PLANT FACT SHEET

# *Swertia chirayita* (Wall.) C. B. Clarke

**GENUS** *Swertia* **FAMILY** Gentianaceae

**COMMON NAMES** Chiretta

## EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

**Edible parts:** Leaves - flavouring, Medicine

Extracts of the plant are used to flavour drinks both alcoholic and non-alcoholic. Caution: Alcohol is a cause of cancer.

## DESCRIPTION

An annual herb. It grows each year from seed or can take 2 years to complete its lifecycle. It grows 0.6-1.5 m tall. The root is yellowish and 7-8 cm long and tapers. The stems are robust and branching. They become angular towards the top of the stems. The stems contain a large pith. The leaves are broadly sword shaped and have short stalks. They are 4 cm long. The flowers are in large panicles. They are greenish yellow with a purple tinge. The fruit are egg shaped capsules. They have many sides and sharp points. The seeds are smooth and many angled.

## HABITAT

It is a subtropical plant. In Sikkim it grows between 1,500-2,500 m above sea level.

## NOTES

It is used in medicine. It reduces fevers.

## REFERENCES


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