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Aster novae-angliae

[Synonyms : *Lasalea novae-angliae*, *Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*, *Virgulus novae-angliae*]

NEW ENGLAND ASTER is a perennial. Native to eastern North America it has daisy-like, yellow-centred, deep purple (rarely pink or white) flowers.

It is also known as Farewell summer, Hairy Michaelmas daisy, Hardy aster, *Herfstaster* (Dutch), Last rose of summer, *Luktaster* (Swedish), Michaelmas aster, Michaelmas daisy, Michelmas aster, New England starwort, and *Tuoksuasteri* (Finnish).

The crushed leaves emit a turpentine-like smell.

Novae-angliae means ‘of or from New England (USA)’.

New England aster is a parent of many varieties and hybrids developed both in North America and in Europe.

The plant was used as a love charm by the North American Indian Iroquois tribe, while the Chippewa believed that when they smoked it in pipes the root would attract game.

For several North American Indian tribes the plant was a source of medicine. The Potawatomi and Meskwaki Indians used it to revive unconscious patients, and the Iroquois and Cherokee prescribed it for fever. The Cherokee also used the root for treating diarrhoea, catarrh and pain.

The plant was introduced to Britain in 1710 and was a familiar sight in very many gardens there by 1818.

Medicinally, local herbalists used the smoke from the burning plant to stimulate unconscious patients or those suffering from faintness and also included it in sweat bath cures for epileptic convulsions. Apart from this a plant decoction was applied to skin disorders.