PLANT FACT SHEET

Pontederia vaginalis (Burm.f.) Presl. ex Kunth

GENUS *Pontederia* **FAMILY** Pontederiaceae

COMMON NAMES Oval-leaf monochoria, Pickerel weed

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Flowers, Tubers, Vegetable, Stem, Rhizome, Root

The stems and young leaves are cooked and used as a vegetable. They are spicy.
The flower is eaten raw and also cooked as a vegetable with small fish.

DESCRIPTION

A plant which grows in water attached to the mud. It keeps growing from year to year. The stems are 5 cm long. The plant can grow to 35 cm tall. The lower leaf is 2.5-11 cm long by 0.4-7.5 cm wide. The leaves are sword shaped to broadly oval. The leaf stalk is fleshy and 5-70 cm long. The stem leaf is similar to the lower leaf. The flower stalk is 12-35 cm long. The flower cluster is 1.5-5 cm long and dense bearing 1-20 flowers. The flowers are 0.9-1.8 cm long and blue. The fruit is a capsule 1 cm across and round but flattened at the top. The seeds are oval and about 1 mm across.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It needs a sunny position for flowering. It occurs in slow moving streams and swamps. It grows in wetlands. It grows to 1550 m altitude. It is very frost sensitive. It is native to Australia and Asia. It is often in rice fields. It suits acid soils. In Sichuan. It suits the wet tropics.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

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

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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