PLANT FACT SHEET

Alchornea cordifolia (Schum. & Thonn.) Mull.-Arg.

GENUS *Alchornea* **FAMILY** Euphorbiaceae

COMMON NAMES Christmas bush

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves - drink, Leaves

The dried leaves are cooked and used to make a tea drink.
The fruit are eaten raw.

DESCRIPTION

A sprawling shrub. It can grow 8 m tall. The leaves are simple and alternate. They are 10-28 cm long by 7-16 cm wide. The leaves are oval with a heart shaped base and with irregular teeth along the edge. They have distinct glands at the base of the leaf blade. The leaf stalk is long. The male flowers are on long spikes. The female flowers are on short stalks.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows on the edges of forests near fresh and sea water. It grows in open places. In Nigeria it has been recorded at 1,060 m above sea level. It suits acid soils.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from stem cuttings. They can also be grown from seed. Plants can be cut back and will re-grow.

Harvesting and Seed Production

In Central African Republic plants flower in April and fruit in July.

NOTES

There are about 70 Alchornea species. They are in the tropics. It is regarded as a medicine.

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