

# FGCU Food Forest

## Plant Database

### Cranberry Hibiscus (*Hibiscus acetosella*)

**Origin:** Tropical Parts of Africa

**Description:** Cranberry hibiscus is a multi-stemmed medium shrub 3-6 feet tall. It has greenish red to burgundy toothed leaves and smooth stems. If left to grow without being pruned the plant grows tall and lanky. When pruned repeatedly and given enough sunlight it becomes a bushy shrub. It has a rapid growth rate. The leaves have a tart

**Uses:** Edible raw flowers petals and leaves

**Harvest:** Year Round

**Flower:** Borne at the axil of the leaves all

and shorter days. The pinkish red flowers are said to be self-fertile so seeds are readily

**Tolerance:** Generally pest and disease resistant such as soil-borne nematodes, it is

Cranberry Hibiscus is drought tolerant, it grows in full sun to light shade. Possesses a bushier appearance and grows fast in full sun but will be leggy and grow at a moderate rate in light shade. It can be grown in a wide variety of soils but will do best in well drained soils. It can tolerate moderate to

Intolerant of cold.



**General Description:** Cranberry Hibiscus is valued as easy to grow tender perennial plant for its value as an attractive ornamental and edible plant that provides nutritious greens throughout the year. This plant is easily

propagated from woody cuttings and seeds.

- **Native Origin:** Tropical Africa
- **General History:** Some uncertainty surrounds determining the exact origin of Cranberry Hibiscus. It is known to hail from somewhere in the tropical regions of Africa and assumed to be a hybrid of different wild African hibiscus species. The domesticated cultivar available today is speculated to have originated in Angola, Sudan, or Zaire. The plant is believed to have been introduced into Brazil and Southeast Asia early on as a crop.
- **Distribution:** Tropical and subtropical humid and arid regions in South, Central, and North America, and the Caribbean.
- **Season of Harvest:** Year-Round (Mainly during growing season or warm to hot months)
- **Culinary Uses:** The leaves and flower petals of Cranberry Hibiscus contain antioxidants, calcium, iron, and vitamins B2, B3, and C. The leaves and flowers are eaten raw in salads and used in stir fries. The flower petals are often used to make teas and beverages. This is done by collecting flowers after they have folded up, removing the petals and either steeping them in hot water or blending them up with lime juice and sugar.

Cranberry Hibiscus	
Scientific Classification	
Kingdom:	Plantae
(unranked):	Angiosperms
(unranked):	Eudicots
(unranked):	Rosids
Order:	Malvales
Family:	Malvaceae
Genus:	Hibiscus
Species:	H. acetosella

#### Sources

[http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/members.echocommunity.org/resource/collection/59800F4C-2723-4074-9CA3-DB23AA9F576A/Hibiscus\\_acetosella\\_CranberryHibiscus.pdf](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/members.echocommunity.org/resource/collection/59800F4C-2723-4074-9CA3-DB23AA9F576A/Hibiscus_acetosella_CranberryHibiscus.pdf)

<http://edibleplantproject.org/cranberryhibiscus/>

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/346372-nutrition-information-on-cranberry-hibiscus/>

