PLANT FACT SHEET

Rhododendron arboreum Smith

GENUS *Rhododendron* **FAMILY** Ericaceae

COMMON NAMES Rose tree, Tree Rhododendron

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Flowers, Flowers - drink, Leaves

The flower petals are eaten raw. They are also used to make jelly. The juice from them is used to make drinks. They are also used for colouring drinks and syrups. They are also used for chutney.
The flower can be pickled with salt and chili.
CAUTION: The young leaves are poisonous.
The young leaves are cooked as a vegetable. They are boiled.

DESCRIPTION

A small evergreen tree. It can be 1-8-15 m high. It can spread 4.5 m high. The leaves have stalks. The leaves are crowded towards the ends of the branches. Leaves are 4.5-16 cm long by 1.5-6 cm wide. They are oblong to sword shaped and narrow at both ends. They are silvery underneath. The flowers are red, white or pink. The flowers are crowded in large round heads. There are 10 stamens. The fruit capsule is 1.5-2 cm long. It has ribs along it.

HABITAT

A tropical and subtropical plant. It grows in the highlands of Vietnam between 2,550 and 3,000 m altitude. In Nepal it grows between 1400-3300 m altitude. It grows on hillsides in mixed oak forests. It is native to the Himalayas. It suits hardiness zones 7-9. Arboretum Tasmania.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seeds. They are sown in a nursery and picked out in the second season.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is slow growing.

NOTES

There are over 500 Rhododendron species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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