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Sesuvium portulacastrum

[Synonyms : *Halimus portulacastrum*, *Phamaceum rubens*, *Portulaca portulacastrum*, *Sesuvium ortegae*, *Sesuvium pedunculatum*, *Sesuvium revolutifolium*, *Sesuvium sessile*, *Sesuvium sessiliflorum*]

SEA PURSLANE is a succulent annual or perennial. Native to warm coastal regions (particularly the tropics in Africa) it has tiny pale lilac or whitish flowers with many white-edged stamens.

It is also known as *Dampalit* (Filipino/Tagalog), *Gelang laut* (Malay), *Krokot* (Javanese), *Pourpier-bord-de-mer* (French), Seaside purslane, Shoreline seapurslane, and Shrubby orache.

Warning – the plant is poisonous but this can be neutralized by boiling and repeated rinsing. *Portulacastrum* is derived from the genus name *Portulaca* and Latin *-aster* (somewhat similar) components meaning ‘like plants in that genus’.

Sea purslane has often been grown in west Africa as a green manure.

It is often planted to bind sand.

In China and Indonesia the fleshy leaves and stems are boiled (the water has to be changed repeatedly to remove the salty taste) and eaten as a vegetable. The leaves are pickled in the Philippines as a delicacy – and they can also be eaten raw in salads if they are well rinsed.

This succulent plant is particularly enjoyed by crabs.