PLANT FACT SHEET

Moringa ovalifolia Dinter & A. Berger

GENUS *Moringa* **FAMILY** Moringaceae

COMMON NAMES African moringo, Phantom tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Bark, Stem, Roots, Leaves, Fruit

The bark, stem and roots are eaten. The root is eaten raw.
The root although edible is sour. It is like horseradish. They are also roasted.
The leaves and fruit are eaten.
The fruit are eaten as a snack.

DESCRIPTION

A succulent tree. It grows up to 7 m high. It has a squat, swollen stem. The bark is smooth and pale grey. It is shiny. It loses its leaves during the year. The leaves are alternate and compound. They are crowded near the ends of branches. Leaves are large and up to 60 cm long. They are made up of 4-7 pairs of leaf stalks with 2-7 pairs of opposite leaflets then one at the end. The leaflets are 1.3-2.5 cm long by 0.7-1.8 cm wide. They are light green. The flowers are 2-3 mm across with 4-5 white petals. The flowers occur in large sprays made up of many branches. These appear just before the first young leaves. The fruit is like a pod. It is flat with 3 sides. It is yellowish-green to pinkish-grey. These are 40 cm long and split into 3 valves. The seeds have wings.

HABITAT

It is a subtropical plant. It is native to SW Africa. It grows in dry rocky hillsides and sandy flats. It grows in hot arid places. It grows in areas with an annual rainfall between 50-350 mm. It grows from 175-1,600 m above sea level. It can grow in arid places.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seeds.

NOTES

There are 13 Moringa species.

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