PLANT FACT SHEET

# *Rauvolfia serpentina* (L.) Benth. ex Kurz

**GENUS** *Rauvolfia* **FAMILY** Apocynaceae

**COMMON NAMES** Serpent wood, Snake wood

## EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

**Edible parts:** Leaves, Root - medicine

The root is used as medicine.

## DESCRIPTION

A small shrub. It grows 1 m tall. The stems are usually unbranched and slender and straw coloured. The leaves are grouped near the tip of the stem. They are in rings of 3-5. The leaves are narrowly oval and 7-17 cm long by 2-9 cm wide. The base is wedge shaped and they taper to the tip. The flowers are tube shaped and white. The fruit are oval and 8 mm across.

## HABITAT

It is a tropical and subtropical plant. It grows in mountain forests between 800-1,500 m above sea level in southern China. In Nepal it grows between 100-1,200 m above sea level. In Yunnan.

## PRODUCTION

### Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds and cuttings. Seed can be kept for 6 months. It is best to soak seeds in water for 24 hours before sowing. They are best put in a nursery and transplanted after 3-4 months. Shoot cuttings 15-22 cm long with 3 nodes are suitable. A spacing of 40-50 cm is suitable. Removing shoots increase the yield of roots.

## NOTES

It is an at risk species.

## PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

## REFERENCES


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**ONLINE FACT SHEET** https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/0a3d1bcc-1083-41e8-82fc-b923775a6be2