

COLEUS

Written by Lawrence Young
Thursday, 11 March 2010 00:00

COLEUS

When psilocybin mushrooms are in short supply, and users are willing to settle for a milder but similar mind excursion, they sometimes turn to the coleus plant, particularly the species *Coleus blumei* and *Coleus pumila*. The Mazatec Indians of southern Mexico have been tripping on this psychedelic mint for years:

It takes about fifty to seventy large, colorful leaves of the coleus plant to get someone going. They can be chewed thoroughly and swallowed. If one prefers, the leaves can also be smoked and steeped in lukewarm water for about an hour, after which the liquid is strained and drunk.

No one is exactly sure what gives coleus its psychoactive kick, but we do know that only fresh leaves will work. Dried leaves have virtually no effect.

While the drug has no really unpleasant or dangerous side effects, some people do feel a degree of nausea about a half hour after getting it down. But the nausea goes away quickly and is soon replaced by a trippy, psilocybin-like state, colorful 'visual hallucinations and patterns, and -telepathic and clairvoyant insights. The entire trip lasts for about two hours.

Coleus plants can be purchased legally at most garden centers. Those with green thumbs, who aren't too stoned to exercise them, might purchase some seeds to grow their own.