

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

[Plant Biographies](#)

[Bibliography](#)

Astragalus gummifer

[Synonyms : *Astracantha gummifera*]

TRAGACANTH is a spiny shrub. Native to western and central Asia it has pea-like yellowish-white flowers

It is also known as *Gommer* (Persian), *Gond kateera* (Urdu), Gum dragant, Gum dragon, Gum tragacanth, Gum tragacanth milkvetch, Quincy dragagency, and Syrian tragacanth.

Gummifer is derived from Latin *gummi* (gum) and *-fer* (bearing, carrying) components meaning 'producing gum'.

Gommer, the name used in Iran, is derived from the name of the centre of the gum market, Qom, a desert city there.

This species is the principle source of gum tragacanth (supported by close relatives) and it was known to the ancient Greeks sheltered. It came to be more widely used in Europe during the Middle Ages than in the classical Greek era. It has long been burnt as incense (the scentless gum emits a fragrance when alight).

The resin which is one of the most expensive natural gums today has been used by the textile industry to stiffen materials such as calico or crêpe. It has long been used also in preparing cosmetics and by the pharmaceutical industry as a thickening or suspending agent for mixtures, gels, syrups, emulsions and pills, as well as in making confectionery.

In the tobacco industry it provides the glue applied to the outer cigar leaves.

Medicinally, tragacanth has been applied to burns including sunburn.