PLANT FACT SHEET

Plectranthus scutellarioides (L.) R. Br

GENUS *Plectranthus* **FAMILY** Lamiaceae

COMMON NAMES Flame nettle, Butterfly coleus, Painted leaves, Painted nettle

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Tubers, Root

The young leaves are eaten mainly as a seasoning. They are eaten with bread and butter.
The tubers are eaten.
Caution: It is considered to induce abortions. The fresh leaves when chewed may cause mind altering effects.

DESCRIPTION

A herb up to 50 cm high and covered with hairs. It spreads to 30 cm across. The stems and branches are square. They are usually purple. The leaves are opposite. The leaf stalks are 1-4 cm long. The leaves are 3-7 cm long by 1.5-5 cm wide. They are oval or sword shaped. The edges of the leaves are toothed. The leaves have a smell when crushed. The leaves can be dark red, purple, or green and hairy. The flower clusters are erect and at the end of the shoots. The flowers are 5 mm long. They are purple or bluish. The nutlets are brown and broadly oval. They are 1-1.2 mm long. They are shiny.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It suits tropical and subtropical places. It can grow from the lowlands to the mountains. It can be in rainforest and along shaded stream banks. It grows up to 2,900 m above sea level. It often grows near water, such as the edges of swamps or streams. It suits hardiness zones 10-12. Coffs Harbour Botanical Gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It grows readily from cuttings. It also grows wild from seed. Seeds germinate easily.

NOTES

It is widely grown for its ornamental leaves.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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