PLANT FACT SHEET

Use with caution

This plant can be harmful if it is eaten raw, in large amounts or without the right preparation. Read the whole fact sheet before use.

Caladium bicolor (Aiton) Ventenat

GENUS *Caladium* **FAMILY** Araceae

COMMON NAMES Fancy-leaf caladium

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Tubers, Root, Seeds

CAUTION: The plant like many taro family plants contains very small needle like crystals of calcium oxalate which can irritate the skin or mouth.
The leaves are edible with suitable processing. They are boiled and eaten in the West Indies.
The tubers of some varieties are used as food. (var. poecile and var. velloziana)

DESCRIPTION

A perennial plant. It grows to 50 cm tall and spreads to 1 m wide. The roots form round tubers. The stem is slender and erect and produces a flower at the top. The leaves arise directly from the base and are large and arrow shaped. The leaf stalk joins to the middle of the leaf underneath. (Not the edge). Leaves are 15-30 cm long. They have patterns of pink and green. The flower is creamy white and lily like.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It does best in rich moist soils. It can grow in light shade. It is drought and frost tender. Plants will not grow with temperatures less than 13°C and should have temperatures of 21°C or above. It suits hardiness zones 10-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown by dividing the tubers. They are planted 5 cm deep. Plants are spaced 30 cm apart.

NOTES

It is mostly grown as an ornamental plant. There are (7) 12-17 Caladium species.

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