

Dicentra cucullaria

[Synonyms : *Bicuculla canadensis*, *Bicuculla cucullaria*, *Bicuculla occidentalis*, *Bicucullata canadensis*, *Bikuculla cucullaria*, *Capnorchis americana*, *Capnorchis cucullaria*, *Capnorchis occidentalis*, *Corydalis cucullaria*, *Cucularia bulbosa*, *Dicentra cucullaria* var. *cucullaria*, *Dicentra cucullaria* var. *occidentalis*, *Dicentra cucullaria* forma *purpuritincta*, *Dicentra occidentalis*, *Diclytra bracteosa*, *Diclytra canadensis*, *Diclytra cucullaria*, *Diclytra cucullaria* var. *divaricata*, *Dielytra bracteosa*, *Dielytra cucullaria*, *Fumaria bicalcarata*, *Fumaria cucullaria*, *Fumaria pallida*]

DUTCHMAN’S BREECHES is a perennial. Native to north-eastern North America it has small cyclamen-like, fragrant, yellow tipped, white or pale rose-purple flowers. It is also known as Bachelor’s breeches, Boys-and-girls, Breeches flower, Butterfly banners, Colic weed, Ear-drops, Fly flower, Girls and boys, Indian boys-and-girls, Kitten breeches, Leather breeches, Little blue stagger, Little boy’s breeches, Monk’s hood, Pantaloon flower, Pearl harlequin, Soldier’s cap, Staggerweed, Turkey corn, Turkey pea, White eardrop, and White hearts.

Warning – this species is poisonous, it is alleged, for both humans and livestock. Handling the plant can cause dermatitis.

Cucullaria is derived from Latin *cucullus* (hood, cowl) meaning ‘hooded or hood-like’.

For the North American Menominee Indians dutchman’s breeches was a love charm. Its potency was held to be so great that if an admirer chewed the root its scent would reach out to his lady-love and she would follow him unquestioningly.

The Iroquois tribe included a leaf infusion in a liniment that was believed to be able to strengthen runners’ legs.

Medicinally, it has been used locally to encourage appetite and also as a tonic.