PLANT FACT SHEET

Use with caution

This plant can be harmful if it is eaten raw, in large amounts or without the right preparation. Read the whole fact sheet before use.

Cissampelos pareira L.

GENUS *Cissampelos* **FAMILY** Menispermaceae

COMMON NAMES Velvet leaf

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Tubers, Root, Stems, Leaves, Fruit

The leaves are harvested, crushed and filtered and the sap left to solidify. It is eaten as a sweet.
The fruit is eaten.
The dried root powder is added to rice liquor to improve fermentation.

DESCRIPTION

A woody vine or climber. The branches are slender. They are usually densely hairy. The leaves are simple and 5-12 cm long by 5-12 cm wide. The leaf stalk joins the leaf blade away from the edge. The leaf blade is papery. Plants are separately male and female. A group of flowers occur in the axils of leaves. The flowers have 1 petal and are cup shaped. They are white or yellow. The fruit is fleshy and yellow, orange or red. It is 5-7 mm long and wide. It is hairy. It occurs amongst bracts 1-2 cm long. There is 1 seed. It is brown and 4-5 mm long.
Variety pariera occur only in America and Africa. Variety hirsuta occurs in Asia.

HABITAT

They are tropical. In Pakistan it is common in hedges up to 2,300 m altitude. It can grow in arid places. In Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown by seeds or cuttings.

NOTES

There are about 20-25 Cissampelos species. The roots are cooked and eaten to alleviate constipation. It contains alkaloids - Seeprine, Bebeerine and Cissampeline.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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PROVIDED BY **Food Plants International**

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