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*Phyteuma scheuchzeri*

[Synonyms : *Phyteuma charmelioides*, *Phyteuma corniculatum*]

**OXFORD RAMPION** is a semi-evergreen perennial. Native to the European Alps it has small, thistle-like heads of pale to dark blue flowers.

It is also known as Horned rampion, and *Hornrapunkel* (Swedish).

*Scheuchzeri* commemorates a Swiss physician, natural historian and prolific writer, Johann Jakob Scheuchzer (1672-1733) who is considered by many authorities to be the founder of palaeobotany (authorities note especially his *Herbarium diluvianum* was still a definitive work at the end of the 1800s) and European palaeontology. He corresponded with peers on geology, geophysics, mathematics, medicine and natural sciences, and travelled extensively, particularly in Germany and Switzerland. Apparently his fossil collection begun in 1690 gave him wide standing with other scholars during his lifetime. He published a detailed map considered remarkable then of Swiss features eg. rivers and lakes, and this and his geological studies of the Swiss Alps must have contributed to his recognition there today in the names of two mountains, Scheuchzerhorn and Schechzerjoch.

According to some records the plant was once prized as an aphrodisiac.