



PERILLA FRUTESCENS

Fam. Lamiaceae

DESCRIPTION

It is the only species of the Perilla genus. It boasts reddish erect stems bearing opposite heart-shaped leaves with jagged margins; it is very similar to basil and lemon balm.

LEAVES

Opposite, green or reddish, heart-shaped, pointed and serrated leaves that spread a pleasant scent ranging from anise to lemon balm when exposed to the heat of the sun.

HABITAT

Also known as *shiso* or *ego-ma*, the Korean perilla is an annual herbaceous plant native to East Asia and it is widely cultivated in Japan, China, Korea.

STEM

Robust stem that grows up to 60-70 cm tall.

DISTRIBUTION

It is an aromatic medicinal plant grown in gardens or in pots both for food preparations and for its multiple phytotherapeutic properties. It is also grown in Italy, for ornamental purposes only.

FLOWERS

White apical inflorescences similar to spikes containing small dark seeds. It blooms between July and August.

INTERESTING FACTS

Deulkkae is also known as Chinese basil, beefsteak plant and Joseph's coat. Perilla oil is rich in alpha-linolenic acid and omega 3 fatty acids and it is highly appreciated in Korean and Japanese cuisine. It is also used as a solvent in paints and inks as well as a water-repellent and impregnating agent.

ROOTS

Rhizomatous roots that grow deep in the soil.

