

Armeria maritima

[Synonyms : *Armeria bottendorffensis*, *Armeria vulgaris*, *Caryophyllus marinus minimus*, *Statice armeria*, *Statice maritima*]

SEA PINK is a grass-like, evergreen perennial. Native to Asia, Europe and North America it has fragrant rose-pink flowers.

It is also known as Arby, *Arméria maritime* (French), Brittons, Cliff clover, Cliff rose, *Clustog Mair* (Welsh), Common thrift, Cushion pink, Cushions, Daddy drumsticks, *Eillet d'banque* (Channel Islander-Guernsey), *Engels gras* (Dutch), *Engelskgræs* (Danish), French pink, *Gazon d'Espagne* (French), *Gazon d'Olympe* (French), *Gewöhnliche Grasnelke* (German), Gilly flower, *Gräsnejlika* (Swedish), Heugh daisy, *Iliets d'falaise* (Channel Islander-Jersey Norman-French), Lady's cushion, Lady's pincushion, Maiden pink, Marsh daisy, Midsummer fairmaid, Pincushion, Pink, Profolium, *Rantalaukkaneilikka* (Finnish), Red root, Rock rose, Scawfell pink, Sea cushion, Sea daisy, Sea gillyflower, Sea grass, Sea thrift, Sea turf, Statice, *Strandnellik* (Norwegian), *Strandtrift* (Swedish), Tab-mawn, Thrift, Thrift seapink, *Tonn a Chladaich* (Irish Gaelic), *Trávníčka přímořská* (Czech), *Trift* (Swedish), *Widerstoss* (German), and Wild thrift; and in flower language is said to be a symbol of 'sympathy for the fallen'.

Warning – sea pink used as an antiseptic poultice can cause dermatitis or local irritation.

Maritima is Latin (of the sea) meaning 'coastal, or of the sea or seaside'.

Its habit of growing in dense tufts led to it being called *threave* or *thrive* in Middle English (meaning 'press close together') and that in turn became Thrift.

As an edging plant it achieved its greatest following between the 16th and 18th Centuries when it was often to be found in formal knot gardens. Today research is being undertaken into the viability of growing the flowers in greenhouses on a commercial scale for the ornamental pot plant market.

In Britain during George VI's (1895-1952) reign which began in 1936 the sea pink appeared on the twelve-sided threepenny piece.

Medicinally, despite antiseptic qualities it is rarely used now but it was once employed in the treatment of some nervous disorders, obesity and urinary infections.

It is the birthday flower for 14th August.

