



Common names

Olacaceae

Large sourplum, Blue sour plum,

Scientific name

Ximenia caffra

Edible portion Fruit,

Description

A shrub or small tree. It grows to 8 m tall. It has many spines. Young stems can be very hairy. The bark is grey or brown. It is smooth at first but then becomes rough and cracked along its length. The young twigs are covered with fine red hairs. The leaves are simple and alternate. They vary in shape. They are 2.5-6 cm long and 2 cm wide. They are densely hairy at first. They become shiny green and smooth with age. The leaves narrow to the base and are on short leaf stalks. The lower leaf surface is more pale than the upper surface. The leaves tend to fold inwards. The flowers develop as long green buds in the axils of the leaves. These open to 4 petalled green, hairy flowers. The flowers are either on their own or in a bunch from the same point. They are small and white. They have a sweet scent and are 1.3 cm long. The fruit are oval and 2.5-3 cm long. They are greenish when young and become bright red when ripe. They are edible. They contain one woody seed. (The large leaves, fewer spines, more solitary flowers and red fruit help distinguish this plant from the variety *americana*.)

Distribution

A tropical plant. It grows on rocky woodlands from 5 m to 2,000 m above sea level. It suits dry areas. It can tolerate drought. It can grow in arid places.

Found in:

Africa, Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Central Africa, Congo, East Africa, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, Southern Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Zululand,

Use

The fruit are eaten ripe either raw and fresh or dried. The flavour is best when the fruit are over-ripe. They can be used for jelly and marmalade. They are used for drinks and in porridge. The seeds are eaten.

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed or suckers. To collect seed fruit are collected when soft then left to dry in the sun before removing the seed. Seed are best sown fresh. Seed germinate quickly and easily. Seed lose their viability after 3 months.

Production

Plants are slow growing. They can be topped or pruned. Plants will regrow when cut back.



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Nutritional Values

Ximenia caffra

Edible Part	/100 g edible portion	Moisture %	Energy KJ	Energy Kcal	Protein g	Provit A µg	Vit C mg	Iron mg	Zinc mg
Fruit		77.4	374	89	1.9		68.2	0.5	0.3
Fruit		66.4	347	83	2.0				

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