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Daphne gnidium

[Synonyms : *Daphne orthophylla*, *Daphne paniculata*, *Thymelaea hirsuta*]

SPURGE FLAX is an evergreen shrub. Native to Europe it has small, usually fragrant, creamy-white flowers (brownish on the outside).

It is also known as *Adelfilla* (Spanish), *Baladre* (Spanish), *Barbosa* (Italian), *Beyneb fidani* (Turkish), *Cavolo di lupo* (Italian), *Cocco cnidio* (Italian), *Daphné garou* (French), *Dittinella* (Italian), *Flax-leaf daphne*, *Garou* (French), *Gnidio* (Esperanto), *Gnidium*, *Herbst-Seidelbast* (German), *Kurd baghri* (Turkish), *Laureola lupina* (Italian), *Legno santo* (Italian), *Lýkovec podzimní* (Czech), *Mathnân* (Arabic), *Mazari yoniye* (Turkish), *Mediterranean mezereon*, *Olivastro* (Italian), *Purgierstrauch* (German), *Rispenblütiger Seidelbast* (German), *Rosa de dafne* (Spanish), *Sainbois* (French), *Saint bois* (French), *Thymelée* (French), *Topblomstret kælderhals* (Danish), *Torbisco* (Spanish), *Torvisca* (Spanish), *Torvisco* (Spanish), *Trovisco* (Portuguese), and *Trovisco fémea* (Portuguese).

Warning – spurge flax is considered to be as poisonous as mezereon (*Daphne mezereum*).

Gnidium means ‘of or from Knidos (Cnidos or Cnidus) in Caria, Asia Minor (now part of western Turkey)’.

In Corsica local people caught trout by poisoning the water with a spurge flax extract (probably made from the fruit).

Medicinally, although it was known to be poisonous, the plant was still used by European herbalists as a purgative and it is only relatively recently that its medicinal application has been limited to external use for skin ailments.