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Physalis heterophylla - Nees.

Common Name	Clammy Ground Cherry, Rowell's groundcherry
Family	Solanaceae
Synonyms	P. ambigua.
Known Hazards	All parts of the plant, except the fruit, are poisonous[19, 65].
Habitats	Dry open woods[43]. Rich soils, especially where the surface has been disturbed[235].
Range	N. America - New Brunswick to Saskatchewan, Florida, Colorado and Texas.
Edibility Rating	
Medicinal Rating	
Care	3



4 Fish to NEVER Eat

Are these 4 fish slowing your fatloss and eroding your health?

Never Eat

Summary

Physical Characteristics



Physalis heterophylla is a PERENNIAL growing to 0.9 m (3ft) by 1 m (3ft 3in). It is hardy to zone (UK) 8. It is in flower from Jul to September. The flowers are hermaphrodite (have both male and female organs) and are pollinated by Insects.

USDA hardiness zone : 7-10

Suitable for: light (sandy), medium (loamy) and heavy (clay) soils and prefers well-drained soil. Suitable pH: acid, neutral and basic (alkaline) soils. It can grow in semi-shade (light woodland) or no shade. It prefers dry or moist soil.

Habitats

Cultivated Beds;

Edible Uses

Edible Parts: [Fruit](#).

Edible Uses:

Fruit - raw or cooked[46, 105, 161]. Quite nice raw though rather small[K], the fruit can also be made into pies, jams, sauces etc[183]. Pectin or pectin-rich fruit should be added if the fruit is used in jams and preserves[183]. The fruit can also be dried, ground into a meal and added to flour for making bread etc[183]. The plant conveniently wraps up each fruit in its own 'paper bag' (botanically, the calyx) to protect it from pests and the elements. This calyx is toxic and should not be eaten.

Medicinal Uses

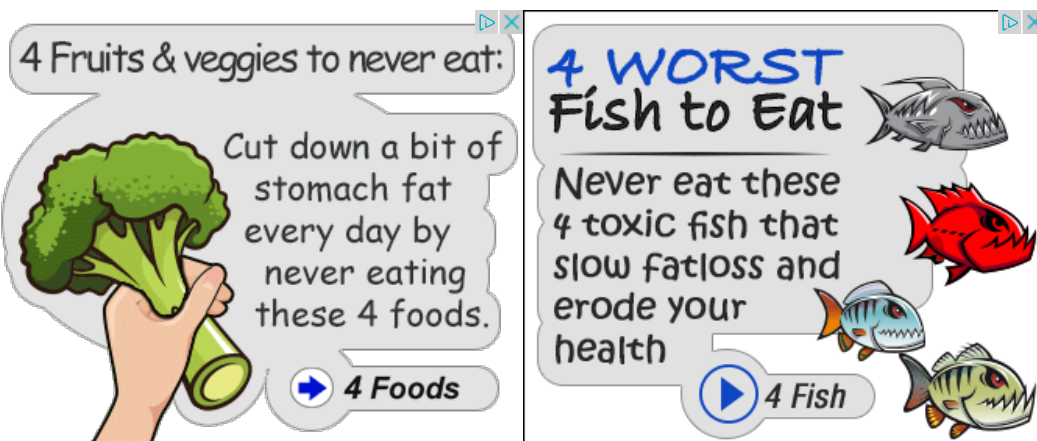
Plants For A Future can not take any responsibility for any adverse effects from the use of plants. Always seek advice from a professional before using a plant medicinally.

[Antitumor](#); [Diuretic](#); [Poultice](#).

The seed is considered to be beneficial in the treatment of difficult urination, fever, inflammation and various urinary disorders[222]. A tea made from the leaves is used in the treatment of headaches and as a wash for burns and scalds[222]. A poultice of the leaves and roots is applied to wounds[222]. An infusion of the leaves and roots is used as a wash on scalds, burns and VD sores[257]. Compounds in the plant are being investigated for antitumor activity[222].

Other Uses

None known



Cultivation details

Succeeds in any well-drained soil in full sun or light shade[200]. A polymorphic species[43].

Propagation

Seed - sow March/April in a greenhouse only just covering the seed. Germination usually takes place quickly and freely. Prick out the seedlings into individual pots of fairly rich soil when they are large enough to handle and plant them out after the last expected frosts. Consider giving them some protection such as a cloche until they are growing away well. Diurnal temperature fluctuations assist germination[170]. Division in spring[111]. Very easy, larger divisions can be planted out direct into their permanent positions. We have found that it is better to pot up the smaller divisions and grow them on in light shade in a cold frame until they are well established before planting them out in late spring or early summer. Basal cuttings in early summer[111]. Harvest the shoots with plenty of underground stem when they are about 8 - 10cm above the ground. Pot them up into individual pots and keep them in light shade in a cold frame or greenhouse until they are rooting well. Plant them out in the summer.

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Expert comment

Author

Nees.

Botanical References

170200235

Links / References

[K] **Ken Fern** Notes from observations, tasting etc at Plants For A Future and on field trips.

[43]**Fernald, M. L.** Gray's Manual of Botany.

A bit dated but good and concise flora of the eastern part of N. America.

[46]**Uphof, J. C. Th.** Dictionary of Economic Plants.

An excellent and very comprehensive guide but it only gives very short descriptions of the uses without any details of how to utilize the plants. Not for the casual reader.

[105]**Tanaka, T.** Tanaka's Cyclopaedia of Edible Plants of the World.

The most comprehensive guide to edible plants I've come across. Only the briefest entry for each species, though, and some of the entries are more than a little dubious. Not for the casual reader.

[111]**Sanders, T. W.** Popular Hardy Perennials.

A fairly wide range of perennial plants that can be grown in Britain and how to grow them.

[161]**Yanovsky, E.** Food Plants of the N. American Indians. Publication no. 237.

A comprehensive but very terse guide. Not for the casual reader.

[170]**Dremann. C. G.** Ground Cherries, Husk Tomatoes and Tomatilloes.

Only a small booklet but it covers the various species in some depth.

[183]**Facciola. S.** Cornucopia - A Source Book of Edible Plants.

Excellent. Contains a very wide range of conventional and unconventional food plants (including tropical) and where they can be obtained (mainly N. American nurseries but also research institutes and a lot of other nurseries from around the world.

[200]**Huxley. A.** The New RHS Dictionary of Gardening. 1992.

Excellent and very comprehensive, though it contains a number of silly mistakes. Readable yet also very detailed.

[222]**Foster. S. & Duke. J. A.** A Field Guide to Medicinal Plants. Eastern and Central N. America.

A concise book dealing with almost 500 species. A line drawing of each plant is included plus colour photographs of about 100 species. Very good as a field guide, it only gives brief details about the plants medicinal properties.

[235]**Britton. N. L. Brown. A.** An Illustrated Flora of the Northern United States and Canada

Reprint of a 1913 Flora, but still a very useful book.

[257]**Moerman. D.** Native American Ethnobotany

Very comprehensive but terse guide to the native uses of plants. Excellent bibliography, fully referenced to each plant, giving a pathway to further information. Not for the casual reader.

Readers comment

Elizabeth H.

Renate Rosenau Tue Oct 3 2006

Does this physalis have blue flowers? I saw a "bush" about 1 meter high at Rosemoor Gardens, UK, and at Hermannshof, Germany, but in both places without names. I am searching the name of the plant: blue floewers, while at the same time (Sept/Oct) it developed fruit, grrren, with brown dots. Can you help me to find out the name of this plant?

Elizabeth H.

Dr. Chiranjit Parmar Sun Nov 23 2008

[Fruitipedia](#) Online encyclopedia of edible fruits of the world

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Subject : Physalis heterophylla

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