
 ***Neptunia oleracea* Lour.** 
Family: Leguminosae

This plant is gaining popularity among the urban cities across the globe as ‘water mimosa’. It is a perennial nitrogen fixing legume with touch sensitive leaflets. The plant has got the name Neptunia from the God of seas –the Neptune, as it is aquatic in habitat. It floats with the help of the aerenchymatous spongy stem. The branches are harvested when they reach around 30cm in length. The people of Manipur eat the stem after removing the spongy wrap around it. The main delicacies prepared using this plant includes the famous ‘Morokmetpa’, ‘Iromba’, ‘Kanghou’ and ‘Shingju’. Morokmetpa, the chilly salad is made from leaves and fresh shoots. The clean small pieces of plant parts are mixed with boiled king chilli, fermented fish, raw onions and salt. For ‘Iromba’, sliced pieces boiled along with potatoes and petiole of *Alocasia odora* which is then prepared along with chillies and fermented fish. The dish is garnished with onions, corianders etc. For ‘Kanghou’, the plant parts are fried with other vegetables (brinjal, okra, potato, cabbage etc). ‘Shingju’ is made with papaya and ‘water mimosa’. Some other popular preparations are like, young stems, shoots and leaves of water mimosa are cooked and eaten as stir fries with soy sauce, oyster sauce, fish sauce, chillies, and garlic. It is also used in recipes with noodles, minced chicken or fried fish. The plant is rich in calcium, iron, vitamin A and C. ‘Pheophorbide a’ and its related compounds make this plant a promising antitumor agent. In addition to this, it shows high antioxidant activity too.

