PLANT FACT SHEET

Dioscorea nummularia Lamarck

GENUS *Dioscorea* **FAMILY** Dioscoreaceae

COMMON NAMES Nummularia yam

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Tubers, Root

The tuber is cooked and eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A yam. A vine plant with long spiny stems. The stems are nearly round in cross section. The leaves are oval to heart shaped. They end abruptly in a pointed tip. Often they are alternate lower on the vine then opposite each other higher up the plant. The vines twine to the right. The stems are spiny near the base. The flowers are slender. The flower spikes occur on leafless branches produced in the axils of leaves and these are longer than the leaf near where they are produced. The flower spikes remain of equal size along the length of this flowering branch. Tubers are often deep in the soil and with several lobes.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. Mostly they occur in coastal areas. In Papua New Guinea it has been recorded up to 2,000 m above sea level. Outside Papua New Guinea it occurs in Fiji, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Solomon Islands.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from pieces of the tuber. It can also be grown from aerial tubers. Plants are often planted near trees so that the vine can climb the tree and the tuber is left growing in the same spot for several years with tubers being harvested annually.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The leaves die off and re-grow each year. The tuber does not store well.

NOTES

There are about 650 species of Dioscorea.

PICTURES



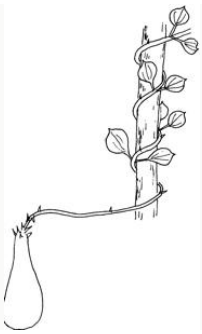
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