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*Claytonia perfoliata* subsp. *perfoliata*

[Synonyms : *Claytonia perfoliata*, *Limnia perfoliata*, *Montia perfoliata*]

**WINTER PURSLANE** is an annual. Native to North America it has small white or pinkish flowers.

It is also known as *Batolka prorostlá* (Czech), Cuban spinach, Indian lettuce, *Kubakraut* (German), Miner's lettuce, Perfoliate claytonia, Petota, Portuguese lettuce, *Salaattikleitonia* (Finnish), Spanish lettuce, Spring beauty, *Tellerkraut* (German), *Vinterportlak* (Swedish), Wild lettuce, and *Winterportulak* (German).

*Perfoliata* means 'with a leaf (leaves) surrounding or embracing the stem'.

North American Indian tribes, including the Mendocino Indian, Neeshenam, Costanoan and Kawaiisu Indians ate winter purslane both raw as a salad vegetable and as a flavouring in cooked dishes.

Authorities have noted that children of the North American Yurok tribe used the young shoots in one of their games.

The plant provided medicine for a few North American Indian tribes. Apparently the Thompson Indians used it for treating some eye problems, and the Shoshoni included it in poultices applied to ease rheumatism.

Winter purslane is said by some authorities to have been introduced to Britain in 1749 and, according to others, to have been first seen growing uncultivated in that Country in 1852.

When the soil is too poor for spinach (*Spinacia oleracea*) winter purslane is capable of providing an alternative Winter crop.

During the gold rushes of the mid-1800s in California miners ate the plant as a protection against scurvy.