

# The East London Garden Society

## Plant Facts

### Purslane - Health Boosting Plant



Purslane, also known as *Portulaca oleracea*, is considered a common weed that may even be growing in your garden right now without your explicit invitation. It started its cultivation in India and Persia before spreading to the rest of the world. Some cultures pluck it out and throw it away with leaf clippings and weeds whilst others cultivate it specifically to eat as food. Purslane is an aesthetically attractive weed with fleshy leaves and yellow flowers. However, its health benefits are even more desirable.

#### Powerful seeds grow in many climates

The seeds of Purslane can stay viable in land for up to forty years. It grows in a well-tended garden as well as arid climates. Often called pig weed, Purslane has more beneficial Omega 3 fatty acids than many fish oils. The weed also has one of the highest levels of vitamin A of all leafy green vegetables. High vitamin A foods can help protect us from many types of cancers and helps boost eye health

#### Strong Antioxidant

Purslane is full of Betalain alkaloid pigments - a reddish beta-cyanis and a yellow beta-xanthins, which are potent antioxidants/anti-mutagens. Purslane also contains vitamins C and B, including riboflavin, pyridoxine, niacin, carotenoids and trace minerals like iron, magnesium and calcium.

With all these nutritional benefits and the large amount of money we spend on supplements to better our health it seems Purslane should be elevated from weed status to a health boosting everyday food.