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Cistus salvifolius

[Synonyms : *Cistus salvaeifolius*, *Cistus salvifolius*]

SAGE-LEAVED CISTUS is an evergreen shrub. Native to southern Europe it has reddish buds that open to small white flowers with gold stained-centres.

It is also known as *Ciste à feuilles de Sauge* (French), *Cist šalvějolistý* (Czech), *Cistusroos* (Dutch), Female cistus, Rockrose, Sage leaf rock rose, Sage-leaved rock-rose, Sage rose, *Salbeiblättrige Zistrose* (German), *Salvia cistus*, and *Xistarka* (Greek).

The flowers are pollinated by flies and beetles.

Salvifolius is made up of the genus name *Salvia* and Latin *-folia* (leaved) components meaning ‘with leaves like those of that (sage) genus’.

The leaves have been used for tanning.

In ancient Greece and in some Arabian countries the leaves have provided an alternative to tea. Sage-leaved cistus must have been growing in England by 1548 as it appears in *Names of Herbes*. This was a list of plants that could be found in the Country then and was compiled by the English naturalist and clergyman, William Turner (c.1510-1568). It is believed to have been introduced to North America in about 1550.

Medicinally, the ancient Greeks are understood to have used a decoction of flowers in treating dysentery, a practice still found in Morocco today. Arabian countries also made a decoction of the roots for remedies for bronchitis and for stemming bleeding.