

Lysimachia vulgaris

[Synonyms : *Lysimachia davurica*]

YELLOW LOOSESTRIFE is a perennial. Native to Asia and Europe it has small, golden flowers.

It is also known as *Čerkáč obyčajný* (Slovak), Common loosestrife, Common wild loosestrife, *Felberich* (German), Garden loosestrife, Garden yellow loosestrife, *Gemeiner Gilbweiderich* (German), *Gewöhnlicher Gilbweiderich* (German), *Gewöhnlicher Lysimachie* (German), Golden loosestrife, Golden willowherb, *Goldfelberich* (German), Herb willow, *Lisimachia* (Italian), *Lisimaquia* (Portuguese), Loosestrife, *Lysimaquia amarilla* (Spanish), *Lysimaque* (French), *Lysimaque vulgaire* (French), *Mazza d'oro* (Italian), *Ranta-alpi* (Finnish), *Strandlysing* (Swedish), *Trewynyn* (Welsh), *Vanlig lysing* (Swedish), *Videört* (Swedish), *Vrbina obecná* (Czech), Wild loosestrife, Willowherb, Willow-wort, Wood pimpernel, Yellow pimpernel, Yellow rocket, Yellow saugh, and Yellow willowherb; and in flower language is said to be a symbol of pretension.

Vulgaris means 'common'.

It was believed that oxen were easier to handle in the plough if yellow loosestrife was placed under the yoke (probably because flies and insects can be allergic to it). Unsettled horses used to be treated similarly.

In Europe yellow loosestrife had certainly established a high reputation as a fly repellent by the 16th Century and in the following Century the English physician, Nicholas Culpeper (1616-1654) known today especially for his writings on herbs that were later to form the basis for Western herbalism in English-speaking countries, wrote of the smoke rising over marsh and fen from the fires of the plant lit to keep flies and gnats at bay.

A yellow dye can be obtained from the plant.

Medicinally, the plant was used by herbalists (and still can be today) to stem bleeding (whether oral, nasal or from open wounds), treat fever and ease diarrhoea. It was also used as a gargle and an antiseptic wash.