PLANT FACT SHEET

Olneya tesota A. Gray

GENUS *Olneya* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Desert ironwood

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds

The seeds are eaten raw or roasted. They can be used in casseroles. The seeds can be dried and stored. They can be ground into flour and used in cakes.
The water is often changed several times.
The roasted seeds are used as a substitute for coffee.

DESCRIPTION

An evergreen tree. It grows 4.5-9 m high and spreads 3.8-8 m wide. It has a short trunk. It can have several stems. It has a broad crown. The leaves are greyish-green. They are divided into leaflets along the stalk. The leaves are 5 cm long. The flowers are like pea flowers and are pink or light purple. They grow in clusters. The pods have 1-4 seeds.

HABITAT

It is a Mediterranean or subtropical plant. It grows in arid regions in North America. It does best in full sun and in very well-drained soil. It suits hardiness zones 8-10.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed.

NOTES

There is one Olneya species.

PICTURES

Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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