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Callistephus chinensis

[Synonyms : *Aster chinensis*, *Callistephus hortensis*]

CHINA ASTER is an annual. Native to China and Japan it has daisy-like, white, pink, red or purple flowers.

It is also known as Annual aster, Aster, *Astero ĉinia* (Esperanto), *Astra ĉinská* (Czech), *Astrovka ĉinská* (Slovak), Chinese aster, Garden aster, *Guli-meenas* (Persian), *Kalistefo* (Esperanto), *Kiinanasteri* (Finnish), *Sommaraster* (Swedish), and *Trädgårdsaster* (Swedish); and in flower language is said to be a symbol of afterthought, 'I share your sentiments' (double); 'I will think of it' (single), and variety.

Chinensis means 'of or from China'.

Authorities note that Father Pierre D'Incarville (1706-1757) a missionary in China, sent the first China aster seeds seen in Europe to the Jardin des Plantes in Paris in 1728.

It is said that China aster crossed the Channel in 1731, the same year that the plant could be seen growing in the Chelsea Physic Garden. Although some claim that this species had become popular in gardens in North America by 1740, others suggest that it was introduced to North America in about 1850.

Today China aster is a familiar sight in cultivation as an ornamental plant.