PLANT FACT SHEET

Marsilea crenata Presl.

GENUS *Marsilea* **FAMILY** Marsileaceae

COMMON NAMES Notched Nardoo, Water clover

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Fronds

The young leaves are eaten as a raw or steamed vegetable dipped in hot sauces.

DESCRIPTION

A fern with a long creeping rootstock. It is often slightly branched. It looks like a small herb. The stem is 1-20 cm long depending on water depth. Leaves come either singly or as a cluster from the underground stem or rhizome. The stem is longer in water and shorter on dry ground. The rhizome is long and slender. The leaflets are spaced 1-4 cm apart along the rhizome. The leaflets are 1-2.5 cm long and 0.5-1 cm wide. They are wedge shaped or oval. The tip is rounded or toothed. The leaflets are dark green. The leaflets look like a four-leaf clover. The leaflets close at night. The spore carrying structures are usually clustered. The structure in which the spores are formed has stalks shorter than the capsules. The capsules are 0.2-0.3 cm long at right angles to the hairy stalk. It only develops reproductive organs when the field is dry.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It can grow in water with the fronds floating but also with erect fronds on the edge of swamps. It needs full sunlight. It is damaged by frosts. It grows in rice fields. In Papua New Guinea it grows from sea level to about 50 m altitude. It tends to be in areas with a prolonged dry season.

PRODUCTION

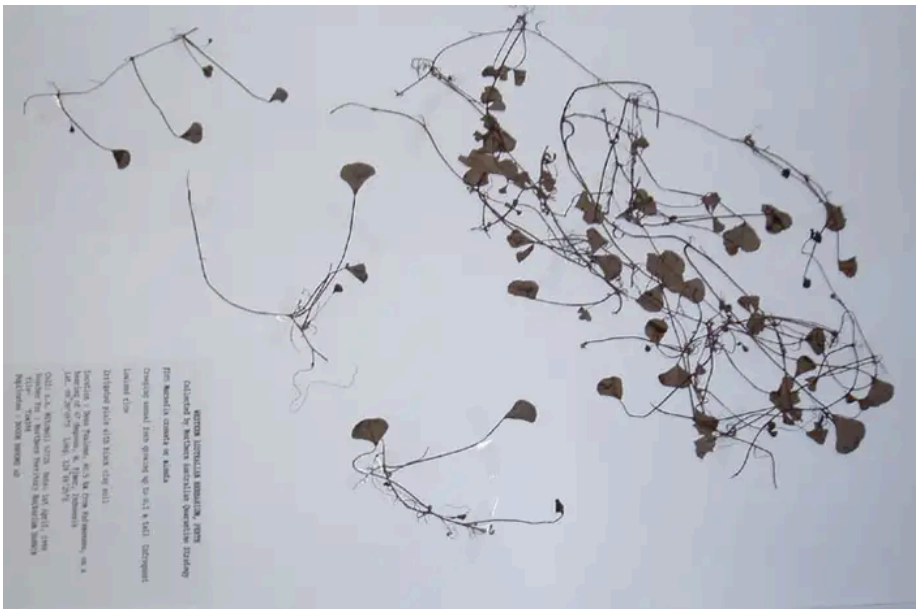
Cultivation

Plants are grown by dividing the clump.

NOTES

Plants are rich in Vitamin A. There are about 50-60 Marsilea species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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