

Persicaria amphibia

[Synonyms : *Polygonum amphibium*, *Polygonum amphibium* var. *coccineum*, *Polygonum amphibium* var. *emersum*, *Polygonum amphibium* var. *pratincola*, *Polygonum amphibium* var. *terrestre*, *Polygonum coccinea*, *Polygonum laetevirens*, *Polygonum muhlenbergii*, *Polygonum muhlenbergii* var. *terrestre*, *Polygonum platensis*, *Polygonum pschrophila*, *Polygonum subcoriacea*]

AMPHIBIOUS BISTORT is a floating semi-aquatic perennial. Native to northern temperate regions it has tiny, sweetly fragrant, pink or red flowers with long stamens.

It is also known as Amphibious knotweed, Amphibious persicaria, 'Assâ er râ' î. (Arabic), *Canwraidd Goch* (Welsh), *Çoban dayaghi* (Turkish), *Çoban deghinaghi* (Turkish), *Courage* (Channel Islander-Guernsey), Devil's shoe string, *Flöhkraut* (German), *Grodpilört* (Swedish), Ground willow, Heart's ease, *Knöterich* (German), Lady's-thumb, *Land-Wasser-Knöterich* (German), *Liang qi liao* (Chinese), Longroot smartweed, *Persicaire amphibie* (French), *Persicaria anfibia* (Italian, Spanish), *Persicária-de-água* (Portuguese), *Polígono anfíbio* (Spanish), *Rdesno obojživelné* (Czech), *Rdest ziemnowodny* (Polish), Red shanks, *Renouée amphibie* (French), *Renouée aquatique* (French), *Sumpf-Knöterich* (German), *Sumphirse* (Danish), Swamp knotweed, *Tian liao* (Chinese), *Vand-Pileurt* (Danish), *Vass-slirekne* (Norwegian), *Vattenpilört* (Swedish), *Veenwortel* (Dutch), *Vesi-kirburohi* (Estonian), *Vesitatar* (Finnish), *Wasser-Knöterich* (German), Water buckwheat, Water knotweed, Water persicaria, Water smartweed, *Watersmerte* (Dutch), *Waterwilg* (Dutch), Willow grass, and Willow weed.

The stems (which can reach as much as 20 ft. long) are floating or submerged. The leaves floating on the water are longer than those on the terrestrial plant.

In both Canada and the United States amphibious bistort has been declared an invasive weed. *Amphibia* means 'suited to or adapted for growing in water and on land'.

The North American Indian Thompson tribe are said to have caught trout using the flowers as bait.

Some of the North American Indians used the plant in their medicine chests. The Okanagan-Colville are said to have taken the raw root (or an infusion of it) to ease colds, while some of the Cree tribe applied a fresh root poultice to oral blisters.

This is an extremely popular plant in the wild with man and beast. It is much appreciated by fishermen for providing shelter for animals upon which the fish they hope to catch feed (in effect it becomes a fishes' larder). It is also claimed that it forms a quarter of the diet of some of Canada's common songbirds and waterfowl, including various cardinals, ducks and sparrows, as well as Canada geese.