PLANT FACT SHEET

Cartonema spicatum R. Br.

GENUS *Cartonema* **FAMILY** Commelinaceae

COMMON NAMES Arda, Cartonema, Small round yam

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Tuber, Corm, Root

The small tubers are cooked and eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A slender herb which keeps growing from year to year. It forms a tuber. It is 20-30 cm high. The stems are hairy. The leaves are long, narrow and hairy. They are 15-25 cm long by 0.4-0.7 cm wide. The leaves are grass like with veins running along the leaf. The leaf is pointed at the tip and has a sheath at the base. The flowers are yellow. They are about 2 cm across. They occur in spikes at the end of the shoot. The fruit is a small capsule. It is 0.5-0.8 cm long and enclosed in hairy papery bracts. The small tubers are edible.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows in northern Australia. It grows in open forest often on rocky outcrops. It grows on moist sandy ground. It does well in hot places.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed or tubers.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Tubers are harvested in the dry season.

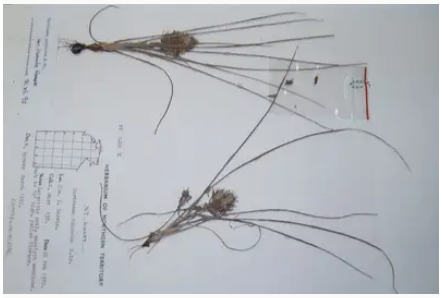
NOTES

There are about 10 Cartonema species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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