

used to produce fighting sticks and hut poles. It is also used for carving. It provides firewood and charcoal. It also provides shade, shelter and erosion protection.

Leaves are browsed by livestock, wild animals such as baboon, monkey, bushpig, nyala and eland.

The leaves, roots and fruit (seeds) are reported to be used medicinally as a treatment for snakebites. Some people use root infusions as a treatment for snakebite. Decoction of the root is taken orally as a cold remedy. Fresh leaves are pounded into a paste to treat sores. Drained liquid from the leaves can be used to repel insects such as aphids and scale.

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monkey



orange



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Scientific name: *Strychnos spinosa*
Family: Strychnaceae
Common names: Monkey orange, Groenklapper, Morapa, umKwakwa, Nsala, Muramba, Umhlali

Origin and distribution

Monkey orange is found in bushveld, riverine, sand forest and coastal bush from the Eastern Cape to KwaZulu-Natal and inland to Swaziland, northern Botswana and Namibia.

Production areas

Monkey orange is found in the wild in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo provinces.

Description

The tree is an evergreen, small, spiny deciduous plant that can grow from 2 to 6 m tall.

Stem

The stem has spreading branches and the crown is rounded. The branches have longitudinal corking ridges. The branchlets are pale and thin with hooked thorns.

Leaves

Monkey orange leaves are leathery, 2 to 6 cm long and 1,5 to 3,5 cm wide. They are opposite, single, short, petiolar, ovate and broad with stiff and sharp tips. They are light to dark green and glossy at the base. Usually smooth, 3 to 5-veined from the base, the midrib prominent below and the veins slightly prominent on both surfaces.

Bark

Grey, rough, tends to flake in rectangular segments but is not deeply fissured.

Flowers

Male and female flowers are borne separately on the same plant. Flowers are creamy green, up to 6 mm, borne in compact heads about 3,5 to 4 cm.

Fruit

The fruit is large, grape size, about 10 cm in diameter and weighs over 0,45 kg. It is round with a thick, woody rind, green or blue-green turning brownish yellow with age, enclosing many large seeds in a yellowish, strong-smelling pulp. The fruit is usually dark green and white speckled when unripe and becomes yellow or orange when ripe.

Climatic and soil requirements

Temperature

Monkey orange prefers a warm climate and a place with full sun, but can tolerate some shade. It is sensitive to frost.

Rainfall

Monkey orange is a drought resistant, semi-deciduous species. It requires only a moderate volume of water. It grows in semi-arid areas with rainfall from as low as 600 mm.

Soil

The tree is found growing singly in well-drained soil. It is capable of growing in an arid, semi-arid area, in poor, rocky soil. It also occurs in sandy soil along riverbanks.

Cultivation practices

Propagation

Monkey orange is frequently grown from seed. It can also be grown by vegetative propagation using grafting.

Planting

Seed should be collected from high-quality fruit and cleaned thoroughly. Seed can germinate without any pre-treatment, but soaking the seed in water for 24 hours will improve germination. Seed should be sown at the depth of 2 to 3 cm in pots or seedbeds. Plants should be spaced approximately 1 m apart.

Pest and disease control

Because of its outer shell, it is resistant to fungi and fruit flies. Few serious pests have been observed, like aphids. Often a forceful spray of water or a water-soap solution when applied with appropriate equipment will provide sufficient control.

Harvesting maturity

Fruit is available for harvesting from October to December. Ripe fruit is determined by full development of colour (yellow or orange). The fruit is normally harvested manually by hand picking.

Uses

Ripe fruit is edible and rich in protein, magnesium, potassium and contains moderate quantities of vitamin C. It can be sundried as food preserves. It is used to make jam, juice, various fruit wines and dry fruit rolls. The dried fruit, after the seeds have been removed, are often used as sounding-boxes for musical instruments such as the xylophone (marimba). Flutes can be made from the dried shells. Timber from this tree is