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Obolaria virginica

PENNYWORT is a perennial. Native to eastern North America it has dull white or purplish flowers framed by prominent, bronzy-green, petal-like leaves (bracts).

It is also known as American pennywort, Penny-leaf, and Virginia pennywort.

Virginica means 'of or from Virginia (United States)' which itself was named after the English 'Virgin Queen' Elizabeth I (1533-1603).

The plant was a source of medicine for a few North American Indian tribes. On the one hand the Cherokee Indians took it internally to treat coughs, colds and wind (and also used it to cause sweating) and on the other it was applied externally by the Choctaw tribe to cuts and bruises.