

Ipomoea purpurea

[Synonyms : *Convolvulus major*, *Convolvulus purpureus*, *Ipomoea affinis*, *Ipomoea charetii*, *Ipomoea diversifolia*, *Ipomoea gerrardiana*, *Ipomoea glandulifera*, *Ipomoea hirsutula*, *Ipomoea hispida*, *Ipomoea pilosissima*, *Ipomoea pilosissima* var. *diversifolia*, *Ipomoea purpurea* var. *diversifolia*, *Pharbitis diversifolius*, *Pharbitis hispida*, *Pharbitis nil* var. *diversifolia*, *Pharbitis purpurea*]

MORNING GLORY is a perennial twining vine. Native to tropical America it has pale pinkish centred, purplish-blue, red or white flowers.

It is also known as Bindweed, *Blomman för dagen* (Swedish), *Bold Tragtsnerle* (Danish), *Campainhas* (Portuguese), Common morning glory, *Convolvulus*, *Dagbloem groot* (Dutch), Dawnflower, *Ipomoea*, *Ipomé* (French), *Lilüfar* (Arabic), *Povijnice nachová* (Czech), *Povijník nachový* (Czech), *Prunkwinde* (German), *Purperwinde* (Afrikaans), *Purpurvinda* (Swedish), *Rød Tragtsnerle* (Danish), Tall morning glory, *Trichterwinde* (German), and *Volubilis* (French); and in flower language is said to be a symbol of affectation, affection, extinguished hopes, ‘she loved you’, and ‘transience of life’.

The vine grows contrary to the sun and if forced to progress in the opposite direction will die. The flowers are at their best in the morning and only last for one day.

Warning – the seeds are poisonous and if taken internally can cause hallucination, blurred vision, disorientation, agitation, dilated pupils, stomach-ache, nausea, psychological disturbance and in some cases death.

Purpurea is Latin (purple-coloured) with reference to the flowers.

Morning glory was introduced to Italy from South America, and from there to other countries in Europe. It had certainly reached Britain by 1621 as records of that period include an ecstatic description of the flowers.

On the subject of superstition morning glory was said to be used by witches who believed that the potency of the flower’s magic powers was at its greatest if it had been picked 3 days before a full moon.

During the 1960s there was a slight scare as it was believed that the seeds were poisonous. This has since been confirmed as correct. However a tincture of the flower heads used to be recommended for treating rheumatism, headaches and eye inflammation.

It is the birthday flower for 4th August, and is also associated with September.