PLANT FACT SHEET

Houttuynia cordata Thunb.

GENUS *Houttuynia* **FAMILY** Saururaceae

COMMON NAMES Fishwort, Fish smelling herb, Swamp pepper

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Rhizomes, Fruit, Vegetable, Roots, Plant - tea, Flowers

The leaves are used to flavour dishes of raw fish. The leaves are eaten in salads. They can be stored for 2-3 days. The tender shoots and leaves including flowers are cooked as a vegetable and also pickled. They are used in chutney and to flavour curries.
The rhizome is eaten as a vegetable raw or cooked. It is made into chutney or pickles.
The fruit is eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A herb 10-30 cm tall. It climbs slightly. It has stolons and continues to grow from year to year. The leaves are alternate and oval. They narrow to the tip and are heart shaped at the base. They are 10 cm long by 6 cm wide. They are slightly hairy on the veins. They have a smell of oranges when crushed. The leaf stalk is 3-4 cm long. The flowers are in a spike. This is at the ends of branches and is 2.5 cm long by 6 mm wide. There are 4 developed bracts. These are oval and 1.5-2 cm long and white. The fruit is an urn shaped capsule. The seed are oval and 1 mm long.

HABITAT

A tropical to temperate plant. It is frost hardy. In Nepal it grows between 700-2500 m altitude. It grows in moist, shady places. It will grow in water up to 3-5 cm deep. It suits hardiness zones 5-10. Melbourne Botanical Gardens. In Yunnan. In Sichuan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed or division of the clump. It spread and covers the ground. It can be grown from tip cuttings.

NOTES

There is only one Houttuynia species. It can spread widely.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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