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Convolvulus soldanella

[Synonyms : *Calystegia soldanella*]

SEA BINDWEED is a prostrate perennial. Found worldwide it has pale rose striped, pink flowers.

It is also known as Beach morning glory, *Cavolo di mare* (Italian), *Chou-marin* (French), *Correguela marina* (Spanish), *Couve-marinha* (Portuguese), *Cynghafog Arfor* (Welsh), *Leblieb tal-bahar* (Maltese), *Markalistegio* (Esperanto), *Nihi-nihi* (Maori), Sand convolvulus, Sea bells, Sea coal, Sea pea, Seashore bindweed, Seashore false bindweed, Shore bindweed, *Soldanella* (Italian, Portuguese), *Strandvinda* (Swedish), *Strand-Winde* (German), *Strand-Zaunwinde* (German), and *Veîl'yes dé sablion* (Channel Islander-Jersey Norman-French); and in flower language it is said to be a symbol of uncertainty.

The flowers, which open in bright weather and close before night, are pollinated by bumblebees. The capsular fruit are dispersed by the sea.

Warning – like hedge bindweed (*Convolvulus sepium*) large doses of sea bindweed can cause constipation. The plant should not be taken internally for an extended period.

Soldanella is the genus name *Soldanella* meaning ‘like plants in that genus’ with reference to the similarity of the rounded leaves.

The common name *soldanella* is believed to be derived from an Italian word for ‘small coin’ *soldo*.

In the past the roots and young shoots have been cooked and eaten, but this is no longer recommended.

For the Scots sea bindweed brings to mind Bonnie Prince Charlie (1720-1788). It is told that it was he who scattered sea bindweed seeds (picked up in France) when he landed on one of the islands in the Outer Hebrides – an isolated patch which then persisted as it re-seeded itself each year.

Rabbits are particularly partial to the flowers.

Medicinally, the plant is used locally.