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Dicentra spectabilis

[Synonyms : *Capnorchis spectabilis*, *Diclytra spectabilis*, *Dielytra spectabilis*, *Eucapnos spectabilis*, *Fumaria spectabilis*, *Lamprocapnos spectabilis*]

BLEEDING HEART is a perennial. Native to China and Japan it has small, rosy-red flowers with white protruding inner petals.

It is also known as Asian bleeding heart, Chinaman's breeches, Common bleeding heart, *Daitsurisō* (Japanese), Dutchman's breeches, *Fuji botan* (Japanese), *Gebrooken hartjes* (Dutch), *Kemansō* (Japanese), Lady in the bath, Lady's locket, Lock-and-keys, *Löjtnantshjärta* (Swedish), *Lyrblomma* (Swedish), Lyre flower, Lyre plant, Seal flower, and *Srdcovka nádherná* (Czech, Slovak).

Warning – the plant is poisonous. It can cause inco-ordination, trembling, respiratory weakness and convulsions. Contact can cause an allergic skin reaction in sensitive people. It is poisonous for animals.

Spectabilis is Latin (notable, remarkable, worth seeing) meaning 'showy or spectacular'.

The name Lady in the bath arose from the flower's appearance – if it is turned upside down and its pouches are pulled back. It acquired the common name Bleeding heart as the flowers were thought to suggest the appearance of the heart shedding a single drop of blood.

The plant was brought to England from the Far East in the 19th Century by Robert Fortune (1813-1880), the botanist who travelled extensively for the Horticultural Society of London looking for new species.

Medicinally, herbalists used to recommend it for the treatment of menstrual cramps and venereal disease.