

Juniperus sabina

[Synonyms : *Juniperus foetida*, *Sabina officinalis*, *Sabina vulgaris*]

SAVIN is an evergreen shrub (sometimes prostrate, rarely a tree). Native to central and southern Europe, North America and western Asia, it has egg-shaped brownish-purple berry-like fruit.

It is also known as *Borievka netata* (Slovak), *Borievka netatová* (Slovak), *Chvojka klášterská* (Czech), Devil's tree, *Jalovec chvojka* (Czech), Magician's cypress, *Sabine* (French), *Sabino* (Esperanto), *Sadebaum* (German), *Sävenbom* (Swedish), Savine, Savine tops, *Savinier* (French), Savin juniper, Savin tops, Shrubby red cedar, and *Stinkwacholder* (German).

Warning – savin is poisonous and can cause death. It can only be used internally or externally under the supervision of a qualified practitioner. It aggravates the stomach and intestines severely, and can result in blood in the urine. Savin can also cause hallucinations, cramps and death. In Britain it can only be obtained from a registered pharmacist. It can be poisonous for animals.

Sabina is a Latin name for savin.

The plant's effect on the womb and genitals led to its use in various malpractices. This explains some of its common names and also reference to it by the English poet, Abraham Cowley (1618-1667) as 'Fatal Sabina, Nymph of Infamy'.

Although the plant has been used in veterinary medicine for a very long time, not least for horses, its extremely poisonous nature has prevented its widespread use for human beings.

Medicinally, it has been used as an ointment externally to treat blisters, warts and other skin disorders.