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Rhus coriaria

SICILIAN SUMACH is a semi-evergreen shrub or tree. Native to Asia Minor and the Mediterranean (particularly Sicily) it has small whitish flowers and leaves that turn purple-crimson in Autumn.

It is also known as *Arbre à sumac* (French), Currier's shrub, Elm-leaved sumac, *Gerbersumach* (German), Mediterranean sumach, *Redoul* (French), *Rhue des jardins* (French), *Sammak* (Arabic), Sicilian sumac, *Škumpa koželužská* (Czech), *Somaq* (Urdu), Sumac, Sumach (English, Italian), *Sumach des corroyeurs* (French), *Sumagre* (Portuguese), *Sumak* (Danish, Swedish), *Sumok* (Bengali), Tanner's sumach, Tanning sumach, *Tatrak* (Hindi), *Xumak tal-Konza* (Maltese), and *Zumaque* (Spanish).

Warning – the sap (as well as the leaves and fresh fruit) is poisonous.

Coriaria is derived Latin *corium* (hide, skin) meaning 'like leather'.

The bark and the leaves have long been a traditional source of tannin still used today for tanning leather (yielding a very high grade, fine white leather known as Cordoba or Morocco leather which is used for white gloves, shoes and handbags). (The resultant leather is preferred in Europe to that obtained from the smooth sumach, *Rhus glabra*.) They are also the source of a yellow and a red dye.

The hairy purplish-brown berry-like fruit have been prepared as capers (especially in the eastern Mediterranean) and consumed both as a spice and a tonic. The stoned fruit are also combined with onion and salt as a seasoning for roast meat.

Medicinally, it has been used in India to treat dysentery and conjunctivitis.