

Botanic name : *Oxalis corniculata* L. Sp. Pl. 1: 435. 1753

Common name : Creeping Wood Sorrel, Amrul (Bengalee), Indian Sorrel

Family : Oxalidaceae

Habitat : Terrestrial

Distribution : Native to Hawaii and South Europe; widely distributed now in India, Indonesia, Taiwan, Japan, China, Pakistan, Afganistan & in US-Canada

Description : Creeping herb; stems rooting. Leaves clover like, palmately 3-foliolate, with very long, slender petiols; leaflets 1.2-2.5 cm long, obcordate cuneate; heart-shaped, green leaflets. Flowers yellow, axillary, subumbellate on solitary long peduncles; petals 6-9 mm long, yellow, oblong, rounded, emarginate. Capsules 2 cm long, linear-oblong, 5-angled. All parts of the plant sour. The plants are low-growing and have long, trailing stems that root at the leaf nodes, allowing them to spread rapidly.

Phytochemicals: Acrid tasted because of the presence of acid potassium oxalate. Also possesses fair quantities of ascorbic, dehydro-ascorbic, oxalic acid, glyoxalic and phosphoric acids and is rich in calcium. The plant also contains tartaric, citric and malic acids and a crystalline principle. The plant is the rich source of water, fat, proteins, Ca, P, Fe, niacin, beta-carotene, and metabolites like flavonoids, phytosterols, tannins, phenols, fatty acids (linoleic acid, linolenic acid, oleic acid, stearic acid, palmitic acid), & volatile oils. Stems are rich in tartaric, malic and citric acid.

Medicinal/Economic uses : The plant/plant parts have phytopharmacological activity such as anthelmintic, astringent, depurative, emmenagogue, lithontriptic, anti-inflammatory, diuretic, febrifuge, stomachic and styptic. Also is used in the treatment of influenza, urinary tract infections, diarrhea, traumatic injuries, enteritis, sprains and poisonous snake bites. As a good source of vitamin C, the entire plant is used as an antiscorbutic in the treatment of scurvy. The leaves are used as an antidote to *Datura* spp seed poisoning, mercury and arsenic. An infusion can be used as a wash to rid children of hookworms. Leaf infusion is used to remove opacities of the cornea and is dropped into the eyes for itching lids. Leaf decoction is used as a gargle. The leaf juice having antibacterial activity is applied to insect bites, burns and skin eruptions. Leaf extract mixed with oil and its local massage is used in relieving insomnia. Aqueous extract of the plant is cardio-protective and health tonic. Economically, yellow, orange and red to brown dyes are obtained from the flowers. The boiled whole plant yields a yellow dye.