PLANT FACT SHEET

Tephrosia purpurea (L.) Pers.

GENUS *Tephrosia* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Purple tephrosia

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Seeds, Roots, Pods, Flowers, Vegetable

The roasted seeds are used instead of coffee.
The seeds are eaten.
The roots are used to flavour milk.
The leaves are used for tea.

DESCRIPTION

An erect or scrambling herb. It can grow each year from seed or continue growing for a few years. It is 40-80 cm high. The stems can be hairy or smooth. The leaves have an odd number of leaflets. The leaves have 9-21 leaflets which are oblong and 2 cm long by 6 mm wide. They have a point at the tip. The flowers are 8 mm long in slender flower arrangements growing opposite leaves. These stalks can be 20 cm long. The flower standard is white inside and purple outside. The keel is green with a purple tip. The fruit are narrow pods curved upwards towards the tip. They are 4-5 cm long and 4-6 mm wide. They have short hairs. There are 6-9 seeds spaced more widely apart.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It is self sown in grasslands. In Papua New Guinea it grows from 30 to 120 m altitude. It grows on the Deccan in India. It grows in the Sahara. It grows in arid places. In Sichuan and Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is a short lived shrub.

NOTES

Chemical composition (acid composition of seeds, Singhalese sample): Oil = 7%. Component esters (wt. %): 16:0 = 16%. 18: = 7%. 18:1 = 25%. 18:2 = 24%. 18:3 = 24%. 20:0 = 2%.

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