PLANT FACT SHEET

Calamus viminalis Willd.

GENUS *Calamus* **FAMILY** Arecaceae

COMMON NAMES Bitter rattan, Chair-bottom cane

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Shoots, Vegetable

The shoots are cooked and used as a vegetable in curry.
The ripe fruit are eaten raw.

DESCRIPTION

A vigorous climbing palm. It has fairly stout, prickly stems. The stems climb with the aid of flagella. The leaf sheaths are woolly white. The leaves are spreading and pale green. They are about 1 m long. They are divided into many narrow leaflets. These leaflets are grouped in small clusters along the stem. The fruit are about 1 cm across. They are yellow when ripe and round with a pointed beak.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in tropical and warm temperate regions. In Asia it grows from sea level to 600 m altitude. It grows in open areas and near streams. It suits hardiness zones 11-12. In Yunnan. It grows in scrub forest between sea level and 300 m altitude.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown by seeds or suckers.

Harvesting and Seed Production

In India it produces fruit September to April.

NOTES

There are 375-400 Calamus species. There are 175 species in tropical Asia.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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