

ODD EXTRACTS FROM THE ESCULENTISE.D. Hatch

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Solanum aviculare F. [for small birds only!]

Berries dull yellow, the size of a large plum, acidulous, slightly nauseous, not very sweet; eagerly devoured by the natives of NZ and also by small birds, but not much enjoyed by us, who all spat them out. Grows naturally in NZ in scrub and waste places.

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Dracaena indivisa F. [the unbranched stem][= Cordyline indivisa]

This tree, with the related Areca oleracea and sapida [Rhopalostylis], together with Apium graveolentum [= australe], Tetragonia halimifolia [= tetragonioides], Lepidium oleraceum and piscidium, and Sonchus oleraceus, is among the most valuable in the list of useful plants in southern lands.

Although the natives hardly make use of D. indivisa, to Europeans suffering from scurvy after a very long ocean voyage it is a most healthful vegetable.

This species of Dracaena had its origin in the forests of that southern portion of NZ which Cook, because it was so dim and shady, named Dusky Bay, where it grows on cliffs and rocky crags, often very close to the sea. The berries, if I am not mistaken, are eaten by the natives, and the delicate, rolled-up inner leaves, preferably from young trees, which protrude about a foot, hidden among the leaves at the top of the trunk, form a white or pale-yellow pith, which when prepared with oil and vinegar is I swear, among the best salads I have had. The berries ripen in the month of May and germinate throughout the winter.

About [the shores of] Queen Charlotte's Sound, in the more temperate parts of NZ, we found another species of Dracaena [Cordyline australis], which was alas omitted [from the list] because I did not know if it was of any use to us for food.

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Areca sapida Solandr. [palatable - pleasant flavoured][= Rhopalostylis sapida - the Norfolk Island plant is R. baueri]

Found naturally in NZ as far [south] as Queen Charlotte's Sound, and is frequent on the uninhabited Norfolk Island. European sailors find the heart or head of this delicious, especially when prepared for use with oil and vinegar. I have taken the name from the late highly esteemed Dr. Solander.

Received 19 January 1985