



PLANT FACT SHEET

Flueggea virosa (Roxb. ex Willd.) Royle

GENUS *Flueggea* FAMILY Phyllanthaceae

COMMON NAMES White Raisin, White Currant Bush

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Seeds, Leaves

The ripe fruit is eaten raw.

Caution: The fruit should probably not be eaten in large amounts due to alkaloids.

CAUTION: The bark and probably the leaves contain poisonous alkaloids.

The leaves are cooked and eaten as a vegetable.

DESCRIPTION

A small shrub. It normally has many stems. The bark is reddish-brown. It grows 2-6 m high and spreads 1-2 m wide. It loses its leaves during the dry season. The branches are angular and sometimes have spines. The leaves are in 2 rows arranged alternately. The leaves are oval and vary in size. The blade is 3.5-8.5 cm long by 2.5-5.5 cm wide. They are light green above and paler underneath. The veins form a network and are prominent underneath the leaf. The tip is pointed. The flowers are tiny and cream with male and female flowers on separate trees. They are 0.1-0.2 cm long and in clusters in the axils of leaves. There are more male flowers than female. The fruit is a round fleshy berry. It is 0.5-0.8 cm across. The fruit are white when ripe and contain 3-4 small seeds. The fruit is edible.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It suits tropical or subtropical places. It grows in coastal monsoon vine thickets. It is usually on sandy soil. It grows in dryland areas. It grows in the Sahel. It occurs in deciduous woodland and on rocky outcrops. It does best in well-drained soils but will grow in sandy and dry soils. It can tolerate drought. It is best in neutral or alkaline soils. It can tolerate salty conditions. It is sensitive to frost. It grows on river flats and well drained rocky slopes. It can grow in hot arid places. It needs an annual rainfall above 150 mm. It needs a sunny position. In Ethiopia it grows between 400-2,050 m altitude. It can grow in arid places. In Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed. These should have the pulp washed off. Plants can develop a suckering habit if subject to constant fires. Plants should be spaced 2-3 m apart. If they are used for a hedge a spacing of 50 cm is suitable.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is fast growing.

NOTES

Flueggea virosa subsp. *melanthesoides* is now recognised as an accepted name.

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