

You are viewing one of thousands of biographies – click below for more, including Search box and access to Plant associated organisations.

[Plant Biographies](#)

[Bibliography](#)

Ageratum houstonianum

[Synonyms : *Ageratum caeruleum*, *Ageratum conyzoides*, *Ageratum conyzoides* subsp. *houstonianum*, *Ageratum conyzoides* var. *mexicanum*, *Ageratum houstonianum* var. *angustatum*, *Ageratum houstonianum* var. *houstonianum*, *Ageratum houstonianum* forma *luteum*, *Ageratum houstonianum* forma *niveum*, *Ageratum mexicanum*, *Ageratum mexicanum* forma *caeruleum*, *Ageratum mexicanum* forma *lasseauxii*, *Ageratum mexicanum* var. *majus*, *Ageratum mexicanum* var. *mexicanum*, *Ageratum mexicanum* var. *nanum*, *Ageratum mexicanum* var. *wendlandii*, *Ageratum wendlandii*, *Alomia pinetorum*, *Cacalia mentrasto*, *Carelia houstoniana*]

FOSSFLOWER is an annual. Native to Middle America and Mexico it has small scented, blue flowers.

It is also known as *Agera* (Finnish), *Ageratum* (English, Swedish), *Bastard agrimony*, *Blue billygoat-weed*, *Blue mink*, *Garden ageratum*, *Leverbalsam* (Swedish), *Mexican paintbrush*, *Nestařec americký* (Czech), *Nestařec mexický* (Czech), *Sinitähtönen* (Finnish), and *Tuin ageratum* (Afrikaans).

The flowers are pollinated by moths and butterflies.

Houstonianum commemorates a Scottish surgeon and botanist, William Houstoun (1695-1733) who studied at St. Andrews and Leiden. Then in Paris he and the Dutch-born Austrian botanist and physician, Gerard van Swieten (1700-1772) carried out experiments on animal respiration. Still in Paris he listed the plants in the *Jardin du Roi* in 1730 and was also appointed as surgeon to the South Sea Company. He then collected plants in Middle America, Cuba and Jamaica. However his ship was wrecked near Vera Cruz (eastern Mexico) and, apart from those plant specimens already sent to the British physician and naturalist, Sir Hans Sloane (1660-1753) and to Philip Miller (1691-1771), curator of the Chelsea Physic Garden, he was unable to rescue most of the remaining specimens. He did however salvage some of his personal belongings. Back in England in 1731, he received a doctorate from St. Andrews the following year and was commissioned by Sloane to research wine-making in Madeira before travelling on to Jamaica, proceeding from there to the Spanish colonies and via Jamaica again on to Georgia to establish a nursery and public garden in Savannah. Unfortunately this itinerary was never completed as he died in 1733 when he returned to Jamaica for the second time. In 1728 he had been elected to the *Académie Royale des Sciences* and he became a Fellow of The Royal Society on 18th January 1733.

Flossflower is cultivated widely as an ornamental plant.