PLANT FACT SHEET

Debregeasia edulis (Siebold. & Zucc.) Wedd.

GENUS *Debregeasia* **FAMILY** Urticaceae

COMMON NAMES Water hemp

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit

The fruit are pleasantly sweet and are eaten raw.

DESCRIPTION

An evergreen shrubby tree. The small branches have dense white hairs. The leaves are long and sword shaped. They are 4-16 cm long by 1-3 cm wide. There are fine teeth along the edge. They have a rough surface and a brownish colour. The flowers are separately male and female on separate plants. These occur in rounded heads. The fruit allow light to shine through. They are fleshy and edible. They are 7 mm across.

HABITAT

It can grow in a range of soils and can tolerate some shade. It prefers a sheltered well drained soil.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Both male and female trees must be grown for fruit production. Plants can be grown from seed. The seed should be sown shallowly and take 1-2 months to germinate at 20°C. They can be sown in a nursery and transplanted. Plants can also be grown from cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The fruit are tender and fall apart easily. They are not therefore easily marketable. Fruit remain on the tree for several weeks.

NOTES

The leaves are used as tooth brushes.
The Flora of China simply says fruit of Debregeasia are edible.

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