

Botanic name : *Houttuynia cordata* Thunb. -- Fl. Jap. (Thunberg) 231, t. 26. 1784 [Aug 1784]; isonym (IK)

Common name : Chameleon, E-Sung-Cho (Korea)

Family : Saururaceae

Habitat : Terrestrial, up to 2400m, msl in the Himalayas

Distribution : Native to mountainous regions of Eastern Asia, Indian Eastern Himalayas to Korean Peninsula, Japan. The herb is a threatened taxa due to extensive exploitation for medicinal-commercial purposes, sensitivity to pollution, and fragmentation to its natural habitats

Description : Perennial aromatic herb with aromatic rhizome and creeping root stock; leaves broad, ovate-cordate, thinly papery, densely glandular, purplish abaxial, base cordate at base, shortly acuminate at apex; stipular sheath as long as petiole, usually ciliate, base enlarged and slightly clasping; flowers naked, subtended by four white and petaloid bracts, involucre, non-petal, yellow inflorescences (spike dense); stamens three

Phytochemicals: Flavoids, steroids, triterpenoids, flavonoid glycosides (afzerin, hyperin, rutin, quercitrin, isoquercitrin) and pyridine alkaloids; the essential oil mainly consists of decanal (capryl aldehyd), dodecanal (lauryl aldehyd) and 2-hendecanon (methyl nonyl ketone), aristolactams AII, BII, piperolactam A, oxoaporphines, cepharadione B, amides, benzenoids, indoles, ionones, phenolic compounds,

Medicinal/Economic uses : The whole plant is medicinal-antidote, antibacterial, diuretic, astringent, anti mutagenic, anti-inflammatory, anti-obesity, anti-diabetic, cooling, antioxidant, anti cancer, anti-leukemic, resolvent and emmenagogue. Eaten raw as a medicinal salad for lowering the blood sugar level (Jamyrdoh in NE India). Leaf juice is taken for the treatment of cholera, dysentery, curing of blood deficiency and purification of blood. Also used for the treatment of many ailments including cancer, coughs, dysentery, enteritis and fever (plant decoction), measles, gonorrhea, dysentery, eye troubles, skin diseases, hemorrhoids, reducing swelling, draining pus, relieving fever, resolving toxin, and in certain female diseases. Traditionally used in Korea for the treatment of various viral diseases (herpes simplex, influenza virus, human immunodeficiency virus type 1, and chronic sinusitis and nasal polyps), chronic sinusitis, and allergy. Also found in Vietnamese salads and garnishes. Edible- Young shoots and leaves are eaten raw or cooked as a pot-herb. Potent herbicide. Essential for effective cleansing and detoxifying results