

*Actinidia arguta*

[Synonyms : *Actinidia callosa*, *Actinidia kolomikta*, *Actinidia megalocarpa*, *Actinidia polygama*, *Actinidia rufa*, *Actinidia volubilis*, *Trochostigma arguta*, *Trochostigma rufa*]

**SIBERIAN GOOSEBERRY** is a deciduous climbing twining vine. Native to temperate eastern Asia (particularly northern China, Korea and Siberia) and possibly Japan, it has sweetly scented, brownish based, white to cream flowers with many stamens.

It is also known as *Actinidier à chair verte* (French), *Actinidier de Sibérie* (French), *Aktinidia arguta* (Russian), *Aktinidia krupnaia* (Russian), *Aktinidia ostolistna* (Polish), *Aktinidia ostrozubchataia* (Russian), *Aktinidie vyznačná* (Czech), Arctic kiwi, Baby kiwi, Bower actinidia, Bower vine, Cocktail kiwi, Dessert kiwi, Fuzzless kiwi, Green-fleshed actinidia, Hardy kiwi, Hardy kiwifruit, *Hong mao mi hou tao* (Chinese), Japanese actinidia, Japanese gooseberry, *Japaninlaikkuköynnös* (Finnish), *Japanische Stachelbeere* (German), Kiwi berry, *Kiwi de Sibérie* (French), Kiwifruit, *Kokuwa* (Japanese), Kolomikta vine, *Krusbärsaktinidia* (Swedish), *Mihoutao* (Chinese), *Mini kiwi* (Polish), *Ruan zao mi hou tao* (Chinese), *Saru nashi* (Japanese), *Scharfzähniiger Strahlengriffel* (German), *Seom da rae na mu* (Korean), *Shima saru nashi* (Japanese), Smooth skinned kiwi, *Souris végétale* (French), *Stikkelsbærkiwi* (Danish), *Straalstempel* (Dutch), *Ta rae* (Korean), *Ta rae na mu* (Korean), Tara vine, Vine pear, *Yang tao* (Chinese), and *Yuan li* (Chinese).

The vine can grow by 15-20 feet annually. The flowers are pollinated by bees and other insects.

Siberian gooseberries are normally sweeter-tasting than kiwi fruit (*Actinidia chinensis*).

*Arguta* means ‘sharply toothed or notched’ with reference to the leaf edges.

The yellowish-green berries which are widely cultivated in Asia (and have a Vitamin C content five times that of black currant, *Ribes nigrum*), can be eaten like kiwi fruit (*Actinidia chinensis*) and used to make jam. In parts of China they are eaten fresh, and in Siberia they have been dried and eaten in Winter in bread or pastry.

This vine was introduced to Britain in about 1874. At the end of the 1990's it was beginning to be cultivated commercially in the southern United States. It is also grown as an ornamental plant.

The sap in the bark and shoots contains a catnip-type of oil. This makes the plant alluring to cats and, incidentally, is pointed out by some authorities as having a sedative property which has been used in a veterinary capacity to put large cats and other mammals to sleep.