

Ajuga chamaepitys

[Synonyms : *Chamaepitys chia* subsp. *trifida*, *Chamaepitys trifida*, *Chamaepitys vulgaris*, *Teucrium chamaepitya*]

GROUND-PINE is an annual (sometimes biennial or perennial). Native to Asia, Europe (including Britain) and North Africa, it has small fragrant bright yellow flowers spotted with red or purple on their lower lip.

It is also known as *Ackergünse* (German), *Bugle petit pin* (French), *Camepiteos* (Spanish), *Camepizio* (Italian), European bugle, European bugle leaves, European ground-pine, Field cypress, Field forget-me-not, Forget-me-not, *Gelber Ackergünse* (German), *Gelber Günse* (German), *Gulsuga* (Swedish), Herb ivy, *Slagört* (Swedish), Yellow bugle, *Zbĕhovecek trojklaný* (Czech), *Zbĕhovec trojklaný* (Czech), and *Zbĕhovec yva* (Czech).

In Britain ground-pine is considered to be endangered in the wild and is protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

The flowers are pollinated by bees.

Chamaepitys is made up of Greek *chamae*- (dwarf, on the ground, low-growing) and *pitys* (pine) components meaning 'dwarf pine'.

In veterinary medicine the Arabs have used the strongly aromatic plant as a remedy for hysteria in horses and paralysis in animals generally.

Charles I of Spain and V as Holy Roman Emperor (1500-1558) was dosed with an infusion of the plant for eight weeks and according to the records was cured of gout.

Medicinally, after centuries this plant is still respected and is used for the treatment of female disorders, gout and rheumatism. In the past it has also been recommended by European herbalists for treating kidney ailments, fever, coughs, jaundice and fluid retention, and also for period disorders and as a laxative. It was an ingredient (with wall germander (*Teucrium chamaedrys*) and common centaury (*Centaureum erythraea*)) in the once famous Portland Powder too.