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Opopanax chironium

OPOPONAX is a perennial. Native to the Mediterranean it has yellowish flowers.

It is also known as *Jaweshi* (Bengali), *Juvashur* (Hindi), and Opopanax.

The fleshy yellowish roots yield a resin.

Chironium honours the centaur, Chiron, son of the Titan Cronos (a Greek harvest deity) and the Greek nymph Philyra, who taught the uses of plants.

It is said that opopanax was one of the at least 36 ingredients used by Mithridates (c.132-63 BC), the 1st Century King of Pontus (northern Turkey), in a poison antidote (known as Antidotum Mithradaticum or Theriac) which he took daily to acquire an overall immunity – an important consideration if it is remembered that he gained his position of power by poisoning his opposition.

Today the resin is used by the perfumery industry.

Medicinally, the resin (from the roots) used to be recommended for the treatment of period problems and asthma.