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Aconitum lycoctonum

[Synonyms : *Aconitum lycoctonum* subsp. *vulparia*, *Aconitum septentrionale*, *Aconitum vulparia*]

BADGER'S BANE is a perennial. Native from northern Europe to the Himalayas and China it has small purple, yellow, or pale yellow flowers.

It is also known as *Aconit tue-loup* (French), *Alpstormhatt* (Swedish), Christopher's herb, Foxbane, *Gelber Eisenhut* (German), Harebane, Herb Christopher, *Keltaukonhattu* (Finnish), Mousebane, St. Christopher's herb, Water-cup, Wolf's bane, *Wolfseisenhut* (German), Yellow monkshood, and Yellow wolf's bane; and in flower language is said to be a symbol of lustre, and misanthropy.

The flowers are pollinated by long-tongued bumble-bees.

The root is processed to yield aconitine.

Warning – this species is poisonous. It is avoided by cattle and other animals.

Badger's bane is a protected species in some areas.

Lycoctonum is made up of Greek *lyco-* (wolf) and *-ctonos* (murder) components meaning 'wolf's bane'.

It was used as an animal poison in Europe in the 13th and 14th Centuries, especially for wolves. Despite its poisonous nature some records suggest that in Lapland boiled root has been served as food.

In Europe it is mainly cultivated today as an ornamental plant, but in China badger's bane is used medicinally.