PLANT FACT SHEET

Smilax australis R. Br.

GENUS *Smilax* **FAMILY** Smilacaceae

COMMON NAMES False sarsparilla, Austral Sarsparilla, Greenbrier

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves

The ripe fruit are eaten raw. They have a slightly hot taste. They are used for jams and jellies.
The young leaves cab be eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A climber which scrambles widely. It can grow to many metres high. The stems are wiry and 0.5 cm across. They have some sharp prickly thorns. Plants are separately male and female. The leaves are alternate and smooth. They are broadly oval and leathery. The leaf blade is 5-14.5 cm long by 3.2-9.5 cm wide. Leaves are dark green above and paler underneath. There are 3-5 veins running along the leaf. The flowers are small and cream. They are about 0.3-0.6 cm across. Several occur together in the axils of leaves. The fruit is a smooth berry. It is 0.8-1 cm across. They are purple to black when ripe. There are 1-2 seeds inside.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows naturally in coastal monsoon vine thickets. It grows above the beach or near streams. In tropical Queensland it grows from sea level to 1300 m altitude. Melbourne Botanical Gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown by seeds or cuttings. Seeds can take a few months to germinate.

NOTES

There are about 300 Smilax species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

REFERENCES

Bodkin, F., 1991, Encyclopedia Botanica. Cornstalk publishing, p 932

Brock, J., 1993, Native Plants of Northern Australia, Reed. p 299

Caton, J.M. & Hardwick, R. J., 2016, Field Guide to Useful Native Plants from Temperate Australia. Harbour Publishing House. p 238

Cherikoff V. & Isaacs, J., The Bush Food Handbook. How to gather, grow, process and cook Australian Wild Foods. Ti Tree Press, Australia p 201

Cooper, W. and Cooper, W., 2004, Fruits of the Australian Tropical Rainforest. Nokomis Editions, Victoria, Australia. p 516

Cowie, I, 2006, A Survey of Flora and vegetation of the proposed Jaco-Tutuala-Lore National Park. Timor-Lests (East Timor) www.territorystories.nt/gov.au p 52

Cronin, L., 1989, The Concise Australian Flora. Reed. p 38

Flora of Australia Volume 49, Oceanic Islands 1, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra. (1994) p 527

Haslam, S., 2004, Noosa's Native Plants. Noosa Integrated Catchment Assn. Inc. p 304

Hibbert, M., 2002, The Aussie Plant Finder 2002, Florilegium. p 291

Hinton, B & B., 1982, A Wilderness in Bloom. Wildflowers of tropical Australia. p 22

Jackes, B.R., 2001, Plants of the Tropics. Rainforest to Heath. An Identification Guide. James Cook University. p 82

Jackes, B. R., 2010, Plants of Magnetic Island. 3rd Edition. James Cook University, Australia. p 52

Jones, D.L. & Gray, B., 1977, Australian Climbing Plants. Reed. p 141

Jones D, L, 1986, Ornamental Rainforest Plants in Australia, Reed Books, p 299

King, M. & Horsfall, J., 2023, Kimberley Bush Food. Edible Plants of the Kimberley Region of Western Australia. UWAP. p 238

Lazarides, M. & Hince, B., 1993, Handbook of Economic Plants of Australia, CSIRO. p 220

Melzer, R. & Plumb, J., 2011, Plants of Capricornia. Belgamba, Rockhampton. p 389

Morley, B.D., & Toelken, H.R., (Eds), 1983, Flowering Plants in Australia. Rigby. p 341

Nicholson, N & H., 1996, Australian Rainforest Plants 3, Terania Rainforest Publishing. NSW. p 57

Paczkowska, G. & Chapman, A.R., 2000, The Western Australian Flora. A Descriptive Catalogue. Western Australian Herbarium. p 123

Recher, P, 2001, Fruit Spirit Botanical Gardens Plant Index. www.nrg.com.au/~recher/ seedlist.html p 7 (?Smilax australiana)

Ryan, M. (Ed.), 2003, Wild Plants of Greater Brisbane. Queensland Museum. p 115

Smith, N. M., 1991, Ethnobotanical Field Notes from the Northern Territory, Australia, J. Adelaide Bot. Gard. 14(1): 1-65

Smith, N., 1993, Bushfoods - an Annotated List: Fruit and Seeds Eaten by Aboriginal People in Northern Australia. Winnellie, NorthernTerritory. The Archives of the Rare Fruit Council of Australia.

Wheeler, J.R.(ed.), 1992, Flora of the Kimberley Region. CALM, Western Australian Herbarium, p 989

Wightman, G. & Andrews, M., 1991, Bush Tucker Identikit. Common Native Food Plants of Australia's top end. Conservation Commission Northern Territory. p 54

Wightman, G. M. & Andrews, M.R., 1989, Plants of Northern Territory Monsoon Vine Forests (Vol 1). Conservation Commission of Northern Territory. p 136

World Checklist of Useful Plant Species 2020. Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Yallakool Reserve Plant List July 1, 2009 Off internet

Yunupinu Banjgul, Laklak Yunupinu-Marika, et al. 1995, Rirratjinu Ethnobotany: Aboriginal Plant Use from Yirrkala, Arnhem Land, Australia. Northern Territory Botanical Bulletin No 21. Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory. p 70

PROVIDED BY **Food Plants International**

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

LICENCE CC BY-NC-SA 3.0

ONLINE FACT SHEET https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/e5ea3b85-a62f-48ab-8b60-17e50a833015