PLANT FACT SHEET

Alpinia zerumbet (Pers.) Burtt. & Smith

GENUS *Alpinia* **FAMILY** Zingiberaceae

COMMON NAMES Shell ginger, Butterfly ginger

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Rhizomes, Root, Flowers, Stem pith, Leaves, Fruit, Vegetable

The pith of the young stem is eaten. The stems, leaves and flowers are boiled and eaten.
The rhizome is used as a spice.
The ripe fruit are eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A herb. The false stems are 2-3 m high. The leaf stalk is 1-1.5 cm long. The leaf blade is sword shaped and 30-60 cm long by 5-10 cm wide. They are hairy at the edge. They taper to the tip with a spiral point. The flowers droop. They are 30 cm long. They are enclosed by 2 long sheaths when young. There are 1 or 2 flowers. The capsules are bright red. It is about 2 cm across. It is ribbed. The seeds are angled.

HABITAT

A tropical and subtropical plant. It needs regular moisture and humidity. It needs a fertile humus-rich, well drained soil. It grows as an understory plant with bright light. It grows in S China. In the Cairns Botanical Gardens. Melbourne Botanical gardens. It grows in hardiness zones 8-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown by division of the clump. They can be grown from seeds.

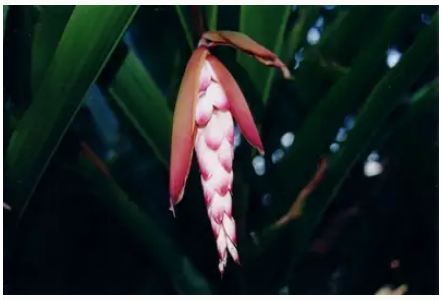
NOTES

It is grown as an ornamental. There are about 200-230 Alpinia species. They are mostly tropical and subtropical.

PICTURES

Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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