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*Proboscidea louisianica*

[Synonyms : *Martynia louisiana*, *Martynia proboscidea*, *Proboscidea jussieui*, *Proboscidea louisiana*, *Proboscidea proboscidea*]

**UNICORN PLANT** is an annual. Native to south-western North America it has fragrant pink flowers with yellow stamens and yellow and purple-spotted insides.

It is also known as *Bockhorn* (Swedish), Cockle horn, Common devil's claw, Common unicorn plant, Cuckold's horn, Devil's claw, Devil's darning needle, Devil's horn, Double claw, Elephant's trunk, *Gemshorn* (Swedish), Goat's horn, Martinoe, Martynia, Mouse-bur, Pickled rats, Pope's nose, Proboscis flower, Purple-flowered devil's claw, Ram's horn, and Toe nails.

Warning – the long-hooked green fruit can get in sheep's eyes, can clamp their mouths and can hinder sheep shearing.

*Louisianica* means 'of or from Louisiana (USA)'.

Local North American Indian tribes including the Kawaiisu and Panamint have used the innermost layer of the fruit wall for basketry to make dark-coloured or black designs – and the Shoshoni used the dried fruit pods to obtain a black dye.

The young fruit provide a commercial ingredient for pickles.

The unicorn plant is not free of superstitious associations. In the Middle East especially in Iraq there are some mothers who will hang the hooked fruit round their baby's neck like an amulet as a protection from evil.