

*Selenicereus grandiflorus*

[Synonyms : *Cactus grandiflorus*, *Cereus grandiflorus*, *Cereus kunthianus*, *Nyctocereus grandiflorus*, *Selenicereus brevispinus*, *Selenicereus coniflorus*, *Selenicereus hondurensis*, *Selenicereus macdonaldiae*, *Selenicereus pringlei*, *Selenicereus vaupelii*]

**NIGHT FLOWERING CEREUS** is a succulent perennial climbing cactus. Native to Cuba and to Jamaica it has large vanilla-scented, white inside and yellow outside flowers with many yellow stamens.

It is also known as Cereus, King of the night, *Königin der Nacht* (German), Large cereus, Large-flowered cactus, New Zealand reed, Night blooming cereus, Night-flowering cactus, Queen of the night, Sweet-scented cactus, and Vanilla cactus; and in flower language is said to be a symbol of transient beauty.

The flower blooms for six hours in the evening before dying.

Warning – large doses can cause slight delirium, gastric irritation, hallucination and general mental confusion.

*Grandiflorus* is made up of Latin *grandis* (large) and *-flora* (flowered) components.

This species is one of the few cacti to have effective, proven medicinal qualities. Although no longer used in remedies for fluid retention, it can still be valued now for the treatment of some heart disorders and of rheumatism. In fact some authorities claim that although a German doctor had tried to promote medicinal qualities in this cactus earlier on, it was only when Dr. R. Rubini of Naples in Italy (who had used it in homoeopathic treatment for a specific heart disease) drew it to the attention of orthodox Western medicine that it began to be formally recognized. Today it can be used especially for treating angina and heart palpitations.