

Pergularia daemia

[Synonyms : *Asclepias daemia*, *Daemia extensa*, *Pergularia extensa*]

PERGULARIA (English, Gujarati) is a hairy twining vine. Native from South Africa to Arabia, India and Sri Lanka, it has small, sometimes mauve-tinged, scentless pale greenish-yellow flowers.

It is also known as *Chagulbati* (Bengali), *Chamardudhi* (Gujarati), *Dhudheli* (Gujarati), *Dushtupatige* (Telugu), *Karial* (Punjabi), *Kponkeki* (Ewe), *Meda-hangu* (Sanskrit), *Nsurogya* (Twi), *Ullamani* (Tamil), *Utaran* (Marathi), *Utran* (Hindi), *Utranjutuka* (Hindi), *Veliparatti* (Malayalam), *Velipparuthy* (Malayalam), *Watcutto* (Nigerian), and *Yugaphala* (Sanskrit).

The plant's milky sap (latex) is fetid-smelling.

Daemia is an Arabic name for this plant.

Locally the plant has been used occasionally for flavouring food and young leafshoots are eaten like spinach (*Spinacia oleracea*).

In Ghana the hairy stems' fire resistant properties are harnessed as they are used as binding in situations that might be exposed to fire.

Apparently in Arabia hides have been smeared with the sap and then buried in the ground to remove the hair.

The leaves have had a veterinary application in Ghana as a remedy for young turkeys suffering from diarrhoea – and leaf juice has been used in India to treat eye problems in cattle.

Medicinally, *pergularia* has been used locally for treating worms, and period and other female disorders – and the sap (or a leaf poultice) has been applied to boils. Ghanaian medicine has recommended that roasted stems be chewed to ease bronchitis and coughs (Nigerians have used the leaves and bark) and some Ghanaian women have taken a leaf soup after childbirth. Local Nigerian medicine also turns to the leaves and stem bark for a treatment to ease rheumatic pain.