

Palmaria Palmata

Related Ingredient: RHODOFILTRAT PALMARIA

The name *Palmaria Palmata* comes from the Latin "Palma". It is named for its resemblance to the palm of the human hand. It means "palm tree which carries smaller palms".

Its common English name *Dulse* originates from the Irish « Duilesc ».

Synonyms: *Dulse, Dillisk, Red Dulse, Sea Lettuce Flakes*



BOTANY

Botanical Family: Palmariaceae

Palmaria Palmata is a perennial membranous red brown alga.

The fronds are variable (from 50-300 mm on average, and up to 1000 mm long), vary in colour from deep-rose to reddish-purple and are rather leathery in texture.

The fronds arise from a discoid base, usually with a small stipe expanding gradually to form simple or dichotomously and palmately divided fronds.

The ramified lobed lamina gradually expands and divides into broad segments ranging in size to 50 cm long and 3-8 cm in width which can bear flat wedge-shaped proliferations from the edge. Younger parts of the blades are more tender, and older parts may have small 'leaflets' along the margin, especially where damaged.

Composition of the alga:

- from 28 to 35% of minerals,
- magnesium,
- iron (493 mg/kg),
- calcium (5 times more than in milk),
- potassium,
- phosphore,
- iodine,
- vitamins A, B6, B12, C and E.



Source: <http://www.aquaportail.com>

BIOTOPE

Palmaria Palmata is abundant and widely distributed. We can find it on rocks, mussels, and it is epiphytic on several algae, especially on upper part of *Laminaria hyperborea* stipes (right to a depth of about 5 m).

Palmaria palmata is to be found growing from mid-tide of the intertidal zone (the area between the high tide and low tide) to depths of 20 m or more in sheltered and exposed shores.

HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

The earliest record of *Palmaria palmata* species is of St Columba's monks, harvesting it on the shores of Iona (Scotland), 1,400 years ago.

It is the only species of *Palmaria* found on the coast of Atlantic Europe. It is very common along the coastline of the English Channel and Atlantic, from Iceland, Baltic Coasts to the French coasts. It can also be found in the Mediterranean Sea.

It also grows on the shores of Arctic Russia, Arctic Canada, Atlantic Canada, Alaska, Japan and Korea.

LEGENDS

In the coastal villages of Northern Ireland, it is often said that throwing *Palmaria Palmata* in water brings peace to the one who throws it.

Palmaria Palmata also features in Welsh legends, as in the « Mabinogion of Math »: in Welsh mythology, Math, son of Mathonwy, was a king of Gwynedd (kingdom based in northwest Wales). He and Gwydion, son of Don, were both powerful magicians. But Gwydion tried to steal Math's lady, Goewin, for his brother. As punishment, Math turned the brothers into animals and sent them into exile.

After three years Math made them human again, and asked Gwydion to choose a wife. Gwydion asked for Aranrhod, Math's niece - but through magic, they discovered she was not a maid as she already had a son. She was sent away from court, but gave Gwydion a secret gift as she went, which he stored in a chest at the foot of his bed.

One day this gift turned into a baby boy. Gwydion went to find Aranrhod to bring her their child, but she was not pleased. She cursed the baby, saying that it would not have a name unless it was she who named him. So the boy went nameless, until Gwydion played an elaborate trick on Aranrhod in order to gain a name for his son: he built a ship from *dulse* by magic, and out the *dulse* he made much cordovan leather, and he put colours on them so that no-one had ever seen leather more lovely than that. Gwydion and his son boarded the ship and used it as a place to make beautiful shoes. Aranrhod became curious and wanted a pair for herself. She saw how quickly and cleverly the boy made the shoes, and not recognising him, commented on how deft the 'fair one's' hands were. So the boy got his name - 'Lleu Llaw Gyffes', or 'Fair one, deft hands'.



Source:<http://www.donaldcorrell.com>

MEDICINAL USES

One of the important benefits of *Palmaria Palmata* is its store of vitamins. Its content of vitamin C helps in preventing conditions like scurvy, which might arise from vitamin C deficiency. It also adds appreciable amount of vitamin A to the diet and this helps in keeping ailments such as night blindness, diseases related to the bone marrow and white blood cells and many others. Its high amount of vitamin B enhances brain function and health of the nervous system.

Dulse can also be recommended to correct mineral deficiencies as anemia (due to its high iron content), to improve the digestion process, to enlarge the thyroid (because of its high iodine content) and for proper gland function. *Dulse* is said to be beneficial for impotence and under-weight. Purple *dulse* seaweed's fluorine content boosts the body's defence systems and strengthens teeth and bones. It is also helpful against the herpes virus.

Also, its high carrageenan content gives it fluidifying and toning properties, very interesting for the walls of veins and the microcirculation of fats in the body.

DIETARY USES

Palmaria palmata is a good source of dietary requirements; it is rich in potassium, iron, iodine and trace elements, and relatively low in sodium. A small amount can provide more than 100% of the daily amount of Vitamin B6, 66% of Vitamin B12, iron and fluoride. That's why humans have been eating it since the 10th century at least.

Palmaria Palmata was widely used for food, dried and eaten uncooked, by the maritime Irish and Scots and also in Iceland, Norway and France. This algae, if dried carefully and rapidly, is one of the few seaweeds with a pleasant taste (slight nutty flavour); its properties are similar to those of a condiment.

In Iceland the tradition is to eat it with butter. It can be pan fried quickly into chips, baked in the oven covered with cheese, with salsa, or simply microwaved briefly. It can be used in soups, sandwiches and salads, or added to bread or pizza dough.

Palmaria palmata is also sold as a seasoning and spice, or as a salt substitute.



Source: <http://blissreturned.wordpress.com>

COSMETIC USES

Palmaria Palmata is famous for its cosmetic properties. Indeed, we can find this alga in many skin care products as facial cleansers, moisturizers, bath salts, massage oils shampoos, soaps, etc.

OTHER USES

Palmaria palmata can also be used as fodder for a variety of animals in many countries, as pet supplements, and sometimes as an agricultural fertilizer.