PLANT FACT SHEET

Phytolacca acinosa Roxb.

GENUS *Phytolacca* **FAMILY** Phytolaccaceae

COMMON NAMES Sweet belladonna, Indian pokeweed

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Root, Vegetable

The tender leaves and shoots are cooked as a green vegetable. They are cooked twice changing the water in between. They are used in curries. They are also used in stir fries.
CAUTION: The root is toxic. The fruit are poisonous.
The root is sliced then boiled and soaked in changes of water and steamed before eating.
The fruit are occasionally used as a flavouring.

DESCRIPTION

A herb. It is soft and juicy. It grows 1.5 m tall. The roots are thick and fleshy. The stems have grooves along them. They can be green or red-purple. The leaves have stalks. These are 1.5-3 cm long. The leaves are 12-26 cm long by 5-10 cm wide. They are oval and narrowed towards the leaf stalk. The flowers have stalks. The flowers are greenish. The fruit is a berry which is 7 mm across and purplish black when mature.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. In Nepal it grows between 2200-3200 m altitude. It grows in the shade of forest trees. It grows in wetlands. In China it grows in valleys in forest understories in moist fertile lands from 500-3400 m altitude. It grows in Yunnan. It occurs in Sichuan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed or root offshoots.

NOTES

There are 25 Phytolacca species. It is used in medicine.

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