



PLANT FACT SHEET

Pachylobus edulis G. Don

GENUS *Pachylobus* **FAMILY** Burseraceae

COMMON NAMES Bush butter tree, African-pear

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Fruit

The pulp is eaten after softening in boiling water for 2-3 minutes. They can also be roasted. The fruit can be preserved by removing the seed, boiling the pulp then drying it.

DESCRIPTION

A tree. It grows to about 20 m high. The trunk is 1.5 m around. The trunk is usually straight for the first 10 m and does not have buttresses. The bark is grey-brown. It flakes off in irregular thin woody scales. The leaves are in tufts near the ends of branches. The leaves have stout stalks. These are 15-45 cm long. There are 6-8 pairs of leaflets. The middle leaflets are 11-22 cm long by 3.5-6 cm wide. Trees are separately male or female. The flowers are 6 mm across. They have short stout stalks. The flowers are clustered at the ends of branches. Dense rust coloured hairs cover the whole flower group. The fruit are oval and 6 cm long by 3.5 cm wide. They hang in clusters in stout stalks. The fruit are pink but then turn bright blue and nearly black. The pulp smells of turpentine. There is a leathery shelled stone inside.

Possibly now *Pachylobus edulis* G. Don.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It occurs naturally in forest. It grows from sea level to 1,000 m altitude. It can grow in high and low rainfall areas. It suits the dry savannah.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. Seed should be sown within one week. Seeds germinate about 2 weeks after planting. Air layering is possible and enables trees of known sex to be chosen. The layers take 6 months before being ready to remove. 5% of the trees in an area should be male. Plants can be budded.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Early plant growth is rapid. Growth occurs in flushes. Both male and female trees are needed for fruit. Fruit are produced after 5-6 years when grown from seeds. Fruit matures about 5 months after flowering. A mature tree can produce over 100 kg of fruit each year.

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