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Clematis montana

[Synonyms : *Clematis alba*, *Clematis insulari-alpina*, *Clematis odorata*, *Clematis ternifolia mandshurica*]

MONTANA is a deciduous climber. Native to China and the Himalayas, it often has fragrant white flowers with golden stamens.

It is also known as Anemone clematis, Great Indian virgin's bower, Himalayan clematis, Mountain clematis, *Plamének* (Czech), Traveller's joy, and Virgin's bower.

Warning – most of the plant is poisonous and should not be taken internally. It can cause severe abdominal pain, gastro-intestinal irritation and death. The sap from the bruised plant can cause blistering, inflammation and sores. Because of its acrid taste animals (for which it is also fatal) rarely eat it.

Montana is derived from Latin *mons* (mountain) meaning 'of or from mountains'.

Lady Sarah Amherst (1762-1838), who was a keen naturalist and collected plants, sent seeds of *montana* back to England in 1831 from India where she was accompanying her husband during his appointment as governor-general.