PLANT FACT SHEET

Acmella oleracea (L.) R. K. Jansen

GENUS *Acmella* **FAMILY** Asteraceae

COMMON NAMES Para cress, Brazilian cress

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Vegetable, Flowers

The leaves are eaten raw or steamed and eaten. The raw leaves are used to flavour salads. The spicy taste is destroyed with cooking. The flowers are also used as a vegetable. They are eaten boiled green or in dried forms. Caution: The leaves when chewed can cause numbing of the mouth. (The chemical is called spilanthol)

DESCRIPTION

An annual herb. It grows 20-30 cm high. The leaf stalks are 2-7 cm long. The leaves are simple and opposite. The leaves are oval or delta shaped and 5-11 cm long by 4-8 cm wide. There are teeth along the edge. The flowering arrangement is round and at the end of the plant. There are 400-600 flowers in a disk.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows in regions with an average temperature of 26°C. The rainfall is 2,700 mm per year. The relative humidity is 85%. It is damaged by frost.

PRODUCTION

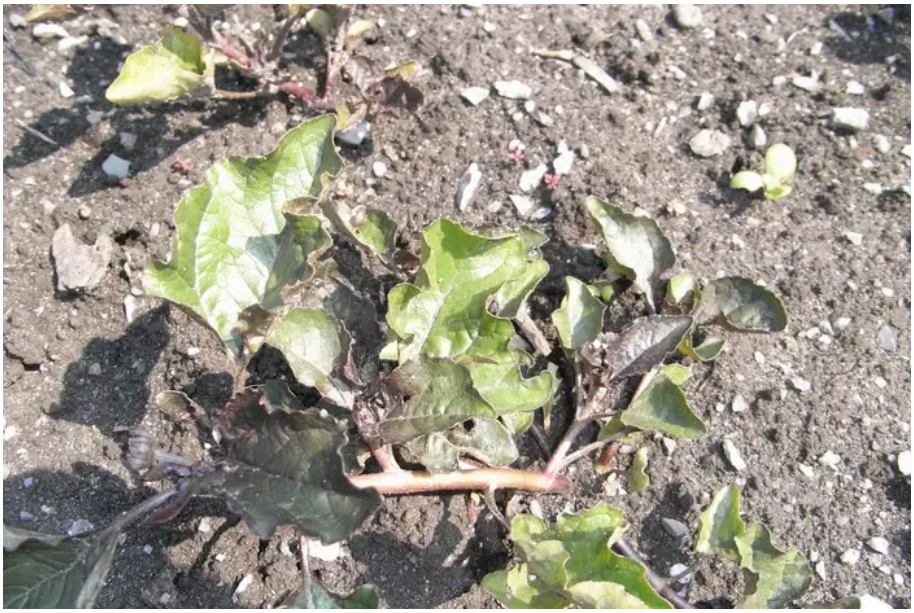
Cultivation

It can be grown from seed. It can also be grown from shoots or cuttings. For seed germination a temperature above 21°C is needed.

NOTES

There are about 30 Acmella species.
It has medicinal uses. It has antibacterial activity.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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