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Kerria japonica

[Synonyms : *Corchorus japonicus*, *Rubus japonicus*]

JEW'S MALLOW is a deciduous shrub. Native to temperate eastern Asia (especially China) it has yellow flowers with many short stamens.

It is also known as Bachelor's buttons, Japanese kerria, Japanese rose, *Kéria japonská* (Slovak), Kerria (English, Swedish), and *Zákula japonská* (Slovak).

Japonica means 'of or from Japan'.

A description of jew's mallow by Engelbert Kaempfer (1651-1715) was familiar to authorities in Europe from 1712 but the plant itself was not introduced to Europe until William Kerr (died 1814) sent it home to England from China in 1805. Authorities note that within twenty to thirty years of its arrival there it was a familiar sight in the most humble English cottage garden.

In Japan where it is also cultivated the pith was fashioned into minute buds and flowers as a decoration to float on cups of saké.