

Common names**Bird plum, Brown ivory, Mountain date,****Rhamnaceae****Scientific name*****Berchemia discolor*****Edible portion** Fruit, Gum, Leaves,**Description**

A tree. It grows 12-18 m tall. It usually loses its leaves during the year. The branches are spreading. The crown is dense and round. The leaves are simple and nearly opposite. They are dark green above and paler underneath. They are 2.5-10 cm long and 8 cm wide. They are oval with pointed tips. The flowers are in small stalked clusters in the axils of leaves. The fruit are like small pointed plums. They are about 2 cm long. They are yellow or red. They have a sweet yellow pulp and a kernel with 2 seeds. The fruit are edible.

Distribution

A tropical plant. It grows in dry forest. It grows at low altitude in South Africa. In East Africa it grows from sea level to 1,600 m altitude. It is damaged by frost or cold winds. It is drought resistant. It grows in areas with an annual rainfall between 300-635 mm. It can grow in arid places. It is often on termite mounds. It grows in the lowlands and along rivers. It grows in Miombo woodlands.

Found in:

Africa, Angola, Botswana, Central Africa, Congo, East Africa, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, South Africa, Southern Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe,

Use

The ripe fruit are eaten raw or dry. They are also used to flavour porridge. The dried fruit can be stored. The dried fruit (after the kernel is removed) are pounded with millet seeds and made into a biscuit dough and baked. The fruit are also fermented into an alcoholic drink. Caution: Alcohol is a cause of cancer. The fruit can be used for juice, jam and sweets.

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from fresh seeds. The seeds germinate easily. Seedlings can then be transplanted. Seeds can also be sown directly in the field. Plants can also be grown from root suckers.

Production

Plants grow very slowly. When dry, the fruit can be stored for a long time. Fruit are normally available in the wet season.



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Nutritional Values

Berchemia discolor

Edible Part	/100 g edible portion	Moisture %	Energy KJ	Energy Kcal	Protein g	Provit A μg	Vit C mg	Iron mg	Zinc mg
Fruit		78.8	305		1.1		50.3	2.2	0.3
Fruit - dry		38.7			1.0		116		



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