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Cleome hassleriana

[Synonyms : *Cleome arborea*, *Cleome houtteana*, *Cleome pungens*, *Cleome spinosa*]

GIANT SPIDER PLANT is an annual. Native to South America (south-eastern Brazil to Argentina) it has pungently scented, white, pink or purple flowers each with protruding stamens.

It is also known as Electric light plant, *Grand mouzambé* (French), *Hämähäkkikukka* (Finnish), Medusa head, Mosquito plant, *Paradisblomster* (Swedish), Pink queen, Spider flower, Spider plant, and Spiderwort.

Warning – seeds and sap may cause skin irritation.

Hassleriana commemorates a Swiss physician and plant collector, Emile Hassler (1861-1937) who travelled in Paraguay from 1885-1913. He collected over 8000 plant specimens there, some of which account for 70% of the large Paraguayan collection held at the Natural History Museum in London.

Giant spider plant is said to have been introduced to Britain in 1817.

The flowers are sought after by professional florists.