

Native Foods

of the South Coast of Western Australia

Youlk

Ravensthorpe Radish

Platysace deflexa

General description: A native shrub that produces fleshy yellow tubers that are sweet and pleasant to taste. It is a relative of carrots, parsley, parsnip, dill and coriander.

History of use: Routinely consumed by Noongar people and early settlers of the south coast of Western Australia.

Distribution: Found locally from Jerramungup to Esperance and Lake King.

Availability: Not yet commercially available, likely 2009.

Product description: Firm and crisp flesh akin to radish or apple with pale to intensely yellow skin. When consumed raw it has a sweet, mild radish flavour.

Preparation & use: Suitable raw, with or without the skin for use in salads, but can also be fried in oil or whole-baked.

Nutrition: Broadly similar to carrots.

Storage: The product keeps best when stored whole in cool dry conditions or under standard refrigeration.

Research & Development: The potential to develop this product as a new, commercial vegetable crop is currently being investigated.



Youlk

Ravensthorpe Radish

Platysace deflexa

Information about this project: Southern Western Australia contains an extraordinary number of plants that form root tubers or related storage organs (over 150 species).

While the diversity of the flora is of international significance it had not been surveyed for prospective vegetable products.

This project has systematically assessed the horticultural potential of southern Western Australia's diverse tuberous flora and commenced commercialization of promising species as new vegetable crops.

To be selected for further development, species required the following: various horticulturally desirable attributes, produce a desirable product (size, taste, colour etc) and have an unambiguous history of consumption by Aboriginal people and/or early settlers.

This work is being conducted by the Centre of Excellence in Natural Resource Management (CENRM) with funding provided by the Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation (RIRDC).

Additional financial support has been provided by the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC), the Australian Flora Foundation, the Reconnections Project (Shell Development - Australia and Greening Australia WA) and Tectonic Resources.

For more information, contact Dr Geoff Woodall at the Centre of Excellence in Natural Resource Management, UWA Albany.
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This project may enable the development of new rural industries based on one to several species and provide enterprise opportunities for indigenous and non-indigenous Australians in the future

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Meen

Bloodroot

Haemodorum spicatum

General description: A relative of Kangaroo paws, this herbaceous plant produces a distinct flower spike from an edible fleshy bulb.

History of use: Generally blended into food and often baked by Noongar people prior to consumption.

Distribution: Common on sands along the south and west coast of Western Australia from Geraldton to Esperance and inland to Kojoonup.

Availability: Not yet commercially available.

What can you do with them: The compound responsible for the red colour and hot taste is soluble in oil and easy to extract by slicing the bulb and pickling in oil. The vibrant red extract has application as a colouring, flavouring, spice or additive in sauces or chutneys. Dry powdered product has application as a hot spice but does not have application as a red colouring.

Product description: HOT. The typically vibrant red bulb is both fibrous and gelatinous and produces a slow to develop, but lasting heat similar to pepper or curry powder. Bulbs collected from some areas have a more mild taste.

Research & Development: The potential to develop this product as a new, commercial vegetable crop is currently being investigated. It also has potential as a commercial dye.



Meen Bloodroot *Haemodorum spicatum*

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A native vegetable of Western Australia

Kulyu

Ipomoea sp.

General description:

A deciduous perennial climbing plant from the arid inland of Western Australia that produces an abundance of large, succulent and starchy tubers.

History of use: Regularly baked and consumed by Aboriginal people of the arid inland of Western Australia and early settlers.

Availability: Not yet commercially available, likely 2008/09.

Preparation & use: Best eaten when baked, roasted or steamed though can also be eaten raw.

Nutrition: Similar to sweet potato.

Storage: The product keeps best when stored whole in cool dry conditions, similar to storing potato (*Solanum tuberosum*).

Research & development: The potential to develop this product as a new, commercial vegetable crop is currently being investigated.



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