PLANT FACT SHEET

Rumex acetosella L.

GENUS *Rumex* **FAMILY** Polygonaceae

COMMON NAMES Sheep Sorrel, Red Sorrel

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Seeds, Vegetable, Roots

The seeds are ground into flour to make flat bread.
The young leaves can be eaten in salads. They are sour but are chewed to quench thirst.
The leaves can be boiled and eaten in small amounts in salads and soups. The leaves are used for sarma in Turkey. They are rolled around a filling of rice or minced meat.
The leaves are used to curdle sheep's milk in cheese making.
The root is also recorded as edible.
CAUTION: Because this plant contains oxalates, eating large amounts over time can reduce calcium absorption by the body.

DESCRIPTION

A herb. It grows 10-25 cm tall. It keeps growing from year to year. It has a slender but wide-spreading rootstock. It has narrow leaves. They are sword shaped and smooth. The veins run length wise right along the leaf. It has curved, winged ears at the base of the leaf. The leaves are on long stalks. The seeding spikes are slender and yellow-green at first but become reddish-brown. The seeds are small and do not have spines or bristles.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It often grows self sown in poor soils and where there is little competition. Plants on frost prone sites are small. It grows best in open sunny locations. It is frost resistant. In Argentina it grows from sea level to 2,000 m above sea level. Tasmania Herbarium.

NOTES

The leaves are rich in Vitamin C. There are about 200 Rumex species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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