

*Ranunculus flammula*

[Synonyms : *Ranunculus flammea*, *Ranunculus flammula* var. *ovalis*, *Ranunculus flammula* var. *samolifolius*, *Ranunculus scoticus*]

**LESSER SPEARWORT** is a perennial. Native to Europe (including Britain) it has small light golden yellow flowers.

It is also known as *Ältgräs* (Swedish), *Ältranunkel* (Swedish), Bachelor's buttons, Banewort, *Brennender Hahnenfuss* (German), Burning cock foot, Butter and cheese, Butterbump, Butterchurn, Buttercreese, Butter-daisy, Butter flower, Butterplate, Butter rose, Caltrops, Celandine, Cowgrass, Cowslip, Crain, Crazy, Crazy bet, Crazyweed, Creeping spearwort, Crowfoot, Crowtoe, Dalecup, Dellcup, Dewcup, Dillcup, *Douve* (Channel Islander-Guernsey), *Egelboterbloem* (Dutch), Fairies' basins, Gilcup, Gildcup, Giltycup, Glennies, Gold balls, Goldcrap, Goldencup, Golden knop, Goldweed, Goldy, Golland, Goosetongue, Greater creeping spearwort, *Iskerník plamenný* (Slovak), *Jaskier plomiennik* (Polish), Kingcup, King's clover, King's cob, Lawyerweed, *Llafnlys Bach* (Welsh), *Maillettes* (Channel Islander-Jersey Norman-French), Marybuds, Maybuds, *Ojaleinikki* (Finnish), Old man's buttons, Paigles, *Pryskyřník plamének* (Czech), *Renoncule flammette* (French), *Renoncule petite douve* (French), Sitsicker, Snake's tongue, Soldier buttons, Spearwort, Teacups, Water buttercup, Wilfire, Yellow caul, Yellow crane, Yellow creams, Yellow crees, Yellowcup, and Yellow gollan.

The flowers are pollinated by small bees and flies.

Warning – the sap in the plant can be poisonous particularly for sheep and cattle.

*Flammula* is derived from an old name for the plant or from Latin *flamma* (flame, blaze, blazing fire) meaning 'little flame' with reference perhaps to a burning taste.

Medicinally, the plant has been used for several hundred years at least. In Scotland they once raised blisters by applying bruised leaves (in one or more limpet shells) to the affected part. A tincture has also been used to cure ulcers.