PLANT FACT SHEET

Heliotropium indicum L.

GENUS *Heliotropium* **FAMILY** Boraginaceae

COMMON NAMES Blue heliotrope

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Medicine, Leaves

Caution. It contains alkaloids.
The leaves are eaten as a vegetable. They are fried.

DESCRIPTION

An erect annual herb. It grows 100 cm high and spreads 80 cm wide. The leaves are opposite or alternate. They are hairy and oval. They have obvious veins. The flowers are small and pale violet. They appear on one side of a curled spike at the ends of branches. The curved spike straightens as the flowers open. The fruit are small and composed of two nuts.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in wet grassland savannah. It grows on hills, river banks and open waste places between 0–700 m altitude in China. In Zimbabwe it grows up to 1,100 m above sea level. It suits hardiness zones 10-12. In Yunnan.

NOTES

Used in medicine. There are about 250 Heliotropium species.
The leaves are boiled to increase a mother's milk supply.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

REFERENCES

Achigan-Dako, E, et al (Eds), 2009, Catalogue of Traditional Vegetables in Benin. International Foundation for Science.

Ambasta, S.P. (Ed.), 2000, The Useful Plants of India. CSIR India. p 261

Batawila, K., et al, 2007, Diversite et gestion des legumes de cueillete au Togo. African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development 7(3& 4): 64

Biswas, K. & Das, A. P., 2011, Documentation of wild leafy vegetables from the tribal dominated parts of Malda District of Paschimbanga, India. Recent Studies in Biodiversity and Traditional Knowledge in India 301 - 306. 2011.

Burkill, I.H., 1966, A Dictionary of the Economic Products of the Malay Peninsula. Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Vol 1 (A-H) p 1154

Codjia, J. T. C., et al, 2003, Diversity and local valorisation of vegetal edible products in Benin. Cahiers Agricultures 12:1-12

Cowie, I, 2006, A Survey of Flora and vegetation of the proposed Jaco-Tutuala-Lore National Park. Timor-Lests (East Timor) www.territorystories.nt/gov.au p 45

Cundall, P., (ed.), 2004, Gardening Australia: flora: the gardener's bible. ABC Books. p 690

Dansi, A., et al, 2008, Traditional leafy vegetables and their use in the Benin Republic. Genet Resour Crop Evol (2008) 55:1239–1256

Flora of Solomon Islands

Fowler, D. G., 2007, Zambian Plants: Their Vernacular Names and Uses. Kew. p 15

Hussey, B.M.J., Keighery, G.J., Cousens, R.D., Dodd, J., Lloyd, S.G., 1997, Western Weeds. A guide to the weeds of Western Australia. Plant Protection Society of Western Australia. p 112

Jackes, B. R., 2010, Plants of Magnetic Island. 3rd Edition. James Cook University, Australia. p 106

Koukou, E., et al, 2022, Local knowledge of agricultural biodiversity and food uses in two agroecological zones of southern Benin. Ethnobotany Research and Applications 23:29 (2022) p 7

Kuhnlein, H. V., et al, 2009, Indigenous Peoples' food systems. FAO Rome p 262

Kumar, R. & Saikia, P., 2020, Wild edible plants of Jharkhand and their utilitarian perspectives. Indian Journal of Traditional Knowledge Vol 19 (2), April 2020, pp 237-250

Lazarides, M. & Hince, B., 1993, Handbook of Economic Plants of Australia, CSIRO. p 130

Loughmiller, C & L., 1985, Texas Wildflowers. A Field Guide. University of Texas, Austin. p 21

McMakin, P.D., 2000, Flowering Plants of Thailand. A Field Guide. White Lotus. p 88

Paczkowska, G. & Chapman, A.R., 2000, The Western Australian Flora. A Descriptive Catalogue. Western Australian Herbarium. p 182

Plants of Haiti Smithsonian Institute http://botany.si.edu/antilles/West Indies

Segnon, A. C. & Achigan-Dako, E. G., 2014, Comparative analysis of diversity and utilization of edible plants in arid and semi-arid areas in Benin. Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine 2014, 10:80

Sp. pl. 1:130. 1753

Swapna, M. M. et al, 2011, A review on the medicinal and edible aspects of aquatic and wetland plants of India. J. Med. Plants Res. 5 (33) pp. 7163-7176

Westerway, J., et al, 2018, Preliminary checklist of the naturalised and pest plants of Timor-Leste. Blumea 63:157-163

Wheeler, J.R.(ed.), 1992, Flora of the Kimberley Region. CALM, Western Australian Herbarium, p 773

World Checklist of Useful Plant Species 2020. Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Zon, A.P.M. van der, Grubben, G.J.H., 1976, Les legumes-feuilles spontanes et cultives du Sud-Dahomey, Communication 65, Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam, p 66

Zhu Ge-ling; Harald Riedl, Rudolf Kamelin, BORAGINACEAE, Flora of China

PROVIDED BY **Food Plants International**

French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

LICENCE CC BY-NC-SA 3.0

ONLINE FACT SHEET https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/1ab802c4-678d-4864-a5b0-3e17e97e8112