PLANT FACT SHEET

Medicago polymorpha L.

GENUS *Medicago* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Toothed bur-clover, Burr medick, Little burclover

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Flowers, Leaves, Seeds, Fruit, Pods

CAUTION: The plant can contain chemicals which make the skin sensitive to light and also contain oestrogens.
The young leaves are used as a leafy vegetable. They can be eaten raw or cooked as a potherb, stir-fried or used in soups.
The leaves are also dried and stored.
The ripe seeds are cooked and used to make a porridge.

DESCRIPTION

An annual herb. It lies along the ground. The stem are 50 cm long. Sometimes they twine and climb over other plants. The leaves are made up of 3 small leaflets on a short stalk. The leafy stipules near their base are deeply lobed and taper to a point. The flowers are yellow and pea-like. They are 6 mm long. Up to 6 flowers occur at the ends of branches or in the axils of leaves near the ends. The fruit is a spiny spiral pod. It is 8 mm across. There are 3 varieties depending on the shape of these spines.

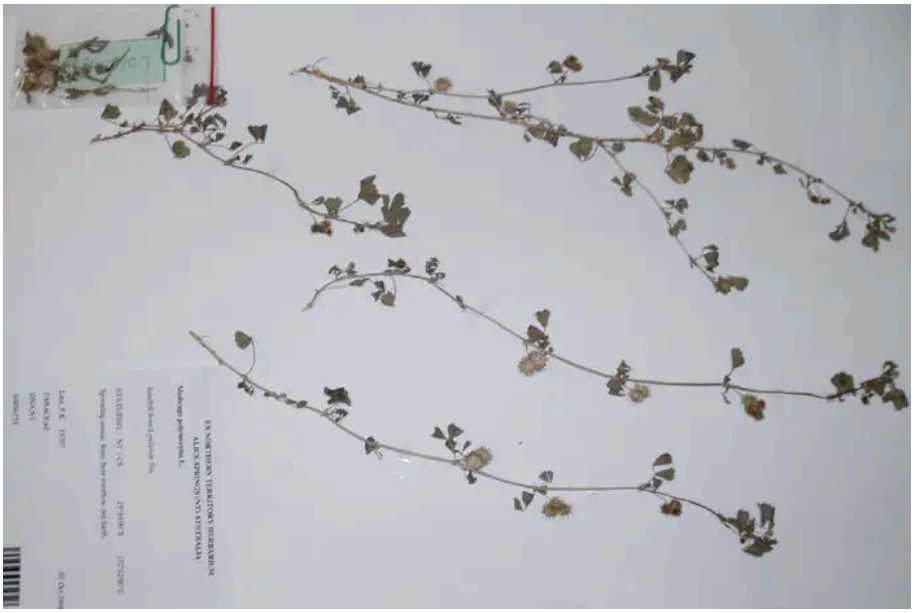
HABITAT

It grows in temperate regions. It grows in dry coastal pastures. It can grow in acid, neutral or alkaline soils. It grows below 2,200 m above sea level. It can grow in arid places. Tasmania Herbarium. In Sichuan and Yunnan.

NOTES

There are about 55 Medicago species.

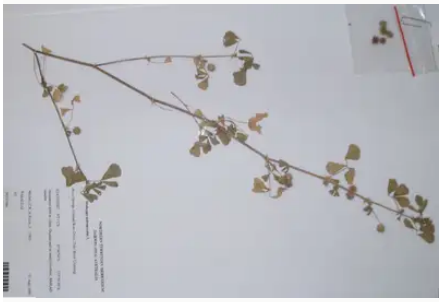
PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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