PLANT FACT SHEET

Habenaria epipactidea Rchb.f.

GENUS *Habenaria* **FAMILY** Orchidaceae

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Tuber, Root

The tubers are dug and peeled and cooked.
They can be pounded and baked into mealy cakes.

DESCRIPTION

An orchid. It grows in the soil. It is 30-55 cm tall. It has an underground tuber 6 cm long by 3 cm wide. This produces an upright stem. The tuber has a dark woolly covering. There are 8-15 leaves that closely overlap the stem. The largest leaf is the lowest and is 5-12 cm long by 2.5 cm wide. The flowers are on a cylinder shaped spike and they have a sweet scent. The spike is 6-16 cm long and 2-5 cm wide. The flowers are close together and there can be 7 or many. The fruit is a narrowly oval capsule. It has slits that release the very small seeds.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows in grassland in damp or rocky gullies. In Tanzania it grows between 1,100-1,800 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from tubers.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Tubers are harvested at the end of the rainy season. In Tanzania this is May to July. They can be stored in a cool place for several weeks.

NOTES

It is becoming rare due to over harvesting. Plants should be cultivated and not only harvested from the wild.

REFERENCES

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ONLINE FACT SHEET https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/26bc2239-56ad-446c-a259-769981fb52bd