PLANT FACT SHEET

Sonchus asper (L.) Hill

GENUS *Sonchus* **FAMILY** Asteraceae

COMMON NAMES Rough sowthistle, Spiny milkthistle, Spiny Sowthistle

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Seeds, Vegetable

The tender leaves and shoots are cooked as a vegetable. They are also used raw in salads.
The seeds are also eaten.
The stems are bruised and the bitter juice washed out before eating or cooking.
It is also used for making salt.

DESCRIPTION

An erect annual herb. It grows to 1 m high. The stems are hollow. There is milky sap when the stems are cut. There are some glands on the upper parts. The leaves are 5-15 cm long. The leaves half clasp the stem. They have rounded ear like structures at the base. The edges can be spiny or have teeth. The plants are bluish-green. The flower heads are yellow. They are 1-2 cm across. They are crowded in irregular heads. The fruit is a dry fruit.

HABITAT

It grows in temperate and subtropical regions. In Nepal plants grow between 1000-1800 m altitude. They grow on moist, neglected ground. It suits sandy soils. In Africa it grows between 750-2,550 m above sea level. In Argentina it grows from sea level to 2,500 m above sea level. Tasmania Herbarium.

PRODUCTION

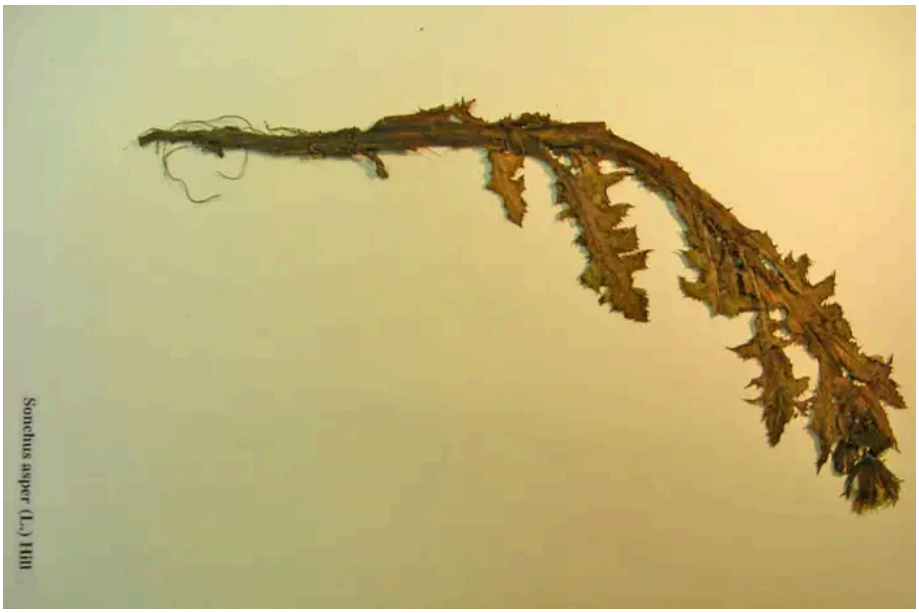
Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed.

NOTES

There are about 60 Sonchus species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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