PLANT FACT SHEET

Use with caution

This plant can be harmful if it is eaten raw, in large amounts or without the right preparation. Read the whole fact sheet before use.

Paris polyphylla Smith

GENUS *Paris* **FAMILY** Melanthiaceae

COMMON NAMES Herb Paris

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Leaves, Flowers

The seed are eaten.
The young leaves are eaten as a vegetable. They are also used for soup.
The flowers and fruit are eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A perennial plant which grows up to 1 m tall. It spreads to 30 cm across. It has rhizomes or underground stems which are 1-2.5 cm thick. There are 5-10 leaves. The leaf stalk is 1-6 cm long. The leaf blade is usually oblong to sword shaped and 6-15 cm long by 0.5-5 cm wide. The base is rounded or wedge shaped. The flower stalk is 5-14 cm long. (There can be more leaves and longer leaf blades and flower stalks.) The flowers are yellowish-green. The fruit is a capsule which is round. The seeds are in a red soft aril or seed layer. Several varieties of this plant have been described.

HABITAT

A tropical and subtropical plant. It grows in broadleaved woodlands up to 3,000 metres in the Himalayas. It grows in moist humus rich soil. It can grow in sunlight of partial shade. In China it grows in forests between 100-3500 m altitude in many provinces. It suits hardiness zones 6-9. In Sichuan and Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed. Seed are slow to germinate. It takes about 12 months to produce leaves. Plants can also be grown by division.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants are slow to flower from seed. Flowers last 3 months.

NOTES

The plant is poisonous. It has medicinal uses. There are about 24 Paris species. Also put in the family Trilliaceae.

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