



PLANT FACT SHEET

Panicum decompositum R. Br.

GENUS *Panicum* FAMILY Poaceae

COMMON NAMES Australian millet, Native millet, Papa Grass, Umbrella grass

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Cereal

The seeds are cooked or ground into a flour.

DESCRIPTION

A perennial millet grass plant. It grows up to 30-100 cm tall and spreads 30-80 cm wide. It forms stout tussocks. The stems are hollow and erect. The leaf blades are 15-30 cm long and 1-2 cm wide and flat. They are bluish-green with a white midrib. The seed head is 40 cm long. It spreads out about 40 cm wide. There are only a few spikelets. These are 0.3-0.4 cm long and green to purple. The seeds are dark brown and shiny.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows on damp sandy soils. They need a well drained soils and sun. It grows in tropical and subtropical places. It can grow in arid places.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from seed.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The seeds are gathered in a bowl by rubbing the heads off the stalks. These are then winnowed.

NOTES

There are about 500 *Panicum* species.

REFERENCES

Anon., 2003, Native Plants for the Fitzroy basin. Society for Growing Australian Plants Inc. (Rockhampton Branch) p 69
Cancilla, D., 2018, Ethnobotanical and Ethnozoological Values Desktop Assessment - Eliwana Project. p 13
Cane, S., 1987, Australian Subsistence in the Western Desert. Human Ecology 15(4): pp 391-434

Cherikoff V. & Isaacs, J., The Bush Food Handbook. How to gather, grow, process and cook Australian Wild Foods. Ti Tree Press, Australia p 190, 196
Chivers, I., et al, 2015, Native grasses make new products. A review of current and past uses and assessment of potential. Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation. Aust. Govt. p 17
Cribb, A.B. & J.W., 1976, Wild Food in Australia, Fontana. p 103

- Elliot, W.R., & Jones, D.L., 1997, Encyclopedia of Australian Plants suitable for cultivation. Vol 7. Lothian. p 161 (Drawing)
- Goddard, C. & Kalotas A. (Eds.), Punu, 2002, Yankunytjatjara plant use. Jukurrpa books. p 81
- Hardwick, G., 2001, Economically Useful Plants for Northern Australia: Master Species List. Crusader eBooks.
- Hedrick, U.P., 1919, (Ed.), Sturtevant's edible plants of the world. p 461
- Hunter, J.T., 2017, Is there a relationship between contemporary high Aboriginal plant resource locations and mapped vegetation communities? *Cunninghamia* 17:27-34. The Royal Botanic Garden Sydney. ISSN 2200 - 405X
- Isaacs, J., 1987, Bush Food, Aboriginal Food and Herbal Medicine. Weldons. p 108
- Kenneally, K.E., Edinger, D. C., and Willing T., 1996, Broome and Beyond, Plants and People of the Dampier Peninsula, Kimberley, Western Australia. Department of Conservation and Land Management. p 222
- King, M. & Horsfall, J., 2023, Kimberley Bush Food. Edible Plants of the Kimberley Region of Western Australia. UWAP. p 183
- Lang, P. J., et al, 1986, Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands Biological Survey. p 43
- Latz, P.K., 1996, Bushfires and Bushucker: Aboriginal plant use in Central Australia. IAD Press Alice Springs p 240
- Lazarides, M. & Hince, B., 1993, Handbook of Economic Plants of Australia, CSIRO. p 180
- Low, T., 1991, Wild Food Plants of Australia. Australian Nature FieldGuide, Angus & Robertson. p 158
- Low, T., 1992, Bush Tucker. Australia's Wild Food Harvest. Angus & Robertson. p 85
- McKerney, M. & White, H., 2011, Bush Tucker, Boomerangs & Bandages. Border River-Gwyder Catchment Management Authority p 141
- Miller, J. B., James, K. W. and Maggiore, P.M.A., 1993, Tables of Composition of Australian Aboriginal Foods. Aboriginal Studies Press. Canberra
- Morley, B.D., & Toelken, H.R., (Eds), 1983, Flowering Plants in Australia. Rigby. p 391
- O'Connell, J.F., et al, 1983, Traditional and Modern Plant Use Among the Alyawara of Central Australia. *Economic Botany*. Vol. 37 p 102
- Paczkowska, G. & Chapman, A.R., 2000, The Western Australian Flora. A Descriptive Catalogue. Western Australian Herbarium. p 111
- Pascoe, B., 2018, Dark Emu. Aboriginal Australia and the birth of Agriculture. Magabala books, p 33, 65
- Petheram, R.J. and Kok, B., 2003, Plants of the Kimberley Region of Western Australia. UWA Press p 183
- Plants for a Future database, The Field, Penpol, Lostwithiel, Cornwall, PL22 0NG, UK.
<http://www.scs.leeds.ac.uk/pfaf/>
- Prodr. 191. 1810
- Salem, L., Thompson, E., and Elvin, H. L., Bush Tucker in Kidney Failure and Diabetes. *AMGEN* 2
- Smith, K & I., 1999, Grow your own bushfoods. New Holland. Australia. p 87
- Taylor, D. & van Leewen, S., Aboriginal Names for Pilbara Plants.
- Ulian, T., et al, 2020, Unlocking plant resources to support food security and promote sustainable agriculture. *Plants, People, Planet*. 2020;2:421-445.
- Wheeler, J.R.(ed.), 1992, Flora of the Kimberley Region. CALM, Western Australian Herbarium, p 1196
- Williams A. & Sides, T., 2008, Wiradjuri Plant Use in the Murrumbidgee Catchment. Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority. Wagga Wagga, p 69
- Yuncker, T.G., 1959, Plants of Tonga, Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Hawaii, Bulletin 220. p 60

PROVIDED BY Food Plants International

French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

LICENCE CC BY-NC-SA 3.0

ONLINE FACT SHEET <https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/fac933e9-784a-497a-83ff-fee646b3a70b>