PLANT FACT SHEET

# *Tribulus cistoides* L.

**GENUS** *Tribulus* **FAMILY** Zygophyllaceae

**COMMON NAMES** Caltrops

## EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

**Edible parts:** Leaves, Vegetable

The young shoots and leaves are eaten.

## DESCRIPTION

A herb. It keeps growing from year to year. The branches which lie down. They can be 1 m long. The plant has a strong taproot. The stems are hairy. The leaves are produced opposite one another. They are divided along the stalk into 6-8 pairs of leaflets. The leaf and leaflets on one side of the stalk are smaller than on the other side. The leaflets are 9-14 mm long by 3-5 mm wide. The flowers are single and 25-35 mm across. They are on stalks about 2 cm long. These flowers are produced from one axil of each pair of leaves. The flower has 5 bright yellow petals. The fruit is a round capsule which has 5 parts. These have strong sharp spines.

## HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. In Papua New Guinea it is common in coastal areas. It grows naturally on sandy loam soils. In Yunnan.

## NOTES

The sharp seeds can damage feet. It is poisonous to animals.

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