

*Dysphania botrys*

[Synonyms : *Ambrina botrys*, *Ambrina foetida*, *Atriplex botrys*, *Botrydium aromaticum*, *Botrydium botrys*, *Botrys aromatica*, *Chenopodium aromaticum*, *Chenopodium botrydium*, *Chenopodium botryoides*, *Chenopodium botrys*, *Chenopodium ilicifolium*, *Chenopodium nepalense*, *Neobotrydium botrys*, *Roubieva botrys*, *Teloxys botrys*, *Vulvaria botrys*]

**JERUSALEM OAK** is a sticky annual. Native from southern Europe to central Asia, it has aromatic oak-like leaves and tiny, fragrant scarlet flowers.

It is also known as Ambrose, Ambrosia (English, German), Ambrosia Jerusalem oak, *Ekmålla* (Swedish), Feather geranium, Hidin-heal, Hindheal, Jerusalem oak goosefoot, Jesuit tea, Jewslly mose, *Merlík hroznový* (Czech), Oak of Jerusalem, Sticky goosefoot, Turnpike geranium, and Worm goosefoot.

The flowers are pollinated by wind.

*Botrys* is Greek (bunch – of grapes, cluster) with reference to the flower clusters.

Authorities have noted the popularity of the plant's scent among the North American Thompson Indians. Apparently they tied it on their clothing in little skin bags and wound it in necklaces.

In contrast the Cherokee tribe appeared to dismiss this attribute in favour of medicinal qualities. For them Jerusalem oak could ease colds and headaches and it also provided a treatment for worms.

The leaves have not only been cooked as a vegetable but have also provided a substitute for tea. The seeds, previously steeped in water and rinsed, can be cooked for food as well or ground as a flour supplement.

The plant was placed amongst linen for its fragrance – and it was also added to the stuffing in cushions and pillows and threaded into bags and baskets.

While the aromatic dried flower spikes have provided material for flower arrangers, the whole plant (dried) has also been used as a moth repellent.

The whole plant is the source of both yellow and green dyes.

Medicinally, herbalists have used the plant to treat catarrh.