PLANT FACT SHEET

Vicia cracca L.

GENUS *Vicia* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Tufted vetch, Bird vetch, Cow vetch

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Seeds, Pods, Fruit, flower - nectar

Young stems and leaves are eaten as a potherb.
The leaves are used as a substitute for tea.
The seeds are eaten boiled or roasted. They are also eaten raw.

DESCRIPTION

An annual climbing herb. It is hairy. The leaves have leaflets along the stalk. There are 8-24 leaflets and a tendril at the end. The leaflets are 7-15 cm long by 2-8 mm wide. The flowers are pinkish-blue. The pods are flat and oblong. They are 2-4 cm long and with an oblique point at the end. There are 2-5 seeds. They are black.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. In China it lies below 4,200 m above sea level. In Argentina it grows below 500 m above sea level. It suits hardiness zone 6.

NOTES

There are about 140 Vicia species. They are mostly temperate.

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PROVIDED BY **Food Plants International**

French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

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