

Botanic name : *Capsella bursa-pastoris* Medik.

Common name : Shepherd's purse

Family : Brassicaceae (Cruciferae)

Habitat : Terrestrial

Distribution : Native to Eastern Europe and Asia Minor; naturalized in many parts of the world, particularly in Indian Himalayas, North America, China, Mediterranean and North Africa

Description : Slender, erect, annual to short-lived perennial herb, 15 – 70 cm tall; stem slender, sparingly branched bearing rosette of radical leaves, leaves dimorphic; upper leaves are irregularly pinnatifid or entire and toothed, clasping with stem (lyrate). The lower leaves are petioled, deeply lobed and sit in a rosette at the base; flowers small, white borne on slender racemes; stamens tetradynamous (2+4); shepherd's-purse because of its triangular, purse-like pods-the siliqua- two chambers divided by a narrow ridge (replum); seeds are tiny minute, oblong, slightly flattened, and reddish to yellowish brown

Phytochemicals: Flavonoids-free and glycosylated derivatives, kaempferol-3-O-rutinoside, 4',7-dihydroxy-5-hydroxymethyl-8-prenylflavonoid and 4',7-dihydroxy-5-hydroxymethyl-6,8-diprenyl; essential oils,

Medicinal/Economic uses : Approved by European Commission E for nose bleeds, urinary calculus, nosebleeds (homeopathic remedy of fresh plants), premenstrual syndrome, wounds & burns; In domestic remedy, effective in the treatment of both internal and external bleeding. A tea made from the dried herb is considered effective against haemorrhages of all kinds - the stomach, the lungs, the uterus and more especially the kidneys, vasoconstrictor, vasodilator, sore throat, vulnerary, astringent against diarrhea in UK. In fresh decoction, the plant parts are employed in hematuria, hemorrhoids, chronic diarrhea and dysentery, heavy menstrual bleeding, uterine fibroid, catarrhal conditions of the bladders and ureters, as diuretic, antiscorbutic, anti-inflammatory, stimulant (in kidney complaints and dropsy), anticancerous (Pakistan).The plant is potential anti-fertility plants in China, having proven uterine-contracting properties and is traditionally used in childbirth. Lactating women who suffer from swollen breasts have also reported relief after application of the herb. Flowers are specifically used for dysentery or uterine bleeding in Chinese medicine. Have a gummy substance that binds the insects' mouth to the seeds and is an effective larvicidal (mosquito repellent). Leaves - raw or cooked; the young leaves used in salads, also a cress and cabbage substitute. Young flowering shoots can be eaten raw or cooked. Fresh or dried root is a ginger substitute. It is commonly used as food in Shanghai and the surrounding Jiangnan region of China, where they are stir-fried with rice cakes and other ingredients or as part of the filling in wontons. In the Japanese spring-time festival, Nanakusa-no-sekku, the plant is one of the ingredients of the symbolic dish consumed. In Korea it is known as naengi and its roots are one of the ingredients of the characteristic Korean dish, namul (fresh greens and wild vegetables). Young leaves, used before the plant comes into flower, make a fine addition to salads while Seedpods can be used as a peppery seasoning for soups and stews.