

Lablab purpureus

[Synonyms : *Dolichos albus*, *Dolichos benghalensis*, *Dolichos lablab*, *Dolichos lignosus*, *Dolichos niger*, *Dolichos purpureus*, *Dolichos sondanensis*, *Lablab cultratus*, *Lablab lablab*, *Lablab niger*, *Lablab purpurea*, *Lablab purpureus* subsp. *purpureus*, *Lablab vulgaris*, *Lablab vulgaris* var. *albiflorus*, *Vigna aristata*]

HYACINTH BEAN is a deciduous, twining and climbing or trailing vine. Probably native to tropical Africa, it has small pea-like, fragrant, white to purple flowers.

It is also known as *Adavichikkudu* (Telugu), *Ägyptische Fasel* (German), Australian pea, Australian pea vine, *Avarai* (Tamil), *Bátau* (Filipino/Tagalog), *Bonavis* (West Indian), Bonavista bean, Bonavist bean, *Boucousou* (West Indian), *Carmelita* (Spanish), *Dambala* (Singhalese), *Đâu ván* (Vietnamese), *Dolichos*, *Dolichos bean*, *Dólico do Egipto* (Portuguese), *Dolico egiziano* (Italian), *Dolique lablab*, *Dolique d’Egypte* (French), *Dolique lab-lab* (French), Egyptian bean, Egyptian kidney bean, *Fagiolo d’Egitto* (Italian), *Fagiolo del Cairo* (Italian), *Fagiolo egiziano* (Italian), *Faselbohne* (German), Field bean, Fiwi bean, *Frijol caballero* (Spanish), *Frijol de adorno* (Salvadoran), *Fuji mame* (Japanese), *Gallinita* (Mexican), *Gemeine Lablab* (German), *Helmbohne* (German), *Hjelmboenne* (Danish), *Hjelmbonne* (Danish), *Ho-dhambala* (Singhalese), *Hyasinttipapu* (Finnish), Indian bean, Indian butter bean, *Ingen* (Japanese), *Irivija* (Singhalese), Jack bean, *Kacang kara* (Malay), *Kachang jeriji* (Sundanese), *Kara kara* (Malay), *Kekara* (Javanese, Malay), *Kerara* (Javanese, Malay), *Komak* (Dutch, Indonesian), *Lablab* (English, Turkish), *Lablâb* (Arabic), *Lablab bean*, *Lubia* (Arabic), *Lubia bean*, *Motchai* (Tamil), *Njahi* (Kikuyu), *Papapa* (Hawaiian), Papaya bean, *Pe-gyi* (Burmese), *Peng pi dou* (Chinese), *Pois nourrice* (French), Poor man’s bean, *Poroto de Egipto* (Argentine), Purple hyacinth bean, *Que dou* (Chinese), *Quiquaqua* (Venezuelan), *Raaj simii* (Nepalese), *Rajashimbi* (Bengali), *Rou dou* (Chinese), *Sem* (Hindi), Seim bean, *Sem* (Hindi), *Simii* (Nepalese), *Tellachikkudu* (Telugu), Tonga bean, *Thua paep* (Thai), *Thua nang* (Thai), *Urahi* (Assamese), *Urchi* (Assamese), *Uri* (Assamese), and *Urshi* (Assamese)

Warning – the raw seeds can be toxic – a poison that can be destroyed by boiling.

Purpureus is Latin (purple-coloured).

Both the young leaves and beans have been eaten as a fresh vegetable in India for thousands of years. Today they are still consumed there and in west Africa and Malaysia too – and they are also grown for food, in large quantities, in Egypt and the Sudan.

This plant has long been cultivated in Asia (particularly India) for both green manure, and also forage and fodder.

In Kenya baked seeds are used in veterinary medicine for treating lung disease in sheep.

Medicinally, the leaves have been used in Malaysia in poultices for treating some skin disorders, and in some parts of Asia the leaf juice has been used to ease ear ache and treat ear and throat inflammation.