

Malva rotundifolia

[Synonyms : *Malva lignescens*, *Malva neglecta*, *Malva pusilla*, *Malva vulgaris*]

SMALL MALLOW is a trailing annual, biennial or perennial. Native to Europe and western Asia it has tiny, deep pink veined, pale purplish-pink or whitish flowers.

It is also known as Blue mallow, Buttonwood, Button weed, Cheeseflower, Cheese plant, Cheeses, Cheesetts, Common mallow, Country mallow, Doll cheeses, Dwarf mallow, Dutch cheese, Fairy cheese, *Hocys Bychan* (Welsh), *Khubasi* (Hindi), *Kleine Malve* (German), Low mallow, Malice, Mallow, *Malva* (Spanish), Pancake plant, Pellas, Round-leaved mallow, Running mallow, *Skär kattost* (Swedish), *Sléz nizounký* (Czech), *Sléz nizučký* (Slovak), Small flowered mallow, *Trikalamalli* (Telugu), and *Wegmalve* (German).

Rotundifolia is Latin *rotunda* (round, circular) and *-folia* (leaved) components meaning 'rounded-leaved'.

Both the ancient Greeks and the Romans cooked small mallow as spinach (*Spinacia oleracea*), and in modern times in Egypt the leaves have been used as a culinary flavouring. Further west in France and Italy the young shoots have provided a salad vegetable.

This was one of the species that was used in a recorded experiment to test dormancy. It was found that seeds that had been sealed in a canister for 100 years germinated when they were released.

Medicinally, the leaves have been used in India to treat piles. The seeds have been employed locally in internal remedies for bronchitis, coughs and piles and applied externally for skin disorders