PLANT FACT SHEET

Gisekia pharnaceoides L.

GENUS *Gisekia* **FAMILY** Gisekiaceae

COMMON NAMES Oldmaid

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Seeds, Vegetable

The leaves are eaten as greens. They are a potherb when food is scarce. They can be dried and stored. They are sometimes used as a flavouring or spice.
Caution: Because it contains poisonous substances it should only ever be eaten in small amounts.

DESCRIPTION

A herb. It lays along the ground. It keeps growing from year to year. It is 20-50 cm long. It grows out from a central spot. The leaves have white dots. The leaves are leathery and shiny with a groove down the middle. The leaf blade is 1-2.5 cm long by 4-10 mm wide. The leaves are in pairs opposite one another or in rings. The flowers are in dense groups without stalks. There are 5-20 flowers. The flowers are green. They can also be pink or purple with a white centre. The seeds are black and smooth and with very small pits.

HABITAT

It grows in open sandy places often near the sea. It grows in the tropics and subtropics. It grows in dry sandy places. It grows between 230-2,440 m above sea level. It can grow in arid places.

NOTES

There are about 8 Gisekia species. There is only one genus in the family Gisekiaceae. It is also put in the family Aizoaceae.

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French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

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