PLANT FACT SHEET

Typha orientalis C. Presl.

GENUS *Typha* **FAMILY** Typhaceae

COMMON NAMES Bulrush, Broad-leaved Cumbungi

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Root, Pollen

The pollen from the top yellow end of the flower can be collected and made into a porridge.
The young shoots near the base can be pulled off and eaten raw once the outside layer is removed.
The underground rootstalks or rhizomes contain 10% sugar and 50% starch and can be eaten raw or used in soups and stews.

DESCRIPTION

It is a plant which continues to grow from year to year. It is 2 m high and spreads to 50 cm across. There is an extensive network of fleshy white underground stems or rhizomes. These produce aerial shoots. The stem is erect, stout and round in cross section. The leaves are bluish-green and narrow. They can be 2 m long. The flowers are brown, in erect spikes at the ends of stalks. The flowers are green at first, then turn brown. The flower spike is 30 mm across.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It mostly grows in tropical and subtropical places. It grows in moist soils or shallow pools. It grows in wetlands. It needs an open sunny position. It can tolerate frost but not drought. In Papua New Guinea it grows from sea level to 2600 m altitude. It grows in fresh or brackish water up to 2 m deep. It suits hardiness zones 9-11.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown by division.

Harvesting and Seed Production

One plant can produce 200,000 seeds.

NOTES

This plant is very similar to Typha domingensis. Typha angustifolia is similar but in the northern hemisphere. There are 10 Typha species.

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