PLANT FACT SHEET

Operculina turpethum (L.) Silva Manso

GENUS *Operculina* **FAMILY** Convolvulaceae

COMMON NAMES Indian jalap, Onion vine, Turpeth

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Buds, Fruit

Young buds are eaten when the seeds are still white.
The soft sweet stem is sucked and chewed.
The fleshy unripe fruit are eaten raw or boiled.
The leaves are also eaten raw or cooked.
Caution: It contains gluco-resins that have a strong purgative effect.

DESCRIPTION

A herb. It is a climbing plant that keeps growing from year to year. The annual stems can be 2-4 m long. The stems have 3-5 narrow wings. The rootstock is fleshy and branched. The leaves are round or heart shaped and 4-14 cm long by 4-14 cm wide. They are hairy underneath. There are often 2 flowers together. They are funnel shaped and white but sometimes with yellow base.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows on stream banks, roadsides, grassy fields, wasteland, dry slopes, clay and sandy soils, scrub bordering valleys between 0–500 m in China.

NOTES

It is used in medicine. There are about 25 Operculina species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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