PLANT FACT SHEET

Disporum cantoniense (Lour.) Merrill

GENUS *Disporum* **FAMILY** Colchicaceae

COMMON NAMES Chinese fairy bells

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Root, Fruit

The tender leaves and shoots are cooked as a vegetable.
The root stock is sliced, well boiled and cooked as a vegetable.

DESCRIPTION

A herb. It grows to 1 m high. It has a thick, creeping rhizome or underground stem but no stolons or runners. The stem is usually branched near the end. It is 50-100 cm high. The leaves are alternate. They are sword shaped and taper to the tip. The base is heart shaped. The leaf blade is 5-12 cm long by 1-5 cm wide. The flowers are greenish-white, or purplish. They occur as a few flowers in a flat arrangement at the ends of branches. The fruit is a berry 8-10 mm across. There are 2-3 seeds but sometimes 5.

HABITAT

A subtropical plant. In Nepal it grows between 1100-2900 m altitude. In China it grows in forests and thickets between 700-3000 m altitude in S China. It grows best in moist, slightly shaded places.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed.

NOTES

There are 20 Disporum species.

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