



## PLANT FACT SHEET

# *Dovyalis zeyheri* (Sonder) Warb.

GENUS *Dovyalis* FAMILY Salicaceae

COMMON NAMES Oval kei apple, Apricot sourberry

## EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

**Edible parts:** Fruit

The flesh of the fruit is edible but sour. It can be eaten raw or made into jelly and jam. It is also used for wine.

## DESCRIPTION

It can be a shrub 1.5 m tall or a tree 12 m tall. It can give off a strong smell like rotten meat. There are short sharp straight spines up to 2.5 cm long in the axils of leaves. Leaves are simple and alternate. They vary in shape and texture. Leaves are 1.3-7 cm long by 1.3-4 cm wide. The young leaves are soft and velvety. The flowers are small and pale green and male and female flowers are separate. The male flowers are in small clusters in the axils of leaves and female flowers occur singly often on small side shoots. The fruit is an oval berry. It has a persistent style at the tip. Fruit are orange-yellow when ripe. The fruit are 2 cm long and with 2-3 seeds. The fruit are edible.

## HABITAT

It is a subtropical plant. It occurs in light shrub and woodland. It grows from near sea level to 1600 m altitude in South Africa. It is drought resistant. It can withstand light frost except when young.

## PRODUCTION

### Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds. The seeds should be collected from ripe fruit off a tree. They should be dried in a shady spot then planted. Seeds germinate in 8-14 days. Seedlings can be transplanted after watering well.

### Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants have a moderate growth rate. Plants can fruit after 3 years.

## NOTES

There are about 22 *Dovyalis* species. Also put in the Flacourtiaceae family.

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