

ROSE, CHEROKEE



Rosa laevigata [RO-zuh lee-vih-GAY-tuh]

Family: Rosaceae

Names: Chin Ying Tsu, Jin Ying Zi, Naniwa-Ibara

Description: Vigorous, semievergreen, climbing shrub with glossy divided leaves. White, solitary, fragrant flowers 2-4 inches across, with persistent, bristly sepals, appear in early summer, followed by pear-shaped, orange-red hips up to 1/2 inches long. Height and spread 30 feet. The flowers have a clove-like fragrance. Native to China.

Cultivation: Succeeds in most soils, preferring a circumneutral soil and a sunny position. Grows well in heavy clay soils. Dislikes waterlogged soils. Only succeeds outside in the warmer parts of the country. It can be cut back to the ground though it will usually resprout from the base. If any pruning is necessary then this should be carried out immediately after the plant has finished flowering. Grows well with alliums, parsley, mignonette and lupins. Garlic planted nearby can help protect the plant from disease and insect predation. Grows badly with boxwood. Plants in this genus are notably susceptible to honey fungus. Rose seed often takes two years to germinate. This is because it may need a warm spell of weather after a cold spell in order to mature the embryo and reduce the seedcoat. One possible way to reduce this time is to scarify the seed and then place it for 2 - 3 weeks in damp peat at a temperature of 80 - 90°F (by which time the seed should have imbibed). It is then kept at 37°F for the next 4 months by which time it should be starting to germinate. Alternatively, it is possible that seed harvested 'green' (when it is fully developed but before it has dried on the plant) and sown immediately will germinate in the late winter. Seed sown as soon as it is ripe in a cold frame sometimes germinates in spring though it may take 18 months. Stored seed can be sown as early in the year as possible and stratified for 6 weeks at 41°F. It may take 2 years to germinate. Prick out the seedlings into individual pots when they are large enough to handle. Plant out in the summer if the plants are more than 25cm tall, otherwise grow on in a cold frame for the winter and plant out in late spring. Cuttings of half-ripe wood with a heel, July in a shaded frame. Overwinter the plants in the frame and plant out in late spring. Cuttings

of mature wood of the current seasons growth. Select pencil thick shoots in early autumn that are about 20 - 25cm long and plant them in a sheltered position outdoors or in a cold frame. The cuttings can take 12 months to establish but a high percentage of them normally succeed. Division of suckers in the dormant season. Plant them out direct into their permanent positions. Layering takes 12 months.

History: It is the state flower of Georgia and is also the parent of several modern garden cultivars.

Properties: Antibacterial; Anticholesterolemic; Astringent; Carminative; Depurative; Diuretic; Emmenagogue; Stomachic; Vulnerary.

Constituents: Vitamin C, saponin glycosides, flavonoids, carotenoids, leucoanthocyanidins, catechins and plant acids

Medicinal Uses: The leaves are a famous vulnerary. The fruits, root and leaves stabilize the kidney. A decoction is used in the treatment of chronic dysentery, urinary tract infections, wet dreams, prolapse of the uterus, menstrual irregularities and traumatic injuries. The root bark is astringent and used in the treatment of diarrhea and menorrhagia. The dried fruits are used internally in the treatment of urinary dysfunction, infertility, seminal emissions, urorrhoea, leucorrhoea and chronic diarrhea. The root is used in the treatment of uteral prolapse. The flowers are used in the treatment of dysentery and to restore hair cover. The fruit of many members of this genus is a very rich source of vitamins and minerals, especially in vitamins A, C and E, flavonoids and other bio-active compounds. It is also a fairly good source of essential fatty acids, which is fairly unusual for a fruit. It is being investigated as a food that is capable of reducing the incidence of cancer and also as a means of halting or reversing the growth of cancers.

TCM:

Indications: male sexual inadequacies including nocturnal emission, spermatorrhea,

neurasthenia), female problems such as leucorrhoea, uterine bleeding; night sweating, excessive urination, bed wetting, chronic diarrhea, enteritis, chronic cough, high blood pressure.

Use: With its earliest written record dating back 1500 years, this rosehip is considered one of the most important Chinese health tonics. It is highly valued by the Chinese as both a food and a medicine. It is rich in both conventional and non-conventional nutrients many of which have strong antioxidant properties. Frequently used as a general and male tonic in countless preparations as well as in certain soup mixes for maintaining good health.

Toxicity: There is a layer of hairs around the seeds just beneath the flesh of the fruit. These hairs can cause irritation to the mouth and digestive tract if ingested.

Culinary Uses: The pear-shaped fruit is up to 4cm long, but there is only a thin layer of flesh surrounding the many seeds. Some care has to be taken when eating this fruit, see the notes toxicity. The seed is a good source of vitamin E, it can be ground and mixed with flour or added to other foods as a supplement. Be sure to remove the seed hairs.

References:

Better health with (Mostly) Chinese Herbs and Foods, Albert Y Leung, AYSL Corp, 1995; ISBN: 0-9634979-1-X
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