PLANT FACT SHEET

Burchardia umbellata R. Br.

GENUS *Burchardia* **FAMILY** Colchicaceae

COMMON NAMES Milkmaids, Star of Bethlehem

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Tubers, Root

The tubers are eaten raw or roasted. They are best cooked.

DESCRIPTION

A lily which produces white flowers. The plant is 15-50 cm high. It usually has one stem with leaves around it. The leaves are grass-like and hairless. Several of these come from the base then smaller ones are along the stem. The base of the leaves forms a sheath. The roots are fibrous. There are showy clusters of flowers. The flowers have 6 white petals and the ovary in the centre is triangular and pink. The seed pod is wing-shaped and they occur in a group. Under the ground there are a star-like array of 10 cm long thin white tubers.

HABITAT

A temperate plant. It grows in grasslands and open forests. It is often on sandy coastal areas. It grows on coastal heath areas and on damp ground. It needs well drained site and can grow in full sun or light shade. It can tolerate frost. Tasmanian Herbarium.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed. They can also be grown by division.

NOTES

There are 2 Burchardia species. The protein content is over 10% dry weight.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

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