PLANT FACT SHEET

Opuntia fragilis (Nutt.) Haw.

GENUS *Opuntia* **FAMILY** Cactaceae

COMMON NAMES Brittle prickly pear

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves, Seeds, Stem

The spines are scorched off in a hot fire and the stem segments are then roasted. The inner part is then eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A cactus. It is low and shrubby. It forms clumps 5-10 cm high and 30 cm across. The stem segments are short and vary in shape. They are studded with clusters of up to 9 spines. The flowers are greenish-yellow. The fruit are green and egg shaped. They become red as they ripen.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It extends to 56°N into British Columbia in Canada. It grows in dry areas. In California it can grow to 2,000 m altitude or higher. It suits hardiness zones 6-10.

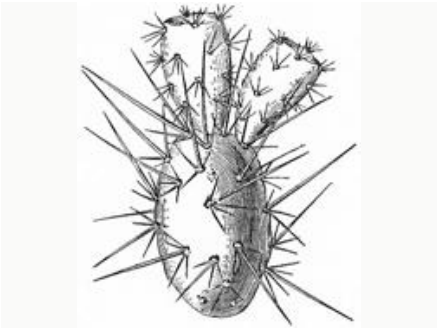
NOTES

There are about 250 Opuntia species. It is used in medicine.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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ONLINE FACT SHEET https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/db21ef7e-d636-425f-8885-be3af2e3399f