PLANT FACT SHEET

Vallisneria americana Michaux

GENUS *Vallisneria* **FAMILY** Hydrocharitaceae

COMMON NAMES Water celery, River ribbons

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves

The young leaves are cooked and eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A plant that keeps growing from year to year. It is a ribbon like plant which grows in water. It grows 2 m above the water surface and spreads 1 m wide. The stem is slender. The leaves are large and twisted in spirals. They are green and grass-like. They can be 90 cm long by 2 cm wide. The flowers are greenish-white. They are very small and appear in summer. They float on the water. Male and female flowers are separate. After fertilisation fruit develop underwater. The fruit are small, curved seed capsules.

HABITAT

It is a temperate to tropical plant. It does best in still water in a protected, sunny position. The water can be 1 m deep. It is sensitive to frost and drought.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown by seed or by division. Seed are only produced if male and female plants both occur. Buds form at the base of the plant in winter and these grow and produce stolon.

NOTES

There are 2 Vallisneria species. They grow in the tropics. There is 1 species in tropical America.

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