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Ligusticum scoticum

[Synonyms : *Haloscias scothicum*]

SCOTS LOVAGE is a perennial. Native to the sub-Arctic Atlantic coastline (and occasionally inland) of North America and Europe, it has greenish-white or pink-flushed flowers.

It is also known as Alexanders, Lovage, Scotch lovage, Scottish licorice root, Scottish lovage, Sea lovage, Sea parsley, Shemis, *Shunis* (Irish Gaelic and Scots Gaelic), *Strandfloka* (Swedish), *Strandloka* (Swedish), *Strandsticka* (Swedish), and *Suolaputki* (Finnish).

Warning – it can cause an allergic reaction on some sensitive skins ie. photosensitivity.

Scoticum means ‘of or from Scotland’.

Some authorities believe that the name of this species is the root of a related genus *Levisticum*.

The raw peeled stem was eaten by North American Indians – and European fishermen and sailors suffering from scurvy consumed it as a cure after long voyages.

Scots lovage was particularly collected in Scotland where it used to be grown much like celery (*Apium graveolens* var. *dulce*) and was used in cooking eg. soups and stews. Raw leafstalks and young shoots, although more pungent, have a taste reminiscent of celery.

On the Isle of Skye off the north coast of Scotland calves were once purged with an infusion of the leaves mixed in whey.

Medicinally, the seeds were used in the past as an aromatic flavouring to disguise the taste of medicine and they were also employed in the treatment of rheumatism.