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Teucrium scordium

[Synonyms : *Chamaedrys scordium*]

WATER GERMANDER is a perennial. Native to Asia, Europe (including Britain) and the Mediterranean it has small purplish-rose flowers.

It is also known as *Lökgamander* (Swedish), *Löksuga* (Swedish), *Ožanka čpavá* (Czech), and Wood sage.

Water germander is a protected species in Britain under the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981 (it may not be picked, uprooted or destroyed).

In the Danube region of Europe the plant is used as the source of a yellowish-green cloth dye. Medicinally, water germander had a reputation as a poison antidote and antiseptic. A slightly gruesome observation (in the context of this text) was recorded by the English barber-surgeon and herbalist (the latter as a charlatan for many authorities), John Gerard (1545-1612). He noted that dead bodies lying on water germander after battle tended to decompose more slowly than those which were not. Herbalists recommended the plant particularly for treating inflammatory diseases and intermittent fevers.