

# Centella



Scientific name: *Centella asiatica*

Aboriginal name: Unknown



Plant habit



Foliage

## About ...

Also known as 'Gotu Kola' or 'Pennywort'. Centella is found growing wild over large areas of North America, South America, Asia and Australia.

Centella is used as a medicinal herb in ayurvedic medicine, traditional African medicine and traditional Chinese medicine. It has anti-inflammatory properties as well as improving circulation and strengthening blood vessels. Described as 'a pharmacy in one herb' centella contains vitamins A, B, C and D and minerals including calcium, chromium, cobalt, magnesium, manganese, phosphorus, sodium, potassium, selenium, silica and zinc.

The raw leaves are bitter. Blanched leaves taste better. Adding lemon juice and butter makes the dish more flavoursome.

<b>Family</b>	APIACEAE
<b>Climate</b>	Temperate to tropical
<b>Habitat</b>	Grows in swampy areas and winter-wet depressions from North Queensland to South Western Australia
<b>Form</b>	Creeping, stoloniferous (runners) perennial, herb, 0.05-0.4 m high
<b>Foliage</b>	Kidney shaped leaf The leaf sizes can vary from 1 cm to 7 cm
<b>Flower</b>	Minute pink/purple-red/white flowers Djilba (Aug to Dec) or Birak to Djeran (Jan to Apr) Flowers on a 1 cm stalk
<b>Fruit</b>	Flattened discs, 3 mm in diameter and occur in upright groups of three

## Aboriginal Uses



- Centella can be added to salads, eaten raw or infused as a tea.
- There are many medicinal claims about centella including help with memory loss, burns, skin diseases, arthritis (eat two leaves a day) and longevity. It can be used as a general tonic.

Developed by SERCUL for use with the *Bush Tucker Education Program*.



Used as food



Used as medicine



Used as resources



Local to SW WA

**Caution:** Do not prepare bush tucker food without having been shown by Indigenous or experienced persons. Some bush tucker if eaten in large quantities or not prepared correctly can cause illness.