

Euonymus planipes

Spindle Tree

Siberian Burning Bush



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Medicinal use of Spindle Tree:

The bark is alterative, cholagogue, hepatic, laxative, stimulant and tonic. The root bark is the part normally used, though bark from the stems is sometimes employed as a substitute. In small doses it stimulates the appetite, in larger doses it irritates the intestines. The bark is especially useful in the treatment of liver disorders which follow or accompany fevers. The seeds are strongly emetic and purgative. The fresh leaves, and the dried fruit and seeds, are used externally to treat scabies, lice (head, body or pubic), ticks and other skin parasites.

Habitat of the herb: Woods, scrub and hedges, usually on calcareous soils.

Edible parts of Spindle Tree: An edible yellow dye is obtained from the fruit and seed. Pink from the fruit case, orange from the seed. These reports

should be treated with some caution since many members of this genus are poisonous. One report suggests that the plant is a source of a manna, there are no further details.



Other uses of the herb:

The whole plant yields a volatile oil that is used in soap making. Other reports say that the oil is obtained from the seed. It is possible that there are two oils, an essential oil from the plant and an oil from the seed. A good yellow dye is obtained from the fleshy coating around the seeds. This becomes green with the addition of alum, but unfortunately both colours are rather fugitive. The baked and powdered berries are used to remove lice from the hair, they are also used as an insecticide. The leaves are used. Roots yield up to 4% gutta-percha, a non elastic rubber used as an electrical insulation and for making plastics. Wood - very hard, easily split, fine-grained, not durable. Used for spindles, skewers, knitting needles, toothpicks, carving etc. A high quality charcoal is obtained from the wood, it is used by artists.

Propagation of Spindle Tree:

Seed - best sown as soon as it is ripe in a cold frame. Stored seed requires 8 - 12 weeks warm followed by 8 - 16 weeks cold stratification and can then be sown in a cold frame. When they are large enough to handle, prick the seedlings out into individual pots and grow them on in the greenhouse for at least their first winter. Plant them out into their permanent positions in late spring or early summer, after the last expected frosts. One report says that the seed can be sown in an outdoors seedbed in early spring with good results. Grow the seedlings on for two years in the seedbed before planting them out into their permanent positions. Cuttings of half-ripe wood, 5 - 8cm long taken at a node or with a heel, July/August in a frame. Very easy. Cuttings of mature wood, November in a frame. Layering in July/August. Takes 14 months.

