

Lamium album

[Synonyms : *Lamium album* subsp. *album*, *Lamium album* var. *brachyodon*, *Lamium album* subsp. *hyrcanicum*, *Lamium album* var. *parietariifolium*, *Lamium album* var. *roseum*, *Lamium album* subsp. *sempervirens*, *Lamium album* subsp. *transcausicum*, *Lamium album* subsp. *turkestanicum*, *Lamium album* var. *viciosoi*, *Lamium archangelica*, *Lamium barbatum*, *Lamium brachyodon*, *Lamium capitatum*, *Lamium dumeticola*, *Lamium hyrcanicum*, *Lamium niveum*, *Lamium parietariaefolium*, *Lamium parietariifolium*, *Lamium petiolatum*, *Lamium sempervirens*, *Lamium transcausicum*, *Lamium turkestanicum*, *Lamium vulgatum*, *Lamium vulgatum* var. *album*]

WHITE DEAD NETTLE is a perennial. Native to Asia and Europe, it has small off-white flowers.

It is also known as Adam-and-Eve-in-the-bower, Archangel, Bee nettle, *Bienensaug* (German), Blind nettle, Day nettle, Dead nettle, Deaf nettle, Dea nettle, *D'la blianche-ortchie* (Channel Islander-Jersey Norman-French), Dog nettle, *Døvnælde* (Danish), Dumb nettle, Dunch nettle, Dun nettle, *Fehér árvacsalán* (Hungarian), Helmet flower, *Hluchá kopřiva* (Czech), *Hluchavka biela* (Czech, Slovak), *Hluchavka bílá* (Czech), Honey-bee, Honeyflower, Honeysuckle, *Honigblume* (German), *Lamier blanc* (French), *Lamio* (Italian), *Lamio blanka* (Esperanto), *Marddanhadlen Wen* (Welsh), *Mrtvá žihlava* (Czech), Nettle, Nettle flowers, *Odorikosou* (Japanese), *Ortie blanche* (French, French-Canadian), *Ortie morte* (French), *Ortiga muerta roja* (Spanish), *Planá bazilika* (Czech), *Planá kopřiva* (Czech), *Saugblume* (German), Snake's flower, Snowflake, Stingless nettle, Suck-bottle, Sucky sue, *Taubnessel* (German), *Urtiga-branca* (Brazilian, Portuguese), *Valkopeippi* (Finnish), *Vitplister* (Swedish), *Weisse Taubnessel* (German), White archangel, White bee-nettle, White nettle, White sting-nettle, and *Witte dovenetel* (Dutch).

The flowers are pollinated by bees, especially bumble-bees.

Warning – white dead nettle is potentially poisonous for animals (although no recent cases have been recorded in Britain).

White dead nettle has a similar appearance to that of the unrelated stinging nettle *Urtica dioica*. *Album* means 'white' with reference to the flowers.

It was suggested in an old calendar that the common names such as Archangel probably came into being during a period when the plant first flowered on 8th May, St Michael's Day ie. the celebration of the Archangel Michael. Subsequent records have pointed out that since that old calendar was published the flowering was about 11 days later. (Authorities have noted that the date's precision for the flower's appearance could not be relied upon over time as, for instance, climatic conditions can vary.)

The Roman natural historian, Pliny the Elder (23-79), contended that the plant's smell was unpleasant enough to deter snakes from the surrounding area.

In England country lads used to make whistles out of the stems.

In Sweden the young Spring leaves used to be boiled and eaten as a vegetable while in England, according to John Gerard (1545-1612), the English barber-surgeon and herbalist (the latter as a charlatan for many authorities), the flowers were often baked in sugar. Children were also known to have sucked the flowers for the sweet nectar.

White dead nettle has been used in veterinary medicine by pigeon breeders. Medicinally, herbalists used a decoction of the plant primarily to stop internal haemorrhages but also prescribed it for some female ailments, and in the treatment of some forms of tuberculosis too. It was applied externally for treating gout, sciatica and muscular pains, as well as for healing burns, bruises and wounds. Today white dead nettle is used in homoeopathy.