

*Rudbeckia laciniata*

[Synonyms : *Helianthus laciniatus*, *Rudbeckia ampla*]

**TALL CONEFLOWER** is a perennial. Native to North America it has backward-pointing yellow flowers each with a prominent brown centre.

It is also known as Black-eyed Susan, Cone disk, Cone-flower, Cut leaf coneflower, Golden glow, Green-headed coneflower, *Höstrudbeckia* (Swedish), Rudbeckia, *Rudbekia strapatá* (Slovak), *Syyspäivänhattu* (Finnish), Thimbleweed, and *Ťřapatka dřípatá* (Czech); and in flower language it is said to be a symbol of impartiality.

Warning – it is alleged that tall coneflower can be poisonous for some animals.

*Laciniata* is derived from Latin *lacer* (torn, mangled) meaning ‘fringed or very deeply cut, torn or slashed into narrow divisions’.

The plant provided food for one or two North American Indian tribes. Some of the Keresan ate the young stems as celery (*Apium graveolens* var. *dulce*) would be today, but records suggest that the Cherokee found it to be especially versatile as a culinary ingredient. They prepared young shoots and leaves as vegetables in various ways including hot salad and as a boiled or fried dish, and they also preserved them for Winter food.

As a source of medicine tall coneflower seems to have been familiar to several North American tribes including the Chippewa who not only used it on themselves to ease indigestion or assist in healing burns but also gave it to their horses as a stimulant.

Tall coneflower is believed to have been introduced to Europe in the 1630s (probably Paris first) and certainly from Paris it crossed the Channel to Britain.

The familiar garden variety known as ‘Golden glow’ is an offspring of this species.

Medicinally, herbalists have used it to treat kidney and urinary disorders.