PLANT FACT SHEET

Xanthium strumarium L.

GENUS *Xanthium* **FAMILY** Asteraceae

COMMON NAMES Giant cocklebur

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Seeds, Stem, Oil

CAUTION: The plant (fruit) has been reported as toxic and damaging to the heart.
The seeds have been ground into flour then baked into cakes. The seed oil is edible.
The young leaves have been thoroughly boiled and washed then eaten.
The young leaves can be stored for 4-5 days after harvesting.

DESCRIPTION

A stiffly branched annual herb. It is 1.2 m tall. The leaves are alternate and oval or triangle shaped with a heart shaped base. The flower heads are greenish. Male and female flowers are separate but on the same plant. They are 5-6 mm across and in clusters at the side. The fruit are 14-18 mm across.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It occurs all around the world. It grows in damp places. It grows in wetlands. It needs full sun. It can grow in arid places. In the Himalayas it grows up to 1,800 m above sea level. In Sichuan and Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds.

NOTES

It contains a glucoside: xanthostrumarium. It has anticancer properties.
Chemical composition (seeds): Protein = 36.7%. Fat = 38.6%. Ash = 5.18%. Some Vitamin C. High amino acid values: Glutamic acid = 2.48g per 16g of nitrogen. Phenylalanine = 5.8g per 16g of nitrogen.

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