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.

Agrostemma githago L.

GENUS *Agrostemma* **FAMILY** Caryophyllaceae

COMMON NAMES Corncockle

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves

CAUTION: The seeds are very poisonous. It contains githagin (agrostemine).
The leaves are cooked and eaten as an emergency food. Because the plant contains saponins which although poisonous are poorly absorbed by the body, they should not be eaten in large amounts.
The leaves are cooked with vinegar and bacon.

DESCRIPTION

An annual herb. It grows about 1 m high and spreads about 40-100 cm wide. There is a shallow taproot. The stem is slender, hairy and with few branches. The leaves are in opposite pairs. They are narrow and 12 cm long. They are covered with fine white silky hairs. Leaves are grey-green. The flowers are dull purple. They occur singly on long stalks in the axils of leaves. The flowers have 5 petals. These are 2.5-6 cm wide and have distinct veins. The sepals are long narrow and green. The fruit is a large oval capsule containing seeds.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It is drought and frost resistant. It adapts to most soils. It will grow best in soils that are not too fertile but are well drained and in a sunny position. Plants are hardy to -15°C. Tasmania Herbarium.

PRODUCTION

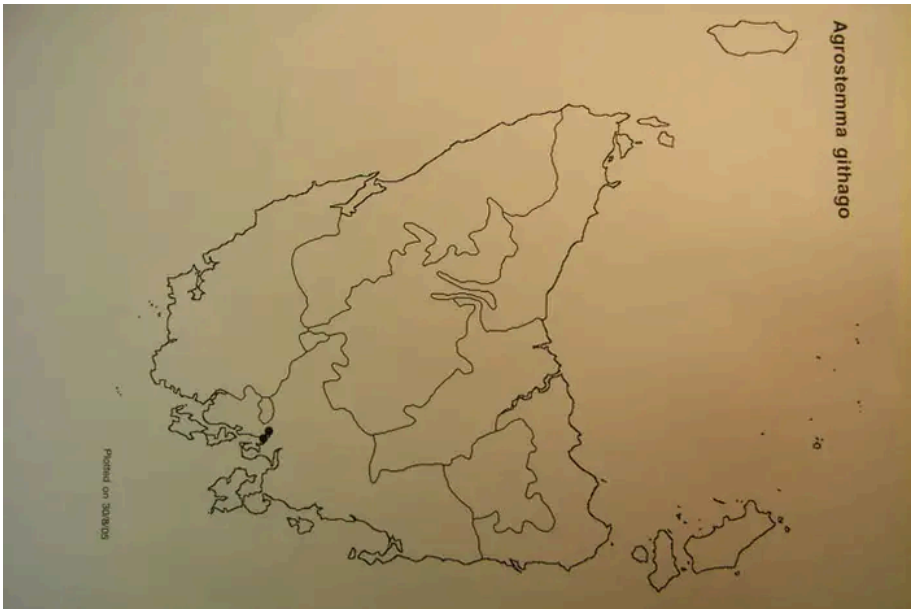
Cultivation

The plant grows from seed. They self seed easily. The seed usually germinates in 2-3 weeks.

NOTES

It is used in medicine.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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ONLINE FACT SHEET https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/59b68144-8685-49d4-83af-ba1efcf1aff1