PLANT FACT SHEET

Sterculia africana (Lour.) Fiori

GENUS *Sterculia* **FAMILY** Malvaceae

COMMON NAMES African star-chestnut

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Seeds, Bark

The seeds are roasted and eaten. They can be eaten raw.
The seeds are also pounded and sieved and the flour cooked with vegetables.

DESCRIPTION

A medium to tall tree. It can be 15 m tall. It has a thick trunk. It can be 2.5 m across. The leaves are light green and crowded at the ends of branches. They are 5-15 cm long and 4-13 cm wide. They can be broadly egg shaped or 3-5 lobed. The lobes are pointed and the base indented. The flowers are in sprays at the ends of twigs. They are 1.9 cm across and with 5-6 petal like lobes. They are yellow with red stripes. The flowers are male and female. The fruit have 1-5 follicles or lobes. These are thick, hard, oblong pods. They have a tail like point. They open wide to reveal stinging hairs. There are blue-black seeds inside. These are edible. The seeds are rich in oil.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It often grows on hot, dry areas on rocky hills. In East Africa it grows from sea level to 1,000 m altitude. It can grow in semi desert. It can grow in arid places. In Brisbane Botanical Gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Seeds are collected during the dry season.

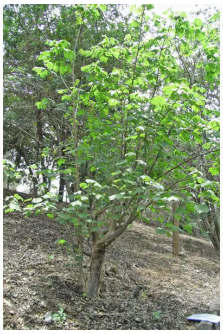
NOTES

Also put in the family Sterculiaceae.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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