

Celosia cristata

Common name: Cockscomb

Family: Amaranthaceae

Habit: Shrub

Location: Commerce Block, Central Lawn and Pasricha Block

Distribution: It was likely originally native to India, where it was saved from extinction in cultivation by the religious significance attached to the variety by Indian, Burmese, and Chinese gardeners who planted it near temples.

Description:

They are herbaceous meaning they lack a woody stem, with a straight, juicy and unbranched stem. Its elliptic leaves lanceolate, are green or red-tanned with terminal inflorescences, thick and flattened, velvety, in the form of ridge crest, in the colors red, whitish, roseate or creamy yellow. Flowers can last for up to 8 weeks. A high number of seeds can be produced by each flower, up to 1,500 per gram or 43,000 per ounce. The plant often grows up to 30 cm (1 ft) in height, though many are smaller. The leaves are either green or bronze/maroon, depending upon the cultivar.

Uses:

Similar to amaranth, the cockscomb is used as a vegetable. It is the most widely used as leafy vegetable in many countries. It is grown in gardens and small farms for their own use and commercially. Even young stems and flowers are eaten. The seeds can also be eaten, they are among the pseudocereals. Grass plantations such as cereal or sorghum – infested root parasites of the African witch-herbs (genus *Striga*) (family of the brown-wort family) could be kept away from fields by common sowing with cockscomb. The flowers are a traditional though now seldom-used garnish for desserts, rice cakes and flower-infused alcoholic beverages in Korea.

