PLANT FACT SHEET

Aletris spicata (Thunberg) Franchet

GENUS *Aletris* **FAMILY** Nartheciaceae

COMMON NAMES Narrow-leaf Plantain-lily, Chinese stargrass

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves

The young leaves are cooked and eaten as an emergency food.
They are eaten with oil and salt.
The whole plant is boiled with sugar to make a drink given to mothers to improve their milk quality.

DESCRIPTION

A perennial plant 30 cm high. There are many leaves tufted together. They are very narrow. They are 5-30 cm long by 2-4 mm wide. The flowering stalk is 5-35 cm long and has 10-80 flowers in a loose cluster. This stalk is densely hairy. The flowers can be yellow or white. They can be striped or tinged pink. The fruit is a capsule which is oval and angular. It is 3-5 mm long by 2-3 mm wide.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It grows naturally in low hills in Japan. It prefers a damp sunny position with leaf mould. In China it grows in grassland and scrub between 100-2900 m altitude in many provinces. In Sichuan and Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed or by division of the clump.

NOTES

There are 21 Aletris species.

REFERENCES

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