

Passiflora gracilis



S America - Brazil, Ecuador, Venezuela; C. America - Nicaragua to southern Mexico

This species has sometimes been confused with *Passiflora suberosa* L. The species differ in leaf shape, and particularly in their fruits - in *Passiflora gracilis* they are red to purple and around 25mm in diameter whilst in *Passiflora suberosa* they are bluish-black and only around 12mm in diameter.

Passiflora gracilis is an annual, climbing plant with very slender, branched stems that can grow 2 metres or more long. The stems scramble over the ground, climbing into nearby vegetation where it supports itself by means of tendrils.

The fruit is said to be edible. The plant is often grown as an ornamental in gardens, valued for its abundant flowering and masses of bright scarlet fruits

Edible Uses

Fruit

The pulp surrounding the seeds is eaten. The red to orange-red, ellipsoid fruit is about 30 - 40mm long and 20 - 25mm wide



Medicinal

The leaves and roots of some, if not all, members of this genus contain a substance called 'passiflorina' which has similarities to morphine and is an effective tranquilizer

We have no specific information for this species but many species are used in herbal infusions to calm the nerves and help bring about a restful sleep

The leaves of many species are also considered to be anthelmintic, antihysterical and diaphoretic. They are used in Brazil to combat intermittent fevers, cutaneous inflammations, and erysipelas.

