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Celosia argentea

[Synonyms : *Amaranthus purpureus*, *Celosia argentea* var. *crystata*, *Celosia coccinea*, *Celosia cristata*, *Celosia debilis*, *Celosia margaritacea*, *Celosia marilandica*, *Celosia pallida*, *Celosia pyramidalis*, *Celosia splendens*]

CELOSIA (English, Swedish) is a perennial (often grown as an annual). Native to tropical Asia and tropical Africa, it has tiny, pinkish or silvery-white flowers.

It is also known as *Bayam merah* (Malay), *Borocho* (Sundanese), Chinese woolflower, Cock's comb, Common cockscomb, Feather coxcomb, Feathered amaranth, *Gurugu* (Telugu), Hackie rose, Indian feathers, *Kadayohan* (Filipino /Tagalog), *Nevadlec hřebeníč* (Czech), Quail grass, Red fox, *Revonhäntä* (Finnish), *Sarwali* (Punjabi), *Shokoto-yokoto* (Sierra Leonean), *Silberbrandschopf* (German), Silver cock's comb, *Sufaid murgha* (Hindi), *Swet-murga* (Bengali), *Urf-ad-dik* (Arabic), Velvet flower, *Vitunna* (Sanskrit), Woodbine, and Wool-flower.

The many cultivated varieties have crimson through orange to yellow flower heads.

Argentea means 'silvery or silvered'.

The leaves and stems are eaten like spinach (*Spinacia oleracea*) in eastern Africa, some southern Asian countries and India. The seeds are held to be an aphrodisiac in some Asian countries (including parts of India) and have been used by the Chinese to decorate cakes in designs of written characters.

The plant has been used in ritual offerings to protective spirits in parts of the Indonesian island of Sumatra (now part of Indonesia).

It is believed that celosia was introduced to England from Asia in 1570.

Medicinally, the seeds have been used for treating diarrhoea, blood disorders, oral sores and eye diseases.