PLANT FACT SHEET

Use with caution

This plant can be harmful if it is eaten raw, in large amounts or without the right preparation. Read the whole fact sheet before use.

Rauvolfia caffra Sond.

GENUS *Rauvolfia* **FAMILY** Apocynaceae

COMMON NAMES Quinine tree, Tree reserpine

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Bark - flavouring

The bark is put into beer to increase the flavour and strength.
Caution: Several parts of this plant are very toxic.

DESCRIPTION

A tree. It grows 4.5-6 m high and spreads 3-4.5 m wide. It can be taller. The bark if grey or brown and broken into small squares. The leaves are in rings of 3-6. They are simple and glossy. They are bright green above and dull green underneath. The leaves are 30 cm long. They have a white midrib. The flowers are white and in dense heads. These are at the ends of branches. The fruit is fleshy and almost round. They are green with white spots. They become black and wrinkled when mature. They have 1 or 2 seeds.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows on the edge of forests and near rivers. In Malawi it grows from 650-1,700 m altitude. In Zimbabwe it grows between 840-1540 m above sea level. It suits hardiness zones 9-11.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from seeds or large cuttings or sections of branches.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is fast growing. In Central African Republic plants flower in March.

NOTES

There are about 60-120 Rauvolfia species. It is used in medicine.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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ONLINE FACT SHEET https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/e28e9296-c1e8-4fbe-b924-7eb0e8fa9fb4