PLANT FACT SHEET

Pontederia cordata L.

GENUS *Pontederia* **FAMILY** Pontederiaceae

COMMON NAMES Pickerelweed, Pickerel Rush

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Seeds

The seeds are eaten raw or boiled like rice. They can be dried and ground into flour for making bread.
They can be slightly parched in an oven and eaten.
Young leaves are cooked as a potherb. They are also added to salads, soups, and stews.

DESCRIPTION

A perennial herb. It is an erect plant which grows in water. It has underground stems or rhizomes. It grows 90-120 cm high and 60-75 cm wide. The leaves develop from the base and have long leaf stalks. The leaf blade normally sticks out of the water. The first leaves may be floating. The mature leaf blades may be 20 cm long and 10 cm wide. They can be heart shaped or sword shaped. There is a small leaf below the flowering stalk. This can clasp the stem. The flower is a spike like panicle. It is dense and 5-15 cm long. It is blue. The flowers have both sexes. The flowers are funnel shaped. The fruit are hard egg shaped capsules 5-10 mm long.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It grows in stationary or slow flowing water up to about 1 m deep. It grows in the edges of lakes and ponds and along streams. It grows in warm places. In Argentina it grows from sea level to 1,000 m above sea level. It suits hardiness zones 2-5 (?).

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from fresh seed. They can also be grown by division.

NOTES

There are 5-6 Pontederia species. They grow in temperate and subtropical places.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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