

Botanic name : *Nasturtium indicum* DC.

Common name : Water Cress, Ban Sarisha (Bengali)

Family : Brassicaceae (Cruciferae)

Habitat : Terrestrial

Distribution : Throughout South and South-East Asia in waste land. Naturalized in North and South America

Description : An annual erect, branched herb bearing leaves of oblong to ovate-lanceolate shaped, variously lobed and toothed, lyrate, and petioled, the terminal ones being semi-sessile or sessile, the basal leaves wither by flowering. Small, yellow flowers arranged into racemes which are long, and terminal. Sepals are as long as the petals. Fruit-a siliqua, spreading, slender, cylindrical, straight or slightly curved with replum.

Phytochemicals: Roripamine, a novel sylphonylalkyl amine (the whole plant), glucosinolates, glucosylated glucosinolates

Medicinal/Economic uses : Diuretic, stimulant, antiscorbutic, depurative, expectorant, hypoglycemic, cancer preventive, odontalgic, purgative and stimulant. As folkloric medicine, tender young leaves and stems eaten raw or cooked as vegetable. In Indian NE state of Assam & Nagaland, seeds used as laxative; juice of seeds mixed with milk used for kidney trouble; aerial parts are used to treat diarrhea and dysentery. In Chinese medicine, herb used to treat cough, diarrhea, and rheumatoid arthritis, and in the treatment of asthma, chronic catarrh, and pyorrhea.

