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Gloriosa superba

[Synonyms : *Gloriosa carsonii*, *Gloriosa minor*, *Gloriosa rothschildiana*, *Gloriosa simplex*, *Gloriosa virescens*, *Methonica gloriosa*]

CLIMBING LILY is a deciduous climbing, bulbous perennial. Native to tropical Africa and tropical Asia it has large, yellow at their base melting into deep orange and red at the petal tips flowers that are sometimes green-striped.

It is also known as African honeysuckle, *Agnisikhha* (Telugu), *Akkinichilam* (Tamil), *Bishalanguli* (Bengali), Common gloriosa, Creeping lily, Flame lily, *Flammenlilie* (German), *Geelboslelie* (Afrikaans), *Gikwa-kia-nduru* (Kikuyu), *Gloriosa*, *Gloriůza vznešená* (Czech), Glory lily, *Kalappaikizhangu* (Tamil), *Kalgari* (Gujarati), *Kariari* (Punjabi), *Karihari* (Hindi), *Klångbuske* (Swedish), Malabar glory lily, Mozambique lily, *Niyangala* (Singhalese), *Ruhmesblume* (German), *Ruhmeskrone* (German), Senegal lily, *Shakrapushpi* (Sanskrit), Superb lily, Turk's cap, and *Ventonti* (Singhalese).

Warning – the whole plant (especially the tuberous roots) is poisonous and can cause gastrointestinal irritation, abdominal pain, numbness of the mouth, nervous excitement and death.

Climbing lily was a protected species in Cape Province (South Africa) in the 1950s and may well still be today.

Climbing lily's root has been mistaken for those of yam (*Dioscorea*).

Superba is Latin (haughty, exalted, proud) meaning 'superb, splendid, brilliant or magnificent'.

The roots are understood to offer a familiar means of suicide in India – and in Burma (Myanmar) too where they have been a last resort among lovelorn girls especially.

The flower appears to be known more often in Zimbabwe as 'flame lily'. It was an emblem for the Country under the previous Rhodesian administration and often continues in this capacity for Zimbabweans today.

Medicinally, the root has been used in India to treat wind, leprosy, piles, some parasitic skin diseases, scorpion stings and snake bites.