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Saxifraga

Saxifragaceae

Saxifraga is derived from Latin *saxum* (rock, large stone, rock fragment) and *frango* (to break, break in pieces, shatter) components with reference to many species' enjoyment of crevices in rocks, or their medicinal use for breaking up bladder and kidney stones. A species in this genus was one of the at least 36 ingredients used by Mithridates (c.132-63 BC), the 1st Century King of Pontus (northern Turkey), in a poison antidote (known as Antidotum Mithridaticum or Theriac) which he took daily to acquire an overall immunity – an important consideration if it is remembered that he gained his position of power by poisoning his opposition.