

Osmorhiza longistylis

[Synonyms : *Myrrhis longistylis*, *Osmorhiza aristata* var. *longistylis*, *Osmorhiza longistylis* var. *brachycoma*, *Osmorhiza longistylis* var. *imbarbata*, *Osmorhiza longistylis* var. *longistylis*, *Osmorhiza longistylis* var. *villicaulis*, *Washingtonia longistylis*]

AMERICAN SWEET CICELY is a perennial. Native to North America it has small white flowers.

It is also known as Anise root, *Cha-pezhuta* (Dakota North American Indian), Cicely, Cicely root, *Kahtstaraha* (Pawnee North American Indian), Longstyle sweetroot, Paregoric root, *Shaga-maka* (Omaha and Ponca North American Indian), Sicily root, Smooth cicely, Smoother sweet cicely, Smooth sweet cicely, Sweet anise, Sweet chervil, Sweet cicely, Sweet jarvil, Sweet jowil, and Sweet myrrh.

The non-poisonous roots of American sweet cicely can be confused with those of the equally non-poisonous horseradish (*Armoracia rusticana*), turnip (*Brassica rapa*), garden radish (*Raphanus sativus*), and parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*), and also the poisonous roots of monk's-hood (*Aconitum napellus*), of beaver poison (*Cicuta maculata*), of fool's parsley (*Aethusa cynapium*), of hemlock water-dropwort (*Oenanthe crocata*), of hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), of pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*), and of white bryony (*Bryonia dioica*).

Longistylis is derived from Latin *longi*- (long) and Greek *stylo*- (pillar, pole) components meaning 'with long styles (part of the female reproductive organ in the flower)'.

The roots are said to be popular with horses – so much so in fact that both the Omaha and Ponca North American tribes used it to catch them, and the Potawatomi fattened their ponies by adding it to their animals' feed. Root was also used by the Meskwaki as a remedy for distemper in horses, and the Chippewa applied a root decoction to dogs' noses as a wash to enhance their scenting powers.

The Omaha North American Indians used the roots in poultices to treat boils, and the Winnebago used these poultices for wounds. A root decoction was taken by both the Pawnee and Meskwaki tribes as a tonic. Chippewa Indians used the root for treating some female disorders, the Cheyenne tribe turned to it for some kidney ailments, and some of the Chippewa also chose it for easing sore throats. Stomach upsets were often treated with it by both the Cheyenne and Potawatomi Indians, and the latter and the Meskwaki used it to treat some eye problems.

Children used to nibble the spicy roots they dug up locally.