & Toelken, H.R., (Eds), 1983, Flowering Plants in Australia. Rigby. p 74

Nabhan, G. P., et al, 2022, Reviving the Arid American Diet in the Face of Climate Change: Assessing its Composition, Links to the Mesomerican Diet and Potential to Advance Indigenous Health and Diabetes Prevention. International Journal of Water Resources and Arid Environments 11(2): 81-112

Segura, S. et al, 2018, The edible fruit species in Mexico. Genet Resour Crop Evol (2018) 65:1767–1793

Wiersema, J. H. & Leon, B., 2013, World Economic Plants. A Standard Reference CRC Press. 2nd Ed. p 479

World Checklist of Useful Plant Species 2020. Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

PROVIDED BY **Food Plants International**

French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

LICENCE CC BY-NC-SA 3.0

ONLINE FACT SHEET https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/cdbe44cf-e916-4686-8da2-d33138bab031