PLANT FACT SHEET

Maerua crassifolia Forssk.

GENUS *Maerua* **FAMILY** Capparaceae

COMMON NAMES Tagart bush

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Seeds, Fruit, Vegetable

The fruit is eaten. They are used fresh or dried.
The leaves are used in sauce. They are pounded and eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A small tree. It grows to 10 m high. The trunk is 1.2 m across. The trunk is often stunted and twisted. It has whip like branches which extend upwards. It has very short side shoots which bear leaves in tufts. The leaves are 12-25 mm long. The leaf blade is dark green and limp and leathery. The flowers occur as one or a few on short leafy shoots. The fruit are brown and beaded.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It occurs in very dry savannah and desert. It grows in the Sahel. It grows in areas with a rainfall of 100-400 mm per year. It is very drought resistant. It grows between 180-1,620 m above sea level. It can grow in arid places. It can tolerate high temperatures up to 42°C.

NOTES

The leaves contain trypsin inhibitors. This means proteins may not be properly digested.

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