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Abutilon vitifolium

[Synonyms : *Corynabutilon vitifolium*, *Sida vitifolia*]

CHILEAN TREE MALLOW is an evergreen shrub or tree. Native to Chile it has white or pale blue flowers with long stamens.

It is also known as Flowering maple.

Vitifolium is made up of Latin *vitis* (vine) and *-folia* (leaved) components meaning ‘with leaves like vine leaves’.

Some authorities believe that the plant was first introduced to Britain by a Captain Cottingham who imported its seeds in 1836. Others believe the honour for its introduction lies with William Lobb (1809-1864), the Cornishman who collected plants in Chile in the 1840s for the enterprising English nursery, Veitch and Sons, and sent seeds to them.

The slightly sweet-tasting flowers can be added raw to salads.