

Common Name: **Hounds Tongue**

Genus: *Cynoglossum*

Species: *officinale*

Family: Boraginaceae

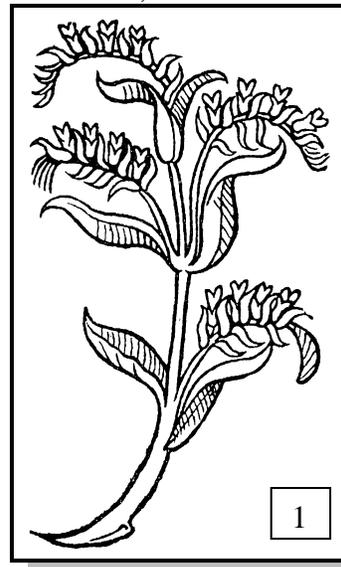
AKA: Rats-and-Mice, Dogs Tongue, Lindefolia spectabilis



Historical Uses:

Medical: “For snakebite, the plant cures well when pounded and taken in wine. For quartan fever, take this plant, the one with four leaves, pound it, and give it to drink in water. It will cure the person. If the ears don’t work right, and if a person can’t hear well, take the same plant, pounded and warmed in oil. Drip it into the ear, and it will help in a wonderful manner.”(1)

“The leaves bruised, or the juice of them boiled in hog’s lard, and applied, helpeth the falling away of hair, which cometh of hot and sharpe humour; as also for any place that is scalded or burnt. The distilled water of the herbs and roots is very good to all the purposes aforesaid, to be used as well inwardly to drink, as outwardly to wash any sore place, for it healeth all manner of wounds and punctures, and those foul ulcers that arise from the French pox.”(2)



“For treating hemorrhoids, eruptions from erysipelas, wounds, and deep ulcers. It cured abscesses of the mouth, asthma, and bad digestion, aided in cases of gonorrhoea, and consumed sperm, making it an aphrodisiac.”(3)

Folklore/Astrology: “Under the domain of Mercury. The leaves laid under the feet will keep the dogs from barking at you.”(4)

Other: Common name is derived from the shape and texture of the leaves

Contemporary Uses:

Parts Used: Whole plant, leaves, and roots. Plants and leaves are collected in early summer. Roots are collected in autumn.

Medicinal: “A painkilling herb that soothes inflamed tissue and speeds healing. Now mostly used externally for minor injuries, bites, and leg ulcers, and as a suppository for hemorrhoids.”(5)

Cautions: “Use banned in some countries because of the carcinogenic properties of pyrrolizidine alkaloids it contains. Not recommended for children or women during lactation.”(6)

Area of Origin: Temperate zones of Europe and Asia

Physical description: Erect, bristly herbaceous plant. The stem, branched above, emerges from a radial arrangement of large, narrow leaves.

Plant type: Biennial

Height: 32” to 36”

Flower color: Maroon, bell-shaped flowers

Flowering period: Summer

Soil type/requirements: Moist, well-drained soil

Hardiness zone: USDA 4-9

Sun requirements: Sun of partial shade

Propagation: By seed in spring or fall



Hounds Tongue flower

Sources

1. Van Arsdall, p. 193
2. Culpeper, p. 79-80
3. Anderson, p. 103
4. Culpeper, p. 79-80
5. Bown, p. 188-189
6. Ibid

Illustrations/Images:

1. Schoffer Herbal 1485
2. PSUMG 2005
3. PSUMG 2005