Wild uncultivated edible plants of India

Part 3
(.....after part 2)

Debregeasia longifolia (Burm.f.) Wedd.

Family: Urticaceae

A shrubby plant commonly known as 'wild rhea' and is one of the widely distributed members of the nettle family Urticaceae famous for stinging hairs on their leaves. However, this apparently thorny member has wide acceptance among tribal people for its sweet edible fruits. Commonly available in the Western Ghats of Southern India, the ripe fruits (known as *Neerinch* or *Monili*) are popular among various tribal groups like, Malmpandarangal, Kattunaikar and Paniyar of Kerala. The plant is known by multiple names *Soh-tyrsim, Dalah esing, Madeilo*, etc. In Himalayan state of Uttarakhand, the plant is known as *Tushiaru* and is a widely cherished among local people. Culinary use has also been reported from north-east Indian states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, and Meghalaya. The fruits can be pickled and preserved in salt, and is practiced by households in the villages of Kerala, especially by people involved in treatment with folk medicine. Nutritional analysis suggested that fibre content in the fruit is higher than common fruits like guava and pomegranate. Similarly, the fruit is a good source for natural anti-oxidants, vitamin C and iron and can be a good dietary supplement if eating raw fruit is popularized at a wider geography.