PLANT FACT SHEET

Trichilia dregeana E. Mey. ex Harv. & Sond.

GENUS *Trichilia* **FAMILY** Meliaceae

COMMON NAMES Forest Natal mahogany, White mahogany

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, seeds - aril, Fruit, Oil

The seeds are eaten after removing the seed coat.
The red aril is cooked as a vegetable.
The seeds are rich in fat and used in cooking.

DESCRIPTION

A very large tree. It grows up to 30 m tall. The bark is grey and smooth. The trunk can have small buttresses. The leaves are made up of 3-4 pairs of leaflets and a leaflet at the end. The leaflets are 21 cm long by 8.5 cm wide. They are dark glossy green above. The flowers are large and creamy-white. The petals are up to 2.4 cm long. They occur in short branched sprays in the axils of leaves. These are 5 cm long. The fruit is an almost round creamy-brown capsule. It is 3 cm across. It splits into 3-4 valves. The seeds are black and covered by a red seed coat (aril).

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in evergreen forest. It grows between 775-1,525 m above sea level. It can grow in arid places.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds. Seeds need to be sown fresh. It can be cut back and will re-grow.

Harvesting and Seed Production

In Tanzania fruit are collected from April to July. Dried seeds can be stored for several months.

NOTES

There are about 92 Trichilia species. They grow in the tropics.

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PROVIDED BY **Food Plants International**

French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

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