

You are viewing one of thousands of biographies – click below for more, including Search box and access to Plant associated organisations.

[Plant Biographies](#)

[Bibliography](#)

Lithospermum officinale

COMMON GROMWELL is a perennial. Native to Europe and Asia it has tiny, yellowish or greenish white flowers.

It is also known as *Aljofar* (Portuguese), *Echter Steinsame* (German), European gromwell, European stoneseed, *Gebräuchlicher Steinsame* (German), Graymile, *Grémil* (French), Grey millet, Gromwell, Grummel, *Kamejka lékařská* (Czech), Lichwale, Little mite, *Lubis firmun* (Hindi), Lychwale, *Maenhad Meddygol* (Welsh), Pearl plant, *Stenfrö* (Swedish), and Stony-hard.

Officinale means ‘of the shop (usually the apothecary’s or herbalist’s)’. Certain plants used for medicinal purposes, whether of actual or legendary value, were kept readily available and acquired this name.

‘Croatian tea’ is made by infusing common gromwell’s leaves.

After the plant had come to the attention of some North American Indian tribes the Iroquois Indians absorbed it into their medicinal repertoire and used the dried seeds to treat fluid retention in children.

Common gromwell is one of the plants that attracted the attentions of the Doctrine of Signatures. For those who subscribed to the Doctrine’s dogma the seeds’ stony in appearance suggested their value in the treatment of kidney stones.

Medicinally, herbalists (particularly in Britain in the 16th and 17th Centuries) used the fruit to get rid of kidney stones, while in Spain the leaves have been used as a sedative. Modern research has included the examination of common gromwell for its contraceptive qualities.