PLANT FACT SHEET

Trapa natans L.

GENUS *Trapa* **FAMILY** Lythraceae

COMMON NAMES Caltrops, Jesuit Nut, Water Caltrops

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Nuts, Fruit, Vegetable, leaves

The seed kernels can be eaten raw, roasted or boiled. They can be fried like a vegetable or preserved in honey and sugar. They can be candied or ground into flour for bread and puddings.

DESCRIPTION

An annual plant which grows in water. It can be 60-75 cm across. The leaves occur in rosettes. They are diamond shaped. The leaves have shiny pale green surfaces. The veins are easy to see. There are teeth around the edge. The leaf stalks are fleshy and spongy. They are 4-20 cm long. The fruit are heart-shaped and brown. It is a soft, juicy, fleshy receptacle.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It grows in warm, still water. It grows in wetlands. In China it grows from sea level to 2,700 m above sea level. It suits hardiness zones 5-8.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from fresh fruit.

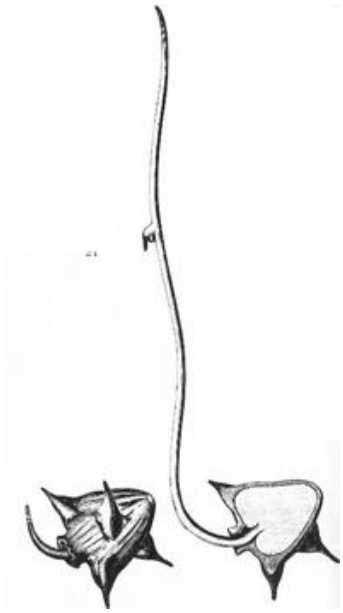
Harvesting and Seed Production

It bears in 1 year. In NE India fruit are available in November to December.

NOTES

The plant is prohibited in the USA.
Also put in the family Trapaceae.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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