

T.K. Lim

Edible Medicinal and Non Medicinal Plants

Volume 8, Flowers

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Introduction

This book continues as volume 8 of a multi-compendium on *Edible Medicinal and Non-Medicinal Plants*. It covers plants with edible flowers whose floral parts including the stalk and flower nectar are eaten as conventional or functional food and as spices and may provide a source of food colorant, additive or nutraceuticals. *Functional food* has been described as being similar in appearance to, or may be, a conventional food that is consumed as part of a usual diet and is demonstrated to have physiological benefits and/or reduce the risk of chronic disease beyond basic nutritional functions, i.e. they contain bioactive compounds (Health Canada 2002). A *nutraceutical* can be defined as a product isolated or purified from foods that is generally sold in medicinal forms not usually associated with foods and is demonstrated to have a physiological benefit or provide protection against chronic disease. Biologically active components in functional foods that may impart health benefits or desirable physiological effects include carotenoids (β -carotene, lutein, lycopene), dietary fibres (β -glucans, soluble fibre), fatty acids (omega fatty acids, conjugated linoleic acid), flavonoids (anthocyanins, flavanols, flavanones, flavonols, proanthocyanidins), isothiocyanates, phenolic acids, plant sterols, polyols and prebiotics/probiotics (fructooligosaccharides – inulin), vitamins and phytoestrogens (isoflavones – daidzein, genistein). Many plants with edible flowers contain many of these bioactive components and essential mineral elements (Mlcek and Rop 2011; Rop et al. 2012), carbohydrates and amino acids in the flowers and

other plant parts, imparting a wide array of health benefits and pharmacological properties. According to the Global Industry Analyst Inc., global nutraceuticals market is anticipated to exceed US 243 billion by 2015 (GIA 2012). The United States, Europe and Japan dominate the global market, accounting for a combined market share of more than 85 %. Spurred by the growing affluence, rising disposable income and increasing awareness, particularly in China and India, the Asia Pacific region is projected to see significant growth in the long term. Functional foods that constitute the faster-growing segment in the nutraceuticals market are rising in popularity, as the segment offers a cheaper alternative to dietary supplements. Value-added food products that feature edible flowers offer additional marketing opportunities.

This volume covers such plants with edible flowers from families Geraniaceae to Zingiberaceae in a tabular form (Table 1) and eighty such species from 32 families such as Geraniaceae, Iridaceae, Lamiaceae, Liliaceae, Limnocharitaceae, Magnoliaceae, Malvaceae, Meliaceae, Myrtaceae, Nyctaginaceae, Nymphaeaceae, Oleaceae, Onagraceae, Orchidaceae, Paeoniaceae, Papaveraceae, Plantaginaceae, Poaceae, Polygonaceae, Primulaceae, Proteaceae, Ranunculaceae, Rosaceae, Rubiaceae, Rutaceae, Solanaceae, Theaceae, Tropaeolaceae, Typhaceae, Violaceae, Xanthorrhoeaceae and Zingiberaceae in detail. Some plants with edible flowers but are better known for their edible fruits have been covered in

Table 1 Plants with edible flowers in the families Geraniaceae to Zingiberaceae

Scientific name	English/Common vernacular name	Flower edible uses	Reference
Geraniaceae			
<i>Geranium bicknellii</i> Britton	Bicknell's Cranesbill, Northern Cranesbill	Flowers eaten raw as garnish for salads	Schofield (2003)
<i>Geranium erianthum</i> DC.	Woolly Geranium, Cranesbill	Flowers eaten raw as garnish for salads	Schofield (2003)
<i>Geranium × fragrans</i> Dum. Cours.	Scented Pelargonium	The leaves have a powerful citrus fragrance and will add flavour to cakes and meringue roulades. The flowers have a faint citrus flavour similar to the leaves and are ideal when crystallized and scattered on desserts	Anonymous (2012a)
<i>Geranium graveolens</i> Stokes = <i>Geranium robertianum</i> L.	Scented Pelargonium, Rose-Scented Geranium, Herb Robert, Storkbill	The flowers have a faint citrus flavour similar to the leaves and are ideal when crystallized and scattered on desserts	Anonymous (2012a) and Roberts (2000)
<i>Geranium incanum</i> Burm.f.	Carpet Geranium, Creeping Geranium, Wild Geranium; Horlosies, Viouetee, Bergtee (Afrikaans)	Flowers used, as for other geranium flowers, in salads and desserts	Roberts (2000)
<i>Geranium quercifolium</i> L.f. = <i>Pelargonium quercifolium</i> (L.f.) L'Her.	Scented Pelargonium	Flowers used as above	Anonymous (2012a)
<i>Geranium robertianum</i> L.	Herb Robert, Storkbill	Flowers eaten raw as garnish in salads	Schofield (2003)
<i>Geranium tomentosum</i> Andrews = <i>Pelargonium ovale</i> (Burm.f.) L'Her.	Scented Pelargonium	The flowers have a faint citrus flavour similar to the leaves and are ideal when crystallized and scattered on desserts	Roberts (2000) and Anonymous (2012a)
<i>Geranium viscosissimum</i> Fisch. & C.A. Mey.	Sticky Geranium, Sticky Purple Geranium	Flowers edible raw, used as garnish for salads or used to decorate hors d'oeuvres	Facciola (1990) and Schofield (2003)
<i>Pelargonium crispum</i> (L.) L'Her.	Crisped Leaf Pelargonium, Curled Leaved Cranesbill, Finger Bowl Geranium, Lemon Geranium, Lemon-Scented Geranium	Flowers used in salads, dessert, drinks and jellies	Barash (1997), Roberts (2000), and Deane (2007–2012j)
<i>Pelargonium graveolens</i> L'Her.	Rose Geranium, Old Fashion Rose Geranium, Rose-Scented Geranium	Flowers edible raw, added to salads and to lend flavour and fragrance to juice, wine, desserts, cakes, ice cream, soups, sugar, vinegar, sauces, custards and canned and baked fruits	Bryan and Castle (1975), Larkcom (1980), Facciola (1990), Barash (1997), and Roberts (2000)
<i>Pelargonium</i> spp.	Scented Geraniums	Scented flowers used in salads, desserts, jellies and drinks	Barash (1997), Newman and O'Connor (2009), and Deane (2007–2012j)

<i>Pelargonium tomentosum</i> Jacq.	Pennyroyal Pelargonium, Peppermint-Scented Pelargonium	Flowers used to flavour cakes, jellies, puddings, pies, cookies, tarts, teas and other desserts	Gessert (1983) and Facciola (1990)
<i>Pelargonium × nervosum</i> Sweet	Lime Geranium, Scented Geranium	Flowers used to flavour cakes, jellies, puddings, drinks, vinegar, wine and soups	Gessert (1983) and Facciola (1990)
Gnetaceae			
<i>Gnetum gnemon</i> L.	Gnetum, Joint Fir, Kampong Tree, Spanish Joint Fir; Blinjau, Meninjau (Malaysia); Melinjo, Belinjo (Indonesia)	Inflorescences/flowers cooked in <i>sayur</i> , soups and in curries in Indonesia	Ochse and Bakhuizen van den Brink (1980), Facciola (1990), and Lim (2012a)
Grossulariaceae			
<i>Ribes aureum</i> Pursh.	Golden Currant	Flowers eaten raw and have a very sweet flavour	Harrington (1974) and Deane (2007–2012j)
<i>Ribes cereum</i> Douglas	Wax Currant	As above	Harrington (1974), Clarke (1977), Facciola (1990), and Deane (2007–2012j)
<i>Ribes nigrum</i> L.	Black Currant	Flower buds used in ice cream and liqueurs	Deane (2007–2012j)
<i>Ribes odoratum</i> H.L. Wendl. = <i>Ribes aureum</i> var. <i>villosum</i> DC.	Golden Currant, Buffalo Currant	Flowers eaten raw, has a sweet taste	Harrington (1974) and Facciola (1990)
Hamamelidaceae			
<i>Corylopsis himalayana</i> Griff.	Dieng-Piu	Flowers eaten in Meghalaya, India	Sawian et al. (2007)
Helwingiaceae			
<i>Helwingia chinensis</i> Batalin	Zhong Hua Qing Jia Ye (Chinese)	Flowers and leaves are edible	Kunkel (1984)
<i>Helwingia japonica</i> (Thumb.) F. Dierr.	Hana-Ikada (Japanese)	Young flowers and young shoots are eaten	Read (1946), Uphof (1968), Tanaka (1976), and Facciola (1990)
Hyacinthaceae			
<i>Muscari atlanticum</i> Boiss. & Reut. = <i>Muscari neglectum</i> Guss. ex Ten.	Musk Hyacinth, Nutmeg Hyacinth	Flowers and flower buds can be pickled in vinegar	Newman and O'Connor (2009)
<i>Muscari botryoides</i> (L.) Mill.	Italian Grape Hyacinth	As above	Crowhurst (1972), Facciola (1990), and Newman and O'Connor (2009)
<i>Muscari neglectum</i> Guss. ex Ten.	Musk Hyacinth, Nutmeg Hyacinth	The flowers, sprinkled over rhubarb, add a wonderful scented flavour	Hedrick (1972) and Facciola (1990)
Hydrocharitaceae			
<i>Hydrocharis dubia</i> (Blume) Backer	Frogbit; Tochi-Kagami (Japanese)	Young inflorescence is eaten	Van den Bergh (1994b)
<i>Ottelia alismoides</i> (L.) Pers.	Mizu Obako (Japanese); Santawa (Thai)	Young leaves and flowers are eaten raw with chilli sauce and used as side dish	Jircas (2010)

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Scientific name	English/Common vernacular name	Flower edible uses	Reference
Hypericaceae			
<i>Cratogeomys formosum</i> Benth. & Hook. f. ex Dyer	Pink Mempat; Tiew (Thai)	Flowers are edible	Tangkanakul et al. (2005)
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i> L.	St. John's Wort, Amber, Goat Weed, John's Wort, Chase Devil, Klamath Weed, Rosin Rose, Tipton Weed	Flowers used for making mead and can be tossed into salads	Crowhurst (1972), Facciola (1990), and Roberts (2000)
Iridaceae			
<i>Crocossmia aurea</i> (Pappe ex Hook.) Planch.	Falling Stars, Valentine Flower, Montbretia	Flowers source of yellow dye, used as substitute for saffron	Uphof (1968) and Facciola (1990)
<i>Crocus sativus</i> L.	Saffron, Autumn Crocus, Spanish Saffron, Dyer's Saffron	Dried filaments and styles used for colouring and flavouring food and saffron tea	Hedrick (1972), Morton (1976), Kunkel (1984), Garland (1993), Facciola (1990), and Wessel-Riemens (1992)
<i>Crocus serotinus</i> Salisb.	Late Crocus, Ornamental Crocus	Flowers used as saffron substitute in colouring food	Tanaka (1976)
<i>Freesia alba</i> (G.L. Mey.) Gumbel.	Fressia, Kammetjie; Ruikpypie (Afrikaans)	Flowers used raw in salads	Deane (2007–2012h)
<i>Freesia leichlinii</i> subsp. <i>alba</i> (G.L. Mey.) J.C. Manning & Goldblatt	Fressia, Kammetjie, Ruikpypie	Edible flowers used raw in salads. They are reported to be excellent, infused with a sugar syrup and are used in sorbets for flavouring	Wickes (2004) and Deane (2007–2012h)
<i>Freesia</i> spp.	Freesia	Highly scented flowers are used in salads raw or as a garnish. They are reported to be excellent, infused with sugar syrup and added in sorbets for flavouring	Deane (2007–2012h)
<i>Gladiolus cruentus</i> T. Moore	Blood Lily, Blood-Red Gladiolus, Blood Flag, Gladiolus	Flowers eaten raw or cooked, added to salads or used as a boiled vegetable	Fox et al. (1982) and Facciola (1990)
<i>Gladiolus dalenii</i> Van Geel	African Gladiolus, Parrot-Beaked Gladiolus; Papegai-Gladiolus (Afrikans)	Flowers eaten raw or cooked. The anthers are removed and the flowers are added to salads or used as a boiled vegetable. Children suck the flowers for their copious quantities of nectar	Fox et al. (1982) and Facciola (1990)
<i>Gladiolus ecklonii</i> Lehm.	Sheathed Gladiolus	Flower eaten raw or used in potheb	Fox et al. (1982) and Facciola (1990)
<i>Gladiolus hortulanus</i> L.H. Bailey	Garden Gladiolus, Gladiolus, Glads	Petals eaten raw or cooked, rather bland	Deane (2007–2012b)
<i>Gladiolus</i> spp.	Gladiolus	As above	Newman and O'Connor (2009)
<i>Tritonia crocata</i> (L.) Ker-Gawl.	Orange Tritonia, Kalkoentjie	Flowers used to adulterate saffron	Kunkel (1984) and Facciola (1990)

Lamiaceae				
<i>Acinosa arvensis</i> (Schur) Dandy = <i>Clinopodium acinos</i> (L.) Kuntze <i>Aeollanthus pubescens</i> Benth.	Basil Thyme	Flowering tops used to season jugged hare and used in salads Leaves, flowers used as spice (analogue of basil)	Grieve (1971), Kunkel (1984), Facciola (1990), and Bown (1995) Seidemann (2005)	
<i>Agastache anethiodora</i> Nutt. & Britton	Anise Hyssop	Aromatic leaves and flowers are used in salads for flavouring and in tea and punch	Roberts (2000) and Deane (2007–2012m)	
<i>Agastache cana</i> (Hook.) Wooton & Standl.	Texas Hummingbird Mint, Mosquito Plant, Wild Hyssop	Aromatic leaves and flowers are used in salads for flavouring and tea	Deane (2007–2012m)	
<i>Agastache foeniculum</i> (Pursh) Kuntze	Anise Hyssop, Blue Giant Hyssop, Blue Giant Hyssop, Lavender Hyssop, Licorice Mint, Wonder Honey Plant	Flowers used in desserts—cakes, custard, cookies; Flowers have an anise or liquorice flavour used for salad or drinks and tea	Morton (1976), Facciola (1990), Barash (1997), Lauderdale and Evans (1999), and Newman and O'Connor (2009)	
<i>Agastache mexicana</i> (Kunth) Lint & Epling	Mexican Hyssop	Aromatic leaves and flowers are used in salads for flavouring and tea	Deane (2007–2012m)	
<i>Agastache neomexicana</i> (Briq.) Standl. = <i>Agastache pallidiflora</i> subsp. <i>neomexicana</i> (Briq.) Lint & Epling	New Mexico Giant Hyssop	As above	Deane (2007–2012m)	
<i>Agastache rugosa</i> (Fisch. & C.A. Mey.)	Korean Hyssop, Korean Mint	As above	Roberts (2000) and Deane (2007–2012m)	
<i>Agastache urticifolia</i> (Benth.) Kuntze	Giant Hyssop, Nettle Leaf Giant Hyssop	Dried flowers used to make herbal tea	Yanovsky (1936) and Facciola (1990)	
<i>Calamintha ascendens</i> Jord. = <i>Clinopodium menthifolium</i> subsp. <i>ascendens</i> (Jord.) Govaerts	Calamint, Common Calamint, Mountain Calamint, Mountain Balm	Calamint tea, calamint conserve, peach and calamint dessert	Roberts (2000)	
<i>Calamintha nepeta</i> (L.) Savi = <i>Clinopodium nepeta</i> (L.) Kuntze	Calamint, Lesser Calamint, Cornemint, Mountain Mint		Roberts (2000)	
<i>Calamintha officinalis</i> Moench = <i>Clinopodium nepeta</i> subsp. <i>glandulosum</i> (Req.) Govaerts	Calamint, Cornemint, Mill Mountain, Mountain Balm, Basil Thyme, Mountain Mint	Calamint tea	Roberts (2000)	
<i>Calamintha sylvatica</i> Bromf. = <i>Clinopodium menthifolium</i> subsp. <i>menthifolium</i>	Calamint, Woodland Calamint	Flowers used for conserve	Morton (1976) and Facciola (1990)	
<i>Clerodendrum japonicum</i> (Thunb.) Sweet	Japanese Glorybower, Kaempfer's Glorybower	Flowers are edible	Kunkel (1984)	
<i>Clerodendrum serratum</i> Spreng. var. <i>wallichii</i> C. B. Clarke = <i>Rotheca serrata</i> (L.) Steane & Mabb.	Glorybower, Bagflower, Bleeding-Heart; Akkhi Thawan, Charak Pa (Thai); Bharangi (Indonesia); Akalbin, Akla Brikhsa (Assamese)	Inflorescences are boiled or cooked with curry in India. Young inflorescences with unexpanded flowers are eaten as lalab, side dish with rice in Indonesia	Tanaka (1976), Ochse and van den Brink (1980), Facciola (1990), Sawian et al. (2007), and JIRCAS (2010)	

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Scientific name	English/Common vernacular name	Flower edible uses	Reference
<i>Clerodendrum spicatum</i> Thumb. = <i>Orthosiphon aristatus</i> var. <i>aristatus</i>	Cat's Whiskers, Java Tea, Kidney Tea Plant; Ya Nuat Suea (Thai)	Flowers cooked as vegetable; flowers that are bitter are cooked and eaten as good vegetable	Pongpangan and Poobrasert (1985)
<i>Clinopodium brownie</i> (Sw.) Kuntze	Browne' Savoury, Creeping Charlie, Mint Charlie	Flowers are edible	Deane (2007–2012)
<i>Elsholtzia blanda</i> (Bentham) Bentham	Llomba, Lengmaser (Manipur)	Flowers dried and stored for months, used for gamishing vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes; used in a dish made of arbi (<i>Colocasia</i>)	Hauzel (2012) and Yumnam and Tripathi (2012)
<i>Elsholtzia strobilifera</i> (Benth.) Benth.	Rengma Ser, Langtu (Assamese)	Inflorescence eaten in Assam	Medhi and Borthakur (2012)
<i>Gmelina arborea</i> Roxb.	Yunnan Gemlina; Tian Shi Zi (Chinese); Gomari, Gameri (Assamese)	Fragrant flower gathered by Thai ethnic group of southern Yunnan for flavouring and colouring pastries. In Assam, flowers eaten cooked	Hu (2005) and Patiri and Borah (2007)
<i>Hedeoma drummondii</i> Benth.	Drummond's False Pennyroyal	Infusion of flowering tops used as beverage in Texas	Yanovsky (1936)
<i>Hyssopus officinalis</i> L.	Hyssop	Flowers, raw. Added to salads or made into syrup	Facciola (1990), Deane (2007–2012n), and Newman and O'Connor (2009)
<i>Koellia virginiana</i> (L.) Kuntze = <i>Pycnanthemum virginianum</i> (L.) T. Durand & B.D. Jacks. ex B.L. Rob. & Fernald.	Virginia Mountain Mint	Flowers and buds used for seasoning meat or broth by Chippewa Indians	Yanovsky (1936)
<i>Lamium amplexicaule</i> L	Greater Henbit, Henbit Deadnettle	Flowering tips eaten in salad, boiled as potherb, cooked in rice gruel or used in dumplings	Fernald et al. (1958), Tanaka (1976), and Facciola (1990)
<i>Lamium galeobdolon</i> (L.) Crantz	Yellow Archangel, Golden Deadnettle	Young flowering tips cooked	Fern (1992–2003)
<i>Lamium purpureum</i> L.	Archangel Red Dead Nettle	Flowering tips boiled or candied	Hedrick (1972), Kunkel (1984), and Facciola (1990)
<i>Lavandula angustifolia</i> Mill.	Lavender, English Lavender, True Lavender	Flowers make into conserve, crystallized and used on cakes; fresh or dried flowers used in salads or to flavour sugar and jellies; fresh or dried flowers brewed into tea; lavender flowers used in both in sweet or savoury dishes	Morton (1976), Larkcom (1980), Facciola (1990), Garland (1993), Burnie and Fenton-Smith (1996), Barash (1997), Roberts (2000), and Newman and O'Connor (2009)
<i>Lavandula dentata</i> L.	Fringed Lavender, French Lavender	As above	Garland (1993) and Roberts (2000)