PLANT FACT SHEET

Amaranthus hypochondriacus L.

GENUS *Amaranthus* **FAMILY** Amaranthaceae

COMMON NAMES Amaranth, Velvet flower

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Leaves, Sprouts, Vegetable

The seeds are eaten cooked. They are made into tortillas and chapaties.
The leaves are eaten cooked.
The seeds can be sprouted and the sprouts eaten.
The red pigment is used to colour foods.

DESCRIPTION

An annual herb. It grows to 1.2 m high and 50 cm across. The leaves are oblong or sword shaped and purple-green. They are 15 cm long. The flowers are more erect than Amaranthus cruentus. They are large and thick. The pointed bracts give a prickly appearance. The flower clusters can be 15 cm long or more. The seed is usually pale.

HABITAT

It will grow in tropical, subtropical and temperate places. Plants do best under high light, warm conditions and dry conditions. It is best with a temperature above 25°C. They need a well drained soil. It tolerates a pH in the range 5.2 to 7.5. It is grown especially in the tropics. It suits hardiness zones 8-11.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed if the soil is warm. Seeds are small and grow easily. Seeds germinate 3-4 days after sowing. Cuttings of growing plants root easily.

NOTES

There are about 60 Amaranthus species. The seeds are 15% protein.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

REFERENCES

Andabati, B., & Muyonga, J., 2014, Phenolic content and antioxidant activity of selected Ugandian traditional medicinal foods. African Journal of Food Science. 8(8), pp 427-434

Bao Bojian; Steve Clemants, Thomas Borsch, Amaranthaceae [Draft], Flora of China

Bircher, A. G. & Bircher, W. H., 2000, Encyclopedia of Fruit Trees and Edible Flowering Plants in Egypt and the Subtropics. AUC Press. p 22 (As Amaranthus frumentaceus)

Bodkin, F., 1991, Encyclopedia Botanica. Cornstalk publishing, p 74

Brouk, B., 1975, Plants Consumed by Man. Academic Press, London. p 34 (As Amaranthus leucocarpus)

Brown, D., 2002, The Royal Horticultural Society encyclopedia of Herbs and their uses. DK Books. p 117

Creasey, R., 2000, Edible Mexican Garden. Periplus. p 22

Cundall, P., (ed.), 2004, Gardening Australia: flora: the gardener's bible. ABC Books. p 144

Facciola, S., 1998, Cornucopia 2: a Source Book of Edible Plants. Kampong Publications, p 8

FAO, 1993, Valor Nutritivo Y Usis en Alimantacion humana de Algunis Cultivos Autoctonos Subexplotados de Mesoamerica. FAO, Santiago, Chile. p 107

Fl. ind. ed. 1832, 3:609. 1832 (As Amaranthus frumentaceus)

Gobezie, S., & Mersha W., 2023, Ethnobotanical survey of some wild edible plants among the Mursi, Bodi and Bacha communities in lower Omo valley of south Omo zone, southern Ethiopia. Research Square.

Gogoi, D, et al, 2023, Foods from the wild. A review on the diversity and use pattern of wild edible plants of Arunachal Himalaya for sustainable management. Plant Science Today Vol.10 No.1

Grivetti, L. E., 1980, Agricultural development: present and potential role of edible wild plants. Part 2: Sub-Saharan Africa, Report to the Department of State Agency for International Development. p 44

Grubben, G. J. H. and Denton, O. A. (eds), 2004, Plant Resources of Tropical Africa 2. Vegetables. PROTA, Wageningen, Netherlands. p 78

Hermandez Bermejo, J.E., and Leon, J. (Eds.), 1994, Neglected Crops. 1492 from a different perspective. FAO Plant Production and Protection Series No 26. FAO, Rome. p 12, 93

Jansen, P.C.M., 2004. Amaranthus hypochondriacus L. [Internet] Record from Protabase. Grubben, G.J.H. & Denton, O.A. (Editors). PROTA (Plant Resources of Tropical Africa / Ressources végétales de l'Afrique tropicale), Wageningen, Netherlands. < http://database.prota.org/search.htm>. Accessed 13 October 2009.

Ju, Y., et al, 2013, Eating from the wild: diversity of wild edible plants used by Tibetans in Shangri-la region, Yunnan, China, Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethno medicine 9:28

Kermath, B. M., et al, 2018, Food Plants in the Americas: A Survey of the Domesticated, Cultivated and Wild Plants Used for Human Food in North, Central and South America and the Caribbean. p 66

Kiple, K.F. & Ornelas, K.C., (eds), 2000, The Cambridge World History of Food. CUP p 1717

Manzanero-Medina, G. I., et al, 2020, Ethnobotany of food plants (quelites) sold in two traditional markets of Oaxaca, Mexico. South African Journal of Botany. 130 (2020) 215-223

Mapes, C. & Basurto, F., 2016, Biodiversity and Edible Plants of Mexico. Chapter 5 in R. Lira, et al. (eds.), Ethnobotany of Mexico, Ethnobiology, Springer. p 114

Martin, F.W. & Ruberte, R.M., 1979, Edible Leaves of the Tropics. Antillian College Press, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. p 173 (As Amaranthus frumentaceus)

Maundu, P. et al, 1999, Traditional Food Plants of Kenya. National Museum of Kenya. p 61

Norrington, L., & Campbell, C., 2001, Tropical Food Gardens. Bloomings Books. p 50

Pena, F. B., et al, 1998, Los quelites de la Sierra Norte de Puebla, Mexico: Inventory Y Formas de Preparacion. Bol. Soc. Bot. Mexico 62:49-62

Piedra-Malagón, E. M. et al, 2022, Edible native plants of the Gulf of Mexico Province. Biodiversity Data Journal 10: e80565 p 8

Plants for a Future database, The Field, Penpol, Lostwithiel, Cornwall, PL22 0NG, UK. http://www.scs.leeds.ac.uk/pfaf/

Plants for a Future database, The Field, Penpol, Lostwithiel, Cornwall, PL22 0NG, UK. http://www.scs.leeds.ac.uk/pfaf/ (As Amaranthus frumentaceus)

Plants for a Future database, The Field, Penpol, Lostwithiel, Cornwall, PL22 0NG, UK (As Amaranthus leucocarpus)

Proc. Amer. Acad. Arts 10:347. 1875 (As Amaranthus leucocarpus)

PROSEA (Plant Resources of South East Asia) handbook Volume 10 Cereals. p 75

Purseglove, J.W., 1968, Tropical Crops Dicotyledons, Longmans. p 624 (As Amaranthus leucocarpus)

Saur, J.D., Grain amaranths, in Simmonds, N.W., (Ed.), 1979, Evolution of Crop Plants. Longman. p 4

Sharma, B.B., 2005, Growing fruits and vegetables. Publications Division. Ministry of Information and broadcasting. India. p 189

SHORTT (As Amaranthus frumentaceus)

Singh, A., 2009, Bioactivity of Famine Food Plants from the family: Amaranthaceae. University of Technology, Durban, South Africa. Masters Degree Thesis. pp 1-116

Small, E., 2009, Top 100 Food Plants. The world's most important culinary crops. NRC Research Press. p 69

Smith, K., 1998. Growing Uncommon Fruits and Vegetables. New Holland. p 25

Sp. pl. 2:991. 1753 "hypocondriacus"

Full reference list (8 more) at https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/50523d07-95e8-4ccf-a9cc-6071dfc224dc

---

PROVIDED BY **Food Plants International**

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

LICENCE CC BY-NC-SA 3.0

ONLINE FACT SHEET https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/50523d07-95e8-4ccf-a9cc-6071dfc224dc