PLANT FACT SHEET

# *Antidesma ghaesembilla* Gaertn.

**GENUS** *Antidesma* **FAMILY** Phyllanthaceae

**COMMON NAMES** Black currant tree

## EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

**Edible parts:** Fruit, leaves - condiment, Spice, Leaves

The fruit are eaten raw when ripe. They are sour. They can be used for jam. The fruit are also used with meat and fish dishes.
The leaves are used as acid flavouring in food.

## DESCRIPTION

A stout and erect tree. It grows 3-8 m tall and spreads 2-4 m across. The trunk is covered with chalky yellowish brown bark. It is rough and mottled. The timber is light coloured and hard. The young branches and new leaves have woolly hairs. The tree loses its leaves during the dry season. The leaves are 3-7.5 cm long by 2-3 cm wide. They are broadly oval with a blunt tip. The leaves are thinly textured and shiny on the upper surface but paler underneath. The leaves are numerous. The flowers are numerous and densely clustered. Male and female flowers occur on separate trees. The male flower spikes are 2.5-5 cm long and the female flowers are on short thick stalks at the ends of branches. The individual flowers are very small and about 1-2 mm long. The fruit are small, oval and fleshy. They are 0.4-0.6 cm long and purple when ripe. The fruit are edible.

## HABITAT

A tropical plant. They are common at low and medium altitudes throughout the islands of the Philippines. It grows to 120 m altitude in Malaysia. In Australia they grow in the north in open vine forest. In Vietnam it grows along riverbanks.

## PRODUCTION

### Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed or cuttings.

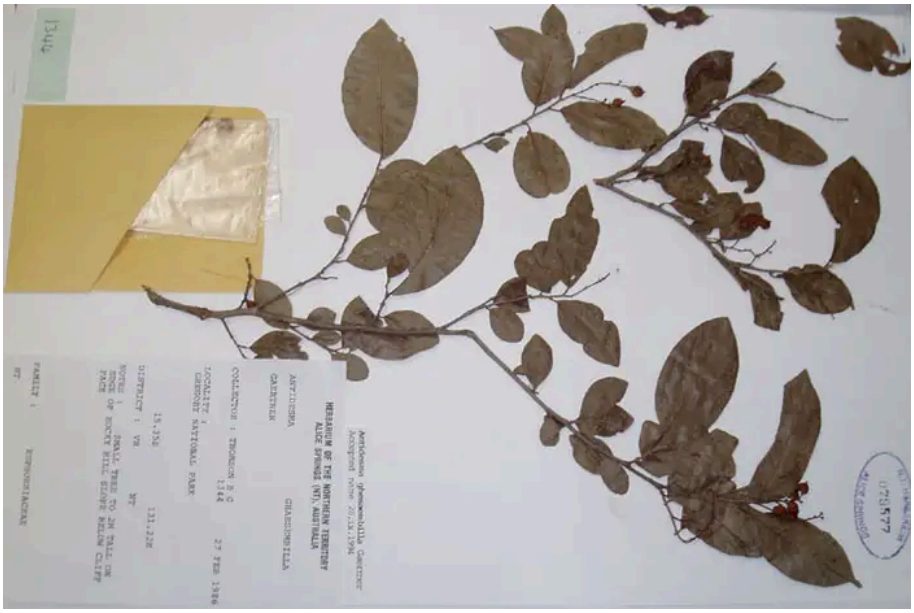
### Harvesting and Seed Production

Fruit are available September to December in Australia. In India plants flower and fruit March to February.

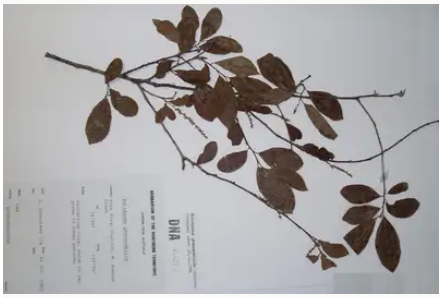
## NOTES

There are about 100-170 Antidesma species.

## PICTURES



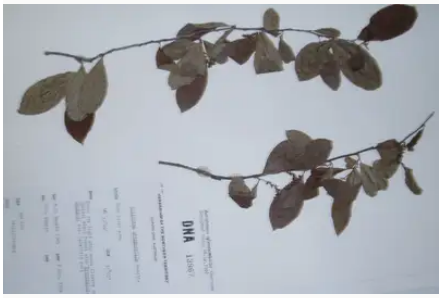
Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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