PLANT FACT SHEET

Helicia australasica F. Muell.

GENUS *Helicia* **FAMILY** Proteaceae

COMMON NAMES Creek silky oak, Austral oak

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit

The ripe fruit are eaten raw.

DESCRIPTION

A slender tree. It grows 5-10 m tall. The bark is smooth and dark grey. The leaves are alternate and smooth. They are oblong but taper to the base. They are 10-19 cm long by 4-7 cm wide. They are shiny green on top and paler underneath. The veins are distinct and sometimes the edges of the leaves have teeth. The flowers are creamy-white. The style sticks out. Flowers are 1-1.5 cm long and have a scent. Many flowers occur together on long shoots in the axils of leaves. The fruit is oval and fleshy. It is 1.5 cm long by 1 cm wide and purple black. There is thin flesh around one seed. The fruit are edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows naturally in monsoon forests near streams. It grows from sea level to 1100 m altitude in tropical Queensland. They need deep soils and a shady site.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Trees flower in August to November and fruit January to April.

NOTES

There are about 90-120 Helicia species mostly in SE Asia with some in N Australia.

REFERENCES

Brock, J., 1993, Native Plants of Northern Australia, Reed. p 216

Cherikoff V. & Isaacs, J., The Bush Food Handbook. How to gather, grow, process and cook Australian Wild Foods. Ti Tree Press, Australia p 200

Cooper, W. and Cooper, W., 2004, Fruits of the Australian Tropical Rainforest. Nokomis Editions, Victoria, Australia. p 412

Dunlop, C.R., Leach, G.J. & Cowie, I.D., 1995, Flora of the Darwin Region. Vol 2. Northern Territory Botanical Bulletin No 20. p 126

Elliot, W.R., & Jones, D.L., 1990, Encyclopedia of Australian Plants suitable for cultivation. Vol 5. Lothian. p 285

Flora of Australia Volume 16, Elaeagnaceae, Proteaceae 1. Melbourne: CSIRO Australia (1995) p 395

Jackes, B.R., 2001, Plants of the Tropics. Rainforest to Heath. An Identification Guide. James Cook University. p 75

Jones D, L, 1986, Ornamental Rainforest Plants in Australia, Reed Books, p 46

Smith, N., 1993, Bushfoods - an Annotated List: Fruit and Seeds Eaten by Aboriginal People in Northern Australia. Winnellie, NorthernTerritory. The Archives of the Rare Fruit Council of Australia.

territorynativeplants.com.au

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/d3e72584-2f5d-4999-ab8b-287add64a361