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Rhinacanthus nasutus

[Synonyms : *Dianthera paniculata*, *Ecbolium dichotomum*, *Justicia nasuta*, *Pseuderanthemum connatum*, *Rhinacanthus communis*, *Rhinacanthus osmospermus*]

RINGWORM ROOT is a tropical shrub. Native to India, East Africa, Madagascar, Sri Lanka and continental south-eastern Asia, it has small hairy groups of cream, yellowish or white flowers with minute brownish dots near the base and small velvety capsular fruit.

It is also known as *Anitia* (Myanmar), *Bai he ling zhi* (Chinese), *Dadmari* (Konkani), Dainty spurs, *Daun burung* (Malay), *Doddapatike* (Kannada), *Gajkarni* (Marathi), *Htaw-la-bat* (Myanmar), *Juhipaani* (Hindi), *Juipana* (Bengali), *Kwaaduko* (Ashanti), *Nagamalle* (Telugu), *Nagamalli* (Tamil), *Nagamallige* (Kannada), *Nagamulla* (Malayalam), *Nakamalli* (Tamil), *Nakamallikai* (Tamil), *Pajarito* (Spanish), *Palakjuhi* (Hindi, Urdu), *Pulukkolli* (Malayalam), *Puzhukkolli* (Malayalam), *Rhinacanthus*, Snake jasmine, *Tagak-tagak* (Tagalog), *Tarebak* (Sundanese), *Thong khan chang* (Thai), *Uragamalli* (Tamil), Wild white buckwheat, *Yaa man Kai* (Thai), *Yudhikaparni* (Sanskrit), and *Yuthikaparni* (Sanskrit).

The flowers are said to appear once in seven years.

Nasutus is derived from Latin *nasi-* (nose) meaning ‘large nosed’.

In Burma the leaves have been used in shampoo.

The shrub has been cultivated to counter soil erosion and as hedging in Indonesian Java.

Medicinally, in south-eastern Asia (especially China and India), leaves, seeds and roots have been used by herbalists to treat wounds and skin disorders, including ringworm. In some parts of India the roots (boiled in milk) have provided both an aphrodisiac (used particularly by Hindu herbalists) and a treatment for snakebite.