

Plectranthus amboinicus

[Synonyms : *Coleus amboinicus*, *Coleus aromaticus*, *Coleus crassifolius*]

MEXICAN MINT is an evergreen perennial. Native to southern tropical Africa it has spurred, lilac, mauve or white flowers.

It is also known as *Coléus d’Afrique* (French), Country borage, *Cubanischer Oregano* (German), Cuban oregano, *Daun bangun-bangun* (Malay), *Daun kambing* (Indonesian, Malay), *Daun kucing* (Indonesian, Malay), French thyme, Indian borage, Indian mint, *Jamaican-Thymian* (German), *Kaloni* (Tongan), *Koreusu anboinikus* (Japanese), *Kuuban oregano* (Japanese), Mexican oregano, *Orégano* (Spanish), *Orégano de la tierra* (Cuban, Spanish), *Orégano francés* (Cuban, Spanish), *Oréganon* (Cuban, Spanish), *Orégano poleo* (Dominican Republican, Spanish), *Oreille* (French), *Pasiole* (Niuean, Tongan), *Plectranthus aromatique* (French), *Plektrantus aromatnyi* (Russian), Soup mint, Spanish thyme, *Tan day la* (Vietnamese), Vick’s plant, Wild oregano, *Yin du bo he* (Chinese), and *Zuo shou xiang* (Chinese).

The small and succulent white-edged, green leaves are strongly aromatic.

Mexican mint has become invasive in the Virgin Islands in the Caribbean.

Amboinicus means ‘of or from Ambon (or Amboina), the name of both the island and the capital of the Indonesian Spice Islands in the Maluku island group’.

In Asia and the Caribbean fleshy stemmed mexican mint is used as a flavouring in meat and fish dishes and is also eaten as a vegetable.

Authorities on south-eastern Asia view the perennial primarily of medicinal value in that region and consider its food flavouring qualities of secondary importance.

Medicinally, the plant has been used in local treatments in Indo-China (the south-eastern Asian mainland peninsular), Indonesia and the Philippines for asthma, bronchitis, bad coughs, burns, sores and insect stings