

Basella alba* L.*Family : Basellaceae**

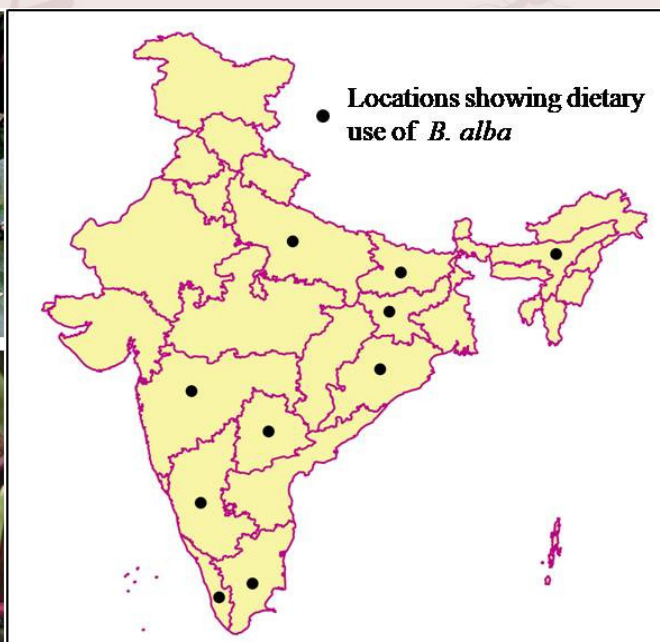
A popular vine, known adorably in the name of *Malabar spinach*, *Indian spinach*, *Ceylon spinach* or *Vine spinach* is wild as well as domestic too. The ubiquitous culinary application is synonymous with its' wider geographic availability. The leaves, young stems, and flowers are the preferred choice for making vegetables, fritters, and soups. In eastern and north-eastern India, commonly known as *Poi*, *Pui*, *Puroi sak*, or *Boga Puroi*, the boiled leaves are lightly fried with spices and salt. The fried item is eaten with rice at the beginning of the meal. Non-vegetarian recipes are also available from West Bengal where leaves are cooked with fish (mostly fish head) and shrimps. Young stems and flowers are also on the menu card either as boiled vegetables or fritters mixed with gram powder. In the southern state of Tamilnadu, leaves, and stems (*Kattupasalai*, *Vasala Dagu*) are consumed as vegetables either with pulses or with spices. A couple of Konkani recipes like *Vaali ambat* (coconut-based curry with lentil, vegetable, and Malabar spinach), *Vaali bhendi* (coconut-spice based preparations with Malabar spinach), *Vaali sukke* (coconut-based side dish with Malabar spinach), etc are super popular. On the other hand, Kannadigas flaunt preparations like *Vasale soppina Tambuli* (coconut and curd-based spinach dish), *Roti* (made with boiled leaves and flour of Sorghum), and soup (prepared from boiled leaf extract and spices). Likewise, the plant is rich in nutrients, vitamins A, B, and C, iron, calcium, and soluble fiber in the mucilage.



Photo: www.epharmacognosy.com



Copyright © NParks Flora&FaunaWeb



● Locations showing dietary use of *B. alba*