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Lathyrus aphaca

[Synonyms : *Lathyrus affinis*, *Lathyrus polyanthus*, *Lathyrus pseudoaphaca*]

YELLOW VETCHLING is an annual. Native from Europe (including Britain) and the Mediterranean to Afghanistan, it has small yellow flowers.

It is also known as *Hrachor* (Slovak), *Hrachor bezlistý* (Czech), *Hrachor pačočkový* (Czech), *Jangli-matar* (Bengali, Hindi), *Korvanätkelmä* (Finnish), *Porvlina* (Maltese), *Ranken-Platterbse* (German), *Rawan* (Punjabi), *Spjutvial* (Swedish), Yellow flowered vetchling, Yellow pea, and *Ytbyesen Felen* (Welsh).

Warning – some authorities note potentially poisonous characteristics, particularly in the ripe seeds.

Aphaca is the name of a Phoenician town, probably called Afka later when under the rule of ancient Syria and known today as Afqa in Lebanon.

Situated in the Lebanese mountains about 35 miles from Beirut Afqa not only boasts the ruins of a temple of Astarte, the Phoenician goddess of love (Venus for the Romans and Aphrodite for the Greeks) but also the source of the Adonis River, known now as Nahr Ibrahim. The latter turns red after the torrential Springtime rains as it carries the dislodged red clay down from the mountains and in Greek and Roman times it used to be said that this was the blood of the young Adonis when he was fatally wounded during a wild boar hunt.