

BEGONIA FIMBRISTIPULA SAMPLE ENTRY (Provisional)

Begonia fimbripula Hance (*B. cyclophylla* J.D. Hooker) - *Purple-back tea begonia*, *Mountain begonia*, *Zi-bei-tian-kui* (Ch.). Small and delicate, perennial, tuberous, acaulescent herb with one or two, solitary leaves. Occurs in forest understories, on rocks or damp ravines, and on soil of steep cliffs. Widely distributed in high mountainous areas of southern China, especially Guanxi and Guangdong provinces, although becoming rare due to over harvesting.



PARTS USED

LEAF - Acuminate, ovate or heart-shaped leaf blade, 2 1/4 to 4 1/2 inches long and 1 1/4 to 3 1/2 inches wide, greenish above, purple below, both surfaces pubescent; petiole slender, bristly.



USAGE AND PRODUCTS

Tea Substitute - The leaves are collected from the wild and brewed into a tea-like beverage with a striking purple color and a pleasant, sour flavor, often called Purple Tea. Fresh or dried leaves may be used. A famous product that is used locally and also exported in the form of bulk herbage, tea bags, and instant tea crystals. Can be consumed hot or cold as it is very popular as a cooling, thirst-quenching summertime beverage in Guangdong.



REMARKS

Due to over collecting, the commercial product is now mostly produced from the species *Begonia cathayana* Hemsl., *Begonia grandis* Dry. or *Begonia palmata* D. Don. (Guan, 2007)



Begonia cathayana



Begonia grandis



Begonia palmata

FURTHER READING

Food Plants of China - Shiu-ying Hu; Traditional Uses of Begonia (Begoniaceae) in China - Kai-yun Guan, *Acta Botanica Yunnanica*, V29 (1), 2007, 58-66; Flora of China, Vol. 13, Missouri Botanical Garden; Traditional Tea Growing in the New Territories - P.H. Hase, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch*, Vol. 24, 1984, 264-281.