PLANT FACT SHEET

Leersia hexandra Sw.

GENUS *Leersia* **FAMILY** Poaceae

COMMON NAMES Swamp Rice Grass

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Cereal

DESCRIPTION

A grass which keeps growing from year to year. It grows near the edges of water and has floating stems. It forms clumps due to underground stems or rhizomes. The stems stick up like a stiff grass with supporting roots from the lower stem joints. The leafy stems can be 60 cm high. The stems are hollow. The leaves can be 0.5-20 cm long and 0.3-1 cm wide. They are dull green and sword shaped and taper towards the tip. The leaf sheath is thickened and with dense white bristles at the base. It has rough upward pointing prickles on the higher section. The flower panicles are 5-15 cm long. They are open and with few branches. The small spikes have one flower containing both sexes. The lower flower bract has 5 veins.

HABITAT

A tropical and subtropical plant. It grows along the edges of still water. It can cause floating islands on lakes. In Papua New Guinea it grows from sea level top 2,300 m altitude. It occurs all around the world. In Argentina it grows below 800 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from rooted sections of stems or rhizomes. Seeds are often not formed.

NOTES

There are about 20 Leersia species. It is a weed of rice fields.

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