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Polygonum punctatum

[Synonyms : *Persicaria punctata*, *Polygonum acre*, *Polygonum epilobioides*, *Polygonum hydropiperoides*, *Polygonum punctatum* var. *aquatile*]

WATER SMARTWEED is an annual. Native to North America it has pink or white flowers. It is also known as Dotted smartweed, Knotweed, *Satbalon* (Punjabi), Snake-weed, Turkey troop, Water-pepper, and Wild water-pepper.

Warning – its acrid juice can irritate the skin.

Punctatum is derived from Latin *punctati*- (spotted).

In North America records show that the plant was used by one or two Indian tribes as part of their medicinal repertoire. It was an ingredient in a compound prepared by the Iroquois for treating some period difficulties. Another compound which included it was taken by the Chippewa tribe for stomach pain, and Houma Indians took a root decoction to ease painful joints.

Medicinally, in India the leaves have been applied to swellings.