

Goosefoot (Common Name)

Syngonium podophyllum (Scientific Name)



Alternative common names:

African evergreen, American evergreen, arrowhead plant, arrowhead vine, five fingers.

Goosefoot is an ornamental vine that has established invasive populations in South Africa, displacing indigenous plants and growing over indigenous trees. The plant has blue-green or green younger stems and leaf stalks. Leaves can be white, green, or pink.

All parts of the plant are poisonous, causing severe mouth pain if eaten. Homeowners and yard workers need to be aware of the severe skin burning sensations caused by the plants sap containing [oxalic acid](#) and the eye damage potential from [raphides](#).

Oxalic acid in concentrated form can have harmful effects through contact and ingestion. There is a possible risk of congenital malformation in the fetus; it may be harmful if inhaled, and is extremely destructive to tissue of mucous membranes and upper respiratory tract. Symptoms and effects include a burning sensation, cough, wheezing, laryngitis, shortness of breath and spasm.



Raphides 600x magnification

Raphides are needle-shaped crystals found in more than 200 families of plants. Both ends are needle-like, but raphides tend to be blunt at one end and sharp at the other.

Raphides can produce severe toxic reactions by facilitating the passage of toxin through the herbivore's skin.

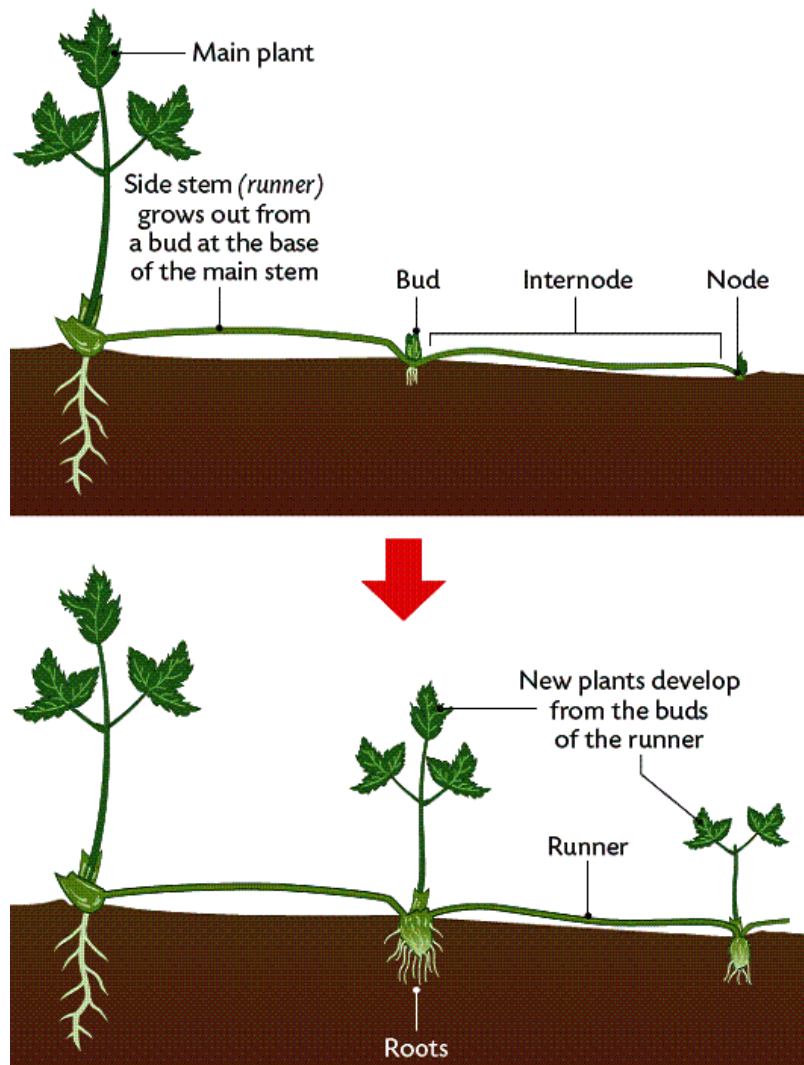
Where does this species come from?

Mexico and Central America.

How does it spread?

This species almost exclusively reproduces vegetatively in the wild, and is propagated and spread by cuttings in cultivation.

Vegetative reproduction means that only one plant is involved, and the offspring is the result of one parent.



For more information, please contact Uschi Powell at 072 908 0350