PLANT FACT SHEET

Mesosphaerum suaveolens Kuntze

GENUS *Mesosphaerum* **FAMILY** Lamiaceae

COMMON NAMES Hyptis, Mint bush

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves - tea, Seeds, Leaves, Spice, Vegetable

The shoot tips are used as food flavouring.
They are also used to make a mint flavoured drink. The seeds are soaked in water and as the seeds soften a slimy coat forms around them and is used as a drink.

DESCRIPTION

A herb which keeps growing from year to year. It grows 70 cm high. It can grow as an annual and can be 3 m high. The stems are rounded in the lower sections and 4-angled higher up. They are hollow. They are hairy. The leaves are produced opposite each other. They have teeth around the edge. They have a strong minty smell when crushed. The leaves are 3-10 cm long by 2-7 cm wide. They have a wavy edge and are rough underneath. The flowers are produced in small clusters in the axils of leaves. The flowers are blue. The fruit are papery brown capsules. The fruit consists of 2 nutlets. They are 3-4 mm long and flattened. They are dark brown.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in dry open locations. It can grow along streams and near roadsides. It can grow up to 1300 m altitude in Papua New Guinea. It grows in seasonally dry climates. In China it grows in open waste places in southern China. In Costa Rica it grows below 1,200 m altitude.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

The plants grow from seeds or cuttings.

NOTES

It grows naturally in pastures. There are about 350-400 Hyptis species. Most are tropical or subtropical. It is used in medicine.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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