PLANT FACT SHEET

Leptactina benguelensis (Welw. ex Benth. & Hook.f.) R. D. Good

GENUS *Leptactina* **FAMILY** Rubiaceae

COMMON NAMES Ivory carpet

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves - tea, Flowers - nectar

The ripe fruit are eaten raw as a snack.
The dried leaves are used to add flavour to tea.
The flowers are sucked for their sweet nectar.

DESCRIPTION

A wiry shrubby herb. It keeps growing from year to year. It can be erect and with many branches or form cushions along the ground 30 cm to 2 m across and 1 m high. The stems arise from a thick woody rootstock. The stems can be hairy. The bark peels on old stems. The leaves are long and oval. They are 2-12 cm long. The leaves are stiff and shiny above and with a few hairs underneath. The flowers are tube shaped and white. They have a scent. They are covered with small curved hairs. The fruit are a rounded berry. They are 1-2 cm long. They turn orange to yellow. They have dark brown seeds.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows in woodland and on rocky hillsides. It grows between 900-1,400 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds or by root suckers.

Harvesting and Seed Production

In Tanzania fruit are collected from November to April.

REFERENCES

Facciola, S., 1998, Cornucopia 2: a Source Book of Edible Plants. Kampong Publications, p 212 (As Leptactina benguelensis subsp. pubescens)

Ferns, Useful Tropical Plants

Flora Zambesiaca. http://apps.kew.org/efloras (As Leptactina benguelensis subsp. pubescens)

Fowler, D. G., 2007, Zambian Plants: Their Vernacular Names and Uses. Kew. p 57 (As Leptactina benguelensis subsp. pubescens)

Lautenschläger, T., et al, 2018, First large-scale ethnobotanical survey in the province of Uíge, northern Angola. Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine (2018) 14:51

Peters, C. R., O'Brien, E. M., and Drummond, R.B., 1992, Edible Wild plants of Sub-saharan Africa. Kew. p 171 (As Leptactina benguelensis subsp. pubescens)

Reis, S. V. and Lipp, F. L., 1982, New Plant Sources for Drugs and Foods from the New York Botanical Garden herbarium. Harvard. p 288

Ruffo, C. K., Birnie, A. & Tengnas, B., 2002, Edible Wild Plants of Tanzania.
RELMA p 440

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/d23a2182-a637-49b8-b0d3-3ffc6da0db5c