PLANT FACT SHEET

Piper capense L.f.

GENUS *Piper* **FAMILY** Piperaceae

COMMON NAMES Wild pepper, Staart pepper

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Spice, Fruit, Leaves

The berries are spicy and can be used to flavour soups and stews.
The leaves can be eaten and used to flavour salads, soups and stews.

DESCRIPTION

A soft wooded straggling herb. It can also be a small tree. It can grow to 4 m high. The bark is light brown and corky. The stems and branches have thickened nodes. The leaves are simple and alternate. The leaves are 7-15 cm long and broad. They are dark green and glossy above. They are paler underneath. The tip tapers towards a point. The base has shallow lobes. The leaf stalk is 2-4 cm long. There are leafy arrangements (stipules) near the leaf stalk. The flowers are white and small. they occur in dense spikes 8 cm long. These are on short side branches. The fruit is a round berry. These are densely clustered along the stalk about 8 cm long. They are green at first then turn black when ripe.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It occurs in moist, shady places, in forests and along streams. In Zimbabwe it grows between 650-2,250 m above sea level.

NOTES

There are between 1000-2000 Piper species. They are mostly in the tropics.

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