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Parietaria officinalis

[Synonyms : *Parietaria erecta*, *Parietaria judaica*]

LICHWORT is a shrub. Native to central and southern Europe it has small, greenish flowers with yellow stamens.

It is also known as *Aufrechtes Glaskraut* (German), *Billie beattie*, *Blidnässla* (Swedish), *Drnavec lékařský* (Czech), *Eastern pellitory-of-the-wall*, *Erba da vetro* (Italian), *Glaskraut* (German), *Glaskruid* (Dutch), *Hammerwort*, *Kosia* (Greek), *Muuriyrtti* (Finnish), *Noc-i-Dyien* (Polish), *Pariétaire* (French), *Parietaria* (English, Italian), *Parietario oficina* (Esperanto), *Parietary*, *Pellitory*, *Pellitory-of-the-wall*, *Sneezewort*, *Upright pellitory*, *Väggört* (Swedish), *Vanlig väggört* (Swedish), *Wallwort*, and *Yerba del muro* (Spanish).

When the flowers are touched the stamen stalks spring upwards to release their pollen.

Officinalis means ‘of the shop (usually the apothecary’s or herbalist’s)’. Certain plants used for medicinal purposes, whether of actual or legendary value, were kept readily available and acquired this name.

In Europe lichwort was an ingredient in early face creams.

Dried powdered leaves provided an ingredient for snuffs and ‘sneezing’ mixtures.

This is one of the plants on which partridges feed.

Lichwort has been yet another of the myriad ingredients tried in remedies for baldness..

Medicinally, European herbalists have used the plant to treat bladder and kidney disorders, fluid retention and skin blemishes – and is an ingredient in some proprietary medicines.