

Chamaedaphne calyculata

[Synonyms : *Andromeda calyculata*, *Cassandra calyculata*, *Cassandra calyculata* var. *angustifolia*, *Cassandra calyculata* var. *latifolia*, *Chamaedaphne calyculata* var. *angustifolia*, *Chamaedaphne calyculata* var. *latifolia*, *Chamaedaphne calyculata* var. *nana*, *Chamaepericlymenum canadensis*, *Lyonia calyculata*]

LEATHERLEAF is an evergreen shrub. Native to northern temperate regions (circumpolar) it has tiny and nodding waxy, delicately fragrant white flowers.

It is also known as *Andromeda* (Dutch), *Cassandra*, *Dwarf cassandra*, *False teeth bush*, *Finnmyrten* (Swedish), *Lýkoveček drobnokališný* (Czech), and *Vaivero* (Finnish).

Warning – it may be unwise to drink tea made from the leaves as it is believed by some authorities that some poisonous elements can be released from any part of the plant when it is infused or steeped in boiling water.

Calyculata is derived from Greek *kalux* (husk, covering) with reference to the outer part of the base of the flower.

For some of the North American Chippewa Indians the leaves (fresh or dried) could be used to make a tea.

On the other hand the Potawatomi Indians recognised medicinal qualities in a leaf infusion taken to ease fever – and a leaf poultice was believed to be advantageous in treating inflammation.

Some records recommend that a tea is best made from leatherleaf's leaves by allowing them to stand in a jar of water in sunshine. No authorities seem to have offered confirmation of either the plant's toxic qualities or the reliability of any methods of circumventing these if they exist.

Leatherleaf is cultivated as an ornamental plant.

The shrub is browsed to varying degrees by different kinds of deer, including moose, elk and caribou.