PLANT FACT SHEET

Calodendrum capense (L.f.) Thunb.

GENUS *Calodendrum* **FAMILY** Rutaceae

COMMON NAMES Cape chestnut

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Nuts, Seeds

The seeds are bitter. They are eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A small to medium sized tree. It grows 7-20 m high. The bark is grey and smooth. It has buttresses. It has a spreading crown. The leaves are opposite and simple. They are large and oblong. They are 6-13 cm long by 3.5-7.5 cm wide. They can be 22 cm long. They are dark green with scattered gland-dots. The edges can be wavy. The flowers are large and striking. The petals can be white or pink. They are like feathers. The flowers are long and narrow. They are 4 cm long by 0.5 cm wide. Flowers have both sexes. The fruit is a brown capsule. It is 3.5 cm across. It has 5 lobes and is woody. It has a knobbly surface.

HABITAT

A subtropical plant. It is native to the southern half of Africa. It grows in forest and wooded ravines. It South Africa it grows from sea level to 2000 m altitude. It needs protection from frost when young. It does best in full sunlight. In Wittunga Botanical Gardens Adelaide. It suits the subtropics. It suits hardiness zones 9-11. Brisbane Botanical gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It is grown from fresh seed. It can also be grown from cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is slow growing. Seedling trees can take 12 years to flower. Grafted trees flower sooner.

NOTES

There is only one (2) Calodendrum species. It is natural in South Africa. The oil from the seeds is used for soap.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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