

Cardamine diphylla

[Synonyms : *Dentaria diphylla*]

TWO-LEAVED TOOTHWORT is a perennial. Native to eastern North America it has small white flowers that are pinkish outside, with many yellow stamens.

It is also known as Coral root, Crinkleroot, Pepper root, Pepperwort, Toothache root, Tooth root, Toothwort, Trickle, Trinkle-root, Two-leaf crinkle-root, Two-leaved pepper-root, and Two-toothed pepper-root..

Diphylla is derived from Greek *di-* (two, twice) and *phyllo-* (leaf) components meaning ‘two-leaved’.

Records show that the North American Iroquois Indians ate the underground stem as a vegetable, raw (with salt) or boiled, while the Abnaki and some of the Algonkin and the Chippewa tribes used it as a flavouring and relish. Cherokee Indians ate the cooked leaves or added them fresh to salads. But it is the Menominee that are especially singled out by at least one authority as prizing the roots as they fermented them for four or five days before cooking in order to sweeten them.

The Cherokee Indians also smoked the leaves as a tobacco.

A perhaps strange use is recorded for the Iroquois Indians who are said to have used the roots to counter the effects of overactive love charms.

Several North American tribes used the plant medicinally for various ailments. The Cherokee favoured it for treating colds and headaches, and the Delaware Indians used it as a remedy for some venereal diseases and stomach upsets. It was also used internally to treat wind, as well as some lung problems (including tuberculosis). Externally it was applied to swellings by the Iroquois. The Algonkin tribes chose it for fever and heart problems, and both the Malecite and Micmac Indians prescribed it as a tonic and a remedy for hoarseness.