PLANT FACT SHEET

Nephrolepis cordifolia (L.) Presl.

GENUS *Nephrolepis* **FAMILY** Nephrolepidaceae

COMMON NAMES Fishbone fern, Tuberous sword fern

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Roots, Tubers, Fronds, Leaves, Tea

The root tubers are eaten. They are boiled. They are also dried. They are used to prepare soup with chicken or pork.
The soft tubers are also used for drink because of the water they contain.
The tender parts are cooked and eaten when food is scarce.

DESCRIPTION

A fern. It can grow in the soil or attached to other plants. It keeps growing from year to year and forms large colonies. It grows about 30-120 cm high. The roots often bear tubers. These can be 1 cm long. The stalk of the fern frond is stiff and brown and often is slightly scaly. It is 10-30 cm long. The fronds are narrow and divided into leaflets along the stalk. The fronds are 30-120 cm long by 2-7 cm wide. The leaflets are many and do not have a leaf stalk. The leaflets are 1-3.5 cm long by 0.4-1 cm wide. There are blunt teeth along the edge. The bases overlap. The spore bodies are kidney shaped. They are close to the leaf edge. It produces fleshy tubers along the runners.

HABITAT

It grows in tropical and subtropical places. In Nepal it grows between 500-2400 m altitude. It will grow in dark places and dry atmosphere. It can tolerate frost. In Argentina it grows from sea level to 1,000 m above sea level. Melbourne Botanical Gardens. It suits hardiness zones 10-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from root tubers or by splitting the plant. It can also be grown from spores or from small plants produced along the runners.

NOTES

There are about 20 Nephrolepis species. They grow in the tropics. It is used in medicine in Bangladesh. Also put in the family Davalliaceae.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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