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*Menispermum canadense*

[Synonyms : *Menispermum angulata*, *Menispermum similacinum*]

**YELLOW PARILLA** is a deciduous climbing shrub. Native to eastern North America it has tiny white or greenish-yellow flowers with long stamens.

It is also known as American sarsaparilla, *Amerikanischer Mondsame* (German), *Amerikansk månfröranka* (Swedish), Canada moonseed, Canadian moonseed, Common moonseed, *Hakakut* (Pawnee North American Indian), *Ingthahe-hazi-i-ta* (Omaha and Ponca North American Indian), *Kanadischer Mondsame* (German), *Månfröranka* (Swedish), Maple vine, Moon creeper, Moonseed, Moonseed sarsaparilla, Safarilla, Sarsaparilla, Sasfriller, Texas moonseed, Texas sarsaparilla, Vine-maple, *Wanaghi-haz* (Winnebago North American Indian), and Yellow sarsaparilla.

Warning – yellow parilla should only be used under the supervision of a qualified practitioner. The root and fruit are poisonous and can cause nausea, thirst, headaches, wind, aching extremities, vomiting, disturbed sleep, diarrhoea, convulsions and death. The grape-like fruit have been the cause of children's deaths.

Yellow parilla can be confused with fruit (and leaves superficially) of the grape (vine, *Vitis*). *Canadense* means 'of or from Canada or north-eastern North America'.

North American Indian tribes employed the plant's medicinal qualities. While some of the Delaware tribe applied it to chronic sores, the Cherokee took it both as a laxative and to ease diarrhoea, and they also used it to treat venereal disease, some female problems and skin diseases.

In Britain yellow parilla has been added to beer.

Medicinally, it has been recommended by herbalists in treating intestinal ailments, tuberculosis, syphilis, gout and rheumatism. It has also provided a tonic.