PLANT FACT SHEET

Cyperus rotundus L.

GENUS *Cyperus* **FAMILY** Cyperaceae

COMMON NAMES Nut Grass, Purple Nutsedge

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Tubers, Seeds, Roots, Rhizomes, Culms

CAUTION: All parts of the plant can contain poisonous cyanide (the bitter taste) so must be well heated before eating.
The tubers are eaten fresh.
They are also roasted or boiled and can be dried and made into flour.
The bases of the culms are cooked and eaten.
The rhizomes are cut into small pieces and roasted.
The seeds are cooked and eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A sedge. It is a herb that continues growing from year to year. It has both rhizomes and tubers under the ground. The leaves of this plant have a blunt tip and do not have a shoulder along the leaf. The leaves mostly grow from the base of the plant. They are narrow and flat and 5-20 cm long. The flower is a compound flower with 5 leafy bracts near the base of the flower. These are of different lengths. The flower stem is 3-angled and 20-50 cm high. The fruit are 3 angled and brown. They are about 1.5 mm long. The tubers of this species are dark brown, in a chain and have a bitter or unpleasant taste.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It occurs world wide in warmer places. In Papua New Guinea it grows up to 1800 m altitude. In Nepal it grows between 300-2400 m altitude. It grows in moist places. It grows in wetlands. It can grow in most soil types and most pH levels. It cannot tolerate salt or shade. It can grow in arid places. It grows in the Sahara.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown by seed or tuberous rhizomes. Seeds often do not grow. Rhizomes and tubers are more common methods of reproduction.

NOTES

It is mostly regarded as a serious weed in gardens in the tropical lowlands. There are 550 Cyperus species. It is used in medicine.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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