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Amaranthus albus

[Synonyms : *Amaranthus albus* var. *pubescens*, *Amaranthus blitoides*, *Amaranthus diacanthus*, *Amaranthus graecizans*, *Amaranthus graecizans* var. *pubescens*, *Amaranthus graezisans*, *Amaranthus hybridus*, *Amaranthus palmeri*, *Amaranthus pubescens*]

WHITE AMARANTH is an annual. Native to tropical south-western North America it has insignificant, greenish flowers.

It is also known as *Amarante blanche* (French), Amaranth, *Amaranto bianco* (Italian), *Amaranto blanco* (Spanish), *Aspro vlito* (Greek), *Bai xian* (Chinese), *Bledo blanco* (Mexican, Spanish), *Bredos-brancos* (Portuguese), *Carurú-branco* (Brazilian, Portuguese), Creeping amaranth, *Denb id-dib abjad* (Maltese), *Hime shiro biyu* (Japanese), *Horoz ibiği* (Turkish), *Hvid amarant* (Danish), *Kadife çiçeği* (Turkish), *Kvitamarant* (Norwegian), *Laskavec bílý* (Czech), *Mi guk bi reum* (Korean), Pigweed, Pigweed amaranth, Prostrate pigweed, *Qatifah* (Arabic), *Shchiritsa belaia* (Russian), *Shiro biyu* (Japanese), Tumble pigweed, Tumbleweed, Tumbling pigweed, *Valkorevonhätä* (Finnish), *Vit amarant* (Swedish), *Weisser Amarant* (German), *Weisser Fuchsschwanz* (German), and White pigweed.

The flowers are pollinated by the wind and the plant becomes stiff and sticky when ripe.

Albus means 'white'.

The name Tumbleweed is especially descriptive. When the leaves fall the plant withers into a ball which is easily uprooted by the wind and blown hither and thither across the ground scattering its seeds as it goes. Often after windstorms it can be seen piled up against fences and hedgerows.

Familiar to several North American Indian tribes fresh white amaranth seeds were threshed and ground for flour by both the Apache Indians and the Navajo. Some of the Keresan ate the young plants as a green vegetable.

White amaranth was also one of the ingredients in smoking mixtures used by the Navajo during ceremonial rituals.

Locally the leaves have been picked as a savoury food flavouring and they and the young plant have also been cooked like spinach (*Spinacia oleracea*).

The whole plant yields yellow and green dyes.

Today white amaranth is viewed as an invasive plant in some parts of North America.