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*Salicornia europaea*

[Synonyms : *Salicornia brachystachya*, *Salicornia herbacea*, *Salicornia ramosissima*, *Salicornia stricta*]

**GLASSWORT** is a succulent annual or biennial. Native to Europe it has very tiny greenish flowers.

It is also known as Chicken claws, Chicken toes, Common glasswort, Crab grass, English seagrass, Frog grass, *Gemeiner Queller* (German), *Glaskraut* (German), *Glasört* (Swedish), *Glasschmalz* (German), Jointed glasswort, *Llyrllys* (Welsh), Marsh samphire, Pickie plant, Pickle plant, Pigeon-foot, *Salicorne d'europa* (French), Saltwort, Samphire, Sandforth, Sanfer, *Sans-souiro* (French), Sea asparagus, Sea grass, *Slanorožec evropský* (Czech), Slender glasswort, and Slender samphire.

*Europaea* means 'of or from Europe'.

Glass manufacture in Britain once involved the use of glasswort which itself had superseded barilla (or prickly saltwort, *Salsola kali*) that had had to be imported from North Africa and southern Europe. The soda ash extracted from glasswort was also used to make soap.

Cattle relish its taste because of the saltiness.

The tender young shoots were pickled in malt vinegar for human consumption, as well as being eaten raw or as a cooked vegetable. During the 1980s there was renewed interest in it and glasswort could be bought in local English markets and fishmongers. It was even served as a delicacy at the wedding of Prince Charles (1948-) and Diana, Princess of Wales (1961-1997) in August 1981. But increasing fashionability and commercial enthusiasm started to threaten the crop in some areas (such as that around King's Lynn in East Anglia) to the extent that in 1991 anybody harvesting glasswort on private property without prior permission risked/risks civil prosecution under the English Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

In the Netherlands it has been one of the plants which has been cultivated on their particularly vulnerable coastline to bind and stabilise the soil.