PLANT FACT SHEET

Saponaria officinalis L.

GENUS *Saponaria* **FAMILY** Caryophyllaceae

COMMON NAMES Bouncing bet, Soapwort

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Flowers, Root

The root is used as an emulsifying agent in the making of confection. It gives a fluffy texture.
It is also added to sunflower seed halava.
The flowers are occasionally added to salads.
Caution: It can be toxic.

DESCRIPTION

A small plant. It grows 30-60 cm high and spreads 50-100 cm wide. They form mounds of wiry stems. The leaves are grey-green and oval. They are pointed and 12 mm long. The flowers are pink, red or white and 25 mm wide. They are in heads of 5 or more flowers.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It will grow in moist soils. It is best in an open sunny position. It is resistant to frost but sensitive to drought. In Argentina it grows from sea level to 1,000 m above sea level. It suits hardiness zones 4-10. Tasmania Herbarium.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed, division or cuttings.

NOTES

It is used in medicine. There are about 20 Saponaria species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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