PLANT FACT SHEET

Verbascum thapsus L.

GENUS *Verbascum* **FAMILY** Scrophulariaceae

COMMON NAMES Mullein, Aaron's rod, Great mullein

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Flowers - flavouring, Leaves - tea

The dried leaves are steeped in boiling water for 5-10 minutes to make tea. This is slightly bitter. The tea should be strained to remove the fuzz that can irritate throats.
The fresh or dried flowers can be used for tea. This is sweet.

DESCRIPTION

A stout herb. It takes two years to complete its life cycle. It can be 2.5 m high. The flowering stems are erect. The leaves, stems and outer flower parts have dense soft white hairs. There is a ring of leaves near the base. These are oval or sword shaped with a sharp tip. The leaf base narrows to a winged stalk. The leaves on the flowering stem get smaller and do not have a stalk. They have a wing which continues down the stem. The flowers are on a dense rod like structure. The flowers are in groups of 1-7 in the axils of bracts. The fruit is a dry round capsule.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It grows in poor soil. It can grow on chalky and gravelly soils. It is best in an open, sunny position. It is resistant to drought and frost. It cannot tolerate shade. In Argentina it grows from sea level to 1,000 m above sea level. It suits hardiness zones 3-9. Tasmania Herbarium. In Sichuan and Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

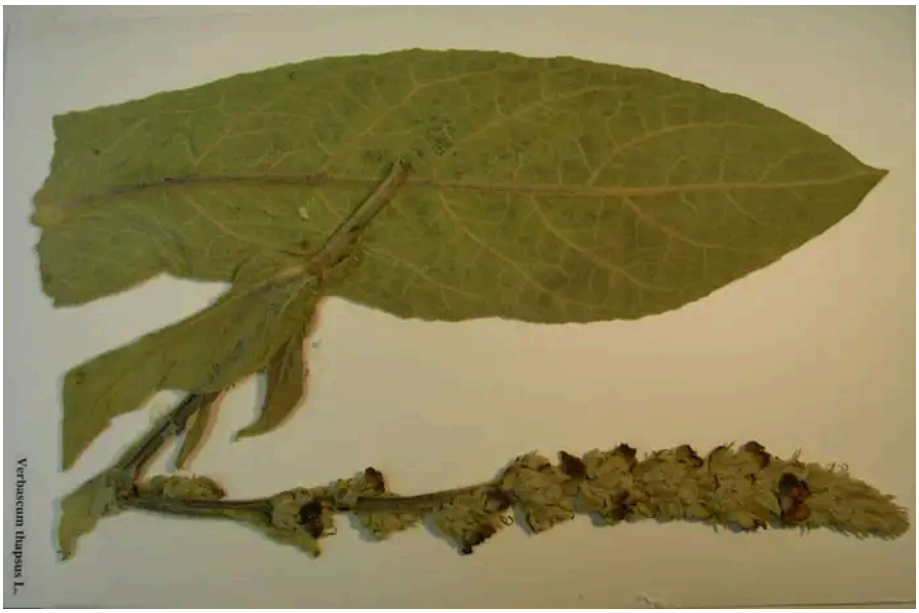
Cultivation

It is grown from seed. Seeds need open ground to germinate.

NOTES

There are about 300-350 Verbascum species. It is used in medicine.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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