PLANT FACT SHEET

Vaccinium arctostaphylos L.

GENUS *Vaccinium* **FAMILY** Ericaceae

COMMON NAMES Caucasian whortleberry

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves - tea

The fruit are eaten raw. They are also used for jam and cooked fruit.
The leaves are used as a substitute for tea.

DESCRIPTION

A densely branched shrub. It loses its leaves. It can grow 3 m high and spreads 1.8 m wide. It is often a smaller bush. The young shoots are reddish brown. The leaves are sword shaped and large and green. They are 10 cm long by 2-3 cm wide. There are fine teeth along the edge. The leaves turn brilliant purple and red in autumn. These remain on the bush for several weeks. The flowers are in groups 3-5 cm long. They grow in axils on the previous year's growth. The flowers are bell shaped and are white with pink or purple tinges. The fruit are purple-black berries. They are round, shiny and 1 cm across.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It is hardy in temperatures down to -15°C.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown by seed or cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is slow growing.

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