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*Ipomoea pandurata*

[Synonyms : *Convolvulus pandurata*, *Ipomoea pandurata* var. *rubescens*]

**WILD POTATO** is a trailing or slightly climbing, perennial vine. Native to eastern North America it has dark purple-throated, white flowers.

It is also known as American bellbind, Batata, Big-root morning-glory, Bindweed, Hog potato, Man-in-the-earth, Man-in-the-ground, Man-of-the-earth, Man root, *Mecha-meck* (North American Indian), Mechoacan, Morning glory, Pea vine, Potato vine, Scammonroot, Scammony, Scammony root, Wild jalap, Wild jalop, Wild moonflower, Wild potato vine, Wild rhubarb, Wild scammony, Wild sweet-potato, and Wild sweet-potato vine.

The roots can weigh up to 100 lb.

Warning – an overdose can cause serious internal disorders.

*Pandurata* means 'fiddle-shaped'.

The tuberous roots are said to have been one of the favourite foods of some of the North American Indian tribes, including the Cherokee. (The Cherokees also steeped sweet potatoes (*Ipomoea batatas*) in a plant infusion of the wild potato as a repellent for moles and insects.)

For the Iroquois tribe wild potato was highly respected as a powerful tool in witchcraft.

The vine was a source of medicine for one or two North American Indian tribes. It was used by the Cherokee and Iroquois for treating coughs and tuberculosis – and the former also used it as a remedy for asthma. The Creek and Cherokee tribes both employed sweet potato for treating fluid retention and for kidney disorders generally, and the Cherokee also used the vine to treat cholera, some urinary problems and rheumatism. The Iroquois tribe prescribed it for blood ailments, headaches, and stomach and liver problems.