

*Lycopodium annotinum*

[Synonyms : *Lepidotis annotina*, *Lycopodium annotinum* var. *acrifolium*, *Lycopodium annotinum* var. *alpestre*, *Lycopodium annotinum* var. *pungens*, *Lycopodium dubium*, *Lycopodium juniperfolium*]

**INTERRUPTED CLUBMOSS** is a trailing evergreen perennial. Native to the Alps in southern Europe, to Norway and to northern North America, it has stems coated in tiny spiny-tipped, overlapping green leaves and a few yellow-scaled cones.

It is also known as *Bärlapp* (German), *Bergbärlapp* (German), Bristly clubmoss, *Femradet ulvefod* (Danish), *Lus a' bhalgair* (Scots Gaelic), *Plavuň pučivá* (Czech), *Plavúň pučivý* (Slovak), *Revlummer* (Swedish), *Riidenlieko* (Finnish), Stiff clubmoss, Stiff ground-pine, and *Zaun-Wicke* (German).

Warning – with the exception of the spores (the fine powder) the whole plant is poisonous. *Annotinum* is Latin (last year's) meaning 'one year old or of the previous year' with reference to the plant's distinct yearly growths.

For the Shuswap North American Indians the plant provided a fertiliser and it was also mixed with clay to cement logs together.

Some of the Cree tribe seem to have been most ingenious as they used the plant as a kind of sieve to separate fish eggs from surrounding membrane.

Nosebleeds and bleeding wounds were sometimes stemmed by some North American Indian tribes with the help of the spore powder.

The fine light powder (the spores) was once used in scientific measurements of vibration. In more dramatic vein it used to be employed too for artificial stage lighting – as well as as baby powder and the inflammable agent for flash photography.

Medicinally, herbalists once used the spore powder for dusting on sores and wounds. It also provided a lubricant on suppositories and a coating on pills.