PLANT FACT SHEET

Hibiscus surattensis L.

GENUS *Hibiscus* **FAMILY** Malvaceae

COMMON NAMES Wild sour, Bush sorrel

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Fruit, Flowers - flavouring

The leaves are cooked as a flavouring with fish and meat. They are sour.
The young leaves are cooked as a vegetable. They are also used in curries. It can be used to thicken sauces.

DESCRIPTION

A spiny vine or shrub. It grows each year from seed. It is 0.5-2 m high but often lies over. The leaf stalk is 2-7 cm long. It is densely hairy. The leaves are alternate and deeply lobed. There are 3-5 lobes. They are somewhat hairy and with toothed edges. The leaves are 5-10 cm long by 5-11 cm wide. The lobes are sword shaped and 3-7 cm long by 1.5-3 cm wide. The flowers occur singly in the axils of leaves. The flowers are large and yellowish or whitish and tinged with red. The fruit is a capsule which is oval or round and 1.2 cm across. The seeds are kidney shaped with very fine white hairs.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. They are found throughout the Philippines in open grasslands. In China it grows in valleys and open slopes between 1000-1180 m altitude in S China. It Africa it grows up to 1,700 m above sea level. It often grows in areas with a rainfall between 1,000-1,600 mm. It can grow in arid places. It can grow in coastal places on sand dunes. In Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Harvesting and Seed Production

The leaves are collected in the early rainy season.

NOTES

There are about 220 Hibiscus species.

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