PLANT FACT SHEET

Strychnos cocculoides Baker

GENUS *Strychnos* **FAMILY** Loganiaceae

COMMON NAMES Kaffir orange, Caper orange

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Leaves

The ripe fruit are eaten and have a good flavour. They are also used for jams and jellies.
The fruit are also buried in the ground until the fruit pulp becomes liquid and then used as a drink.
The fruit are also used for alcoholic drinks. Caution: Alcohol is a cause of cancer.
CAUTION: These are considered POISONOUS. The fruit and leaves can kill. The seeds may be poisonous. They contain strychnine. The seeds are also reported as being eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub or small tree up to 6 m tall. It is evergreen and thornless. The stem can be 23 cm across. The leaves are simple and opposite. They are leathery. They are dark green above and lighter below. They are 5-12 cm long by 2.5-6 cm wide. The base is narrowed. The edges roll inwards. The flowers are in dense clusters in the axils of leaves. The flowers are tubular and with 5 white star like petals. These can be 1.9 cm across. The berries are plum like and 2.5 cm long. They are red and turn purplish-black. The have 1 or 2 oval flat seeds. The fruit are edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in bushveld and usually on sandy soils or in rocky places. It grows between 400-2,000 m above sea level. It can grow in acid soils. It grows in areas with an annual rainfall between 600-1,200 mm. It can grow in arid places. It grows in Miombo woodland.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds. It can be cut back and will re-grow.

Harvesting and Seed Production

In Tanzania fruit are collected from July to December. Ripe fruit can be stored in the shade for about 2 weeks.

NOTES

There are about 170 Strychnos species. They grow in the tropics and subtropics. Some are very poisonous and others have edible fruit. It is the seeds that contain strychnine that are poisonous. These have also been put in the family Strychnaceae.

REFERENCES

Akinnifesi, F. K., et al, 2006, Towards the development of Miombo fruit trees as commercial crops in Southern Africa. Forests, Trees and Livelihoods. Vol. 16 pp 1-3-121

Ann. Mus. Congo Belge, Bot. ser. 5, 1:177. 1904 (As Strychnos suberosa)

Awodoyin, R.O., Olubode, O.S., Ogbu, J.U., Balogun, R.B., Nwawuisi, J.U. and Orji, K.O., 2015, Indigenous Fruit Trees of Tropical Africa: Status, Opportunity for Development and Biodiversity Management. Agricultural Sciences, 6, 31-41

Baidu-Forson, J.J., et al ,2014,. Assessment of agrobiodiversity resources in the Borotse flood plain, Zambia. CGIAR Research Program on Aquatic Agricultural Systems. Penang, Malaysia. Working Paper: AAS-2014-12.

Bultosa, G., et al, 2020, Plant-based traditional foods and beverages of Ramotswa Village, Botswana. Journal of Ethnic Foods (2020) 7:1

Burkill, I.H., 1966, A Dictionary of the Economic Products of the Malay Peninsula. Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Vol 2 (I-Z) p 2129

Bvenura, C. & Sivakumar, D., 2017, The role of wild fruits and vegetables in delivering a balanced and healthy diet. Food Research International 99 (2017) 15–30

Campbell, B. M., 1987, The Use of Wild Fruits in Zimbabwe. Economic Botany 41(3): 375-385

Facciola, S., 1998, Cornucopia 2: a Source Book of Edible Plants. Kampong Publications, p 240

FAO. 1983, Food and fruit-bearing forest species 1: Examples from Eastern Africa. FAO Food and Forestry Paper 44/1 p 99

FAO, 2024, Compendium of forgotten foods in Africa – A companion publication for Integrating Africa's forgotten foods for better nutrition. Accra. https://doi.org/10.4060/cc5044en p 18

Food Composition Tables for use in Africa FAO http://www.fao.org/infoods/directory No. 951

Fowler, D. G., 2007, Zambian Plants: Their Vernacular Names and Uses. Kew. p 61

Fox, F. W. & Young, M. E. N., 1982, Food from the Veld. Delta Books. p 260

Grivetti, 1976, 1979,

Grivetti, L. E., 1980, Agricultural development: present and potential role of edible wild plants. Part 2: Sub-Saharan Africa, Report to the Department of State Agency for International Development. p 80

Heywood, V.H., Brummitt, R.K., Culham, A., and Seberg, O. 2007, Flowering Plant Families of the World. Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew. p 195 (Genus)

http://www.fao.org/forestry/25323-096344a3de335832e8f363c3ac5184a66.pdf (As Strychnos schumanniana)

INFOODS:FAO/INFOODS Databases

Jardin, C., 1970, List of Foods Used In Africa, FAO Nutrition Information Document Series No 2.p 163 (Also as Strychnos schumanniana and Strychnos suberosa)

JSTOR Global Plants edible

Kakeya, 1976,

Latham, P., 2004, Useful Plants of Bas-Congo province. Salvation Army & DFID p 266

Lautenschläger, T., et al, 2018, First large-scale ethnobotanical survey in the province of Uíge, northern Angola. Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine (2018) 14:51

Leger, S., 1997, A Description of Today's Use of Plants in West Bushmanland (Namibia). German Development Service. PO Box 220035, 14061 Berlin, Germany. http://www.sigridleger.de/book/

Maguire, 1978,

Magwede, K., van Wyk, B.-E., & van Wyk, A. E., 2019, An inventory of Vhavenda useful plants. South African Journal of Botany 122 (2019) 57–89

Malaisse, F., 1997, Se nourrir en floret claire africaine. Approche ecologique et nutritionnelle. CTA., p 69

Mannheimer, C. A. & Curtis. B.A. (eds), 2009, Le Roux and Muller's Field Guide to the Trees and Shrubs of Namibia. Windhoek: Macmillan Education Namibia. p 398

Maroyi, A., 2011, The Gathering and Consumption of Wild Edible Plants in Nhema Communal Area, Midlands Province, Zimbabwe. Ecology of Food and Nutrition 50:6, 506-525

Maroyi, A. & Cheikhyoussef, A., 2017, Traditional knowledge of wild edible fruit in southern Africa: A comparative use patterns in Namibia and Zimbabwe. Indian Journal of Traditional Knowledge. 16(3): 385-392

Marshall, 1976,

Martin, F.W. & Ruberte, R.M., 1979, Edible Leaves of the Tropics. Antillian College Press, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. p 202 (As Strychnos suberosa)

Mawunu, M., et al, 2020, First Survey of the Edible Non-Wood Forest Products Sold in Uige Province, Northern Angola. European Journal of Agriculture and Food Sciences. Vol. 2, No. 6

Mawunu, M., et al, 2022, Ethnobotanical uses of wild edible plants of Mucuba municipality, Angola. Natural Resources for Human Health. 2022, 0:1-10

Mbuya, L.P., Msanga, H.P., Ruffo, C.K., Birnie, A & Tengnas, B., 1994, Useful Trees and Shrubs for Tanzania. Regional Soil Conservation Unit. Technical Handbook No 6. p 454

Motlhanka, D. M. T., et al, 2008, Edible Indigenous Fruit Plants of Eastern Botswana. International Journal of Poultry Science. 7(5): 457-460

Mpasiwakomu, R. A., 2017, The Diversity and Utilization of Wild Edible and Medicinal Plant Species found in Uvinza Miombo Woodlands, Tanzania. M. Sc. thesis University of Tanzania.

Njana, M. A., et al, 2013, Are miombo woodlands vital to livelihoods of rural households? Evidence from Urumwa and surrounding communities, Tabora, Tanzania. Forests, Trees and Livelihoods, 22:2, 124-140

Full reference list (20 more) at https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/eb20ebd7-69cf-44d9-a5c5-faa401468e63

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/eb20ebd7-69cf-44d9-a5c5-faa401468e63