PLANT FACT SHEET

Drynaria quercifolia (L.) Hovenkamp & S. Linds

GENUS *Drynaria* **FAMILY** Polypodiaceae

COMMON NAMES Rock fern, Oak fern, Oak leaf fern

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Rhizome, Root, Young fronds, Leaves

The rhizome is eaten. The fleshy rhizome is collected during the dry season, cleaned and pounded and mixed with rice flour to bake cakes.

DESCRIPTION

A large fern which grows attached to other plants. It climbs on trees. It can be 1 m high. It forms large spreading clumps. The rootstock is thick and fleshy. There are two kinds of fronds. One forms the "nest" and these do not have a stem and the others which are more like leaves and have a stem. The second ones have stems which are 30 cm long. The frond is one m long by 40 cm wide. It has deep lobes. The first kind of fronds have lobes and teeth around the edge. These turn brown with age but do not fall off the fern. The young fronds of this fern are different shape from the mature fronds on established ferns.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows in lowland rainforest. It does best in warm humid conditions. It can tolerate cool temperatures. It can grow on rocks and trees in open forests in the tropics. In Hainan in China it grows from sea level to 1,000 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Pieces of the thick rhizome can be planted in soil or attached to wood. They should be in light shade while getting established. In cool weather the roots should be allowed to dry out. Plants can loose all their fronds and then regrow in the wet season. Plants can also be grown from spores. These should be sown fresh. Plants can be grown from spores.

NOTES

There are about 20 Drynaria species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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