

**Botanic name :** *Ranunculus sceleratus* L.-- Sp. Pl. 1: 551. 1753 [1 May 1753] (IK)

**Common name:** Indian buttercup, Cursed butter cup, Celery-leaved buttercup

**Family:** Ranunculaceae

**Habitat:** Terrestrial

**Distribution:** Native to India, also found at altitudes up to 1700 m in Europe, C. Asia, Himalayas, N. India, Siberia, Mongolia, China, Japan, N. America. Habitat destruction, extensive agriculture, and dryer climate are some of the threats of the herb

**Description:** Annual herb which produces a multitude of small yellow flowers. The flowers have three to five yellow petals 2-5 × 1-3 mm and reflexed sepals as long as petals. The leaves have small blades each deeply lobed or divided into usually three leaflets, and look like coriander leaves. They are borne on long stalks. The fruits arise in heads 5-13 × 3-7 mm and make the plant easy to identify.

**Phytochemicals:** Sterols, terpenoids, alkaloids, saponins, tannins, phenolics, flavonoids and glycosides; lactones, anemone acid, essential oil, anemonin, protoanemonin

**Medicinal/Economic uses:** Called as 'Kandira' in Ayurveda, this is a poisonous herb, used in treating infested wounds, scabies, leucoderma etc. Most commonly used for external application. The whole plant is acrid, anodyne, antispasmodic, diaphoretic, emmenagogue, fungicide (leaf extract), insecticide, rubefacient, antirheumatic (leaves and roots), and tonic as well as stomachic; also prescribed in kidney trouble (roots). Pharmacological preparation of roots are used in the treatment of cold, general debility, and spermatorrhoea. Bruised leaves are vesicant; applied externally to raise blisters; also used to treat sciatica, dysuria, asthma and pneumonia. When made into a tincture, given in small diluted doses, it proves curative of stitch in the side and neuralgic pains between the ribs. With great caution (as the fresh plant is poisonous), young plants are cooked/washed/recooked to take as vegetables.