

RHYNCHOSPERMUM JASMINOIDES



Star jasmine vine (confederate jasmine) is also known as *trachelospermum jasminoides* in scientific name and Shi Teng in mandarin is a flowering vine which is not a true jasmine plant. It is named after jasmine just because it has a very similar look and sweet fragrance when its white star-like flowers bloom. It is a climbing or creeping plant species in the genus *Trachelospermum* which contains between 11 and 13 species and belongs to the family of the Apocynaceae (Dogbane Family). The plant is native to eastern and southeastern Asia including China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam where it grows on the edge of the forest and among the underbrush. It has been introduced and can be found naturalized in Pakistan, India, the USA, Mexico, Central America, and the Bahamas.

Chinese star-jessamine, Confederate-jessamine, Confederate jasmine, Star-jasmine, Chinese Star Jasmine, Asiatic jasmine; Japanese star jasmine; small leaf confederate jasmine, Chinese ivy, Chinese jasmine and traders compass are some of the popular common names of the plant. The name of the genus is the combination of the Greek words “trachelos” which means neck and “sperma” meaning seed, with reference to the extension shown by the seeds of some plants belonging to the genus. The name of the species is the combination of the name Jasminum with the suffix “-ooides”, from the Greek “êidos” which means idea, form, hence similar to the jasmine, with reference to the form and the intense perfume of the flowers.

Apart from being one of popular ground cover plants, medicinally it is a very common Chinese herb that has amazing healing powder on treating stroke, arthritis, arthralgia, and other conditions associated with tendon and vessel. Because of that, it is listed in the Shen Nong Ben Cao Jing (Divine Farmer’s Materia Medica) as a top-grade herb.

Plant Description

Star jasmine is a comparatively fast-growing, short-lived, vigorous, multi-stemmed medium-sized evergreen twining woody vine that normally can reach 10 meters under optimal growing conditions in warm humid regions; but usually grows about 5 to 7 m tall and 2 m wide. The plant is found growing in

sunny edges of forests, shrub lands, disturbed sites, wastelands, along roadsides, trails, gardens, parks, cemeteries, recreational sites in coastal areas, and bush tracks. The plant performs best in humus-rich, well-drained moderately retentive soil. It can also succeed in moderately acid or alkaline soils. Remarkable for its vigor, it develops long twining stems lined with persistent foliage and shiny, leathery, sometimes taking beautiful red hues. Stems are glabrous or pubescent when young, mostly branched and with spotted lenticels on surface, glabrous when older. Stems exude a milky sap when broken.



Fruit

The shape of the follicles is cylindrical and measures around 15 cm. The flowers bloom between July to August. The seeds of star jasmine are linear, brown and flat having a bunch of very bright and soft fur.

Traditional uses and benefits of Star Jasmine

- The leaf is restorative and tonic.
- This plant is especially useful for the aged.
- Flowering stem is analgesic, antibacterial, anti-rheumatic, antispasmodic, depurative, emmenagogue, febrifuge, resolvent, tonic and vasodilator.
- Decoction is used in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, sore throats and various boils and abscesses.
- The seed is cardio-tonic and hemostatic.
- Whole plant is cooked with other foods and used to treat rheumatism.
- Stem is used for the treatment of rheumatism and injury.

Other facts

- In Asia, a strong bast fiber obtained from the inner bark is used in making rope, sacks, and paper.

- Flowers yield perfumed oil.
- Star Jasmine is commonly grown as an ornamental plant and houseplant.
- It is used as a climbing vine, a groundcover, and a fragrant potted plant on terraces and patios in gardens, public landscapes and in parks.
- A valuable perfume oil is extracted from the steam distilled or tinctured flowers and used in high end perfumery.
- In a dilute form, tinctured flowers are much used in Chinese, Vietnamese and Thai incenses.
- Bast fiber is produced from the stems.
- An essential oil is obtained from the flowers.
- It uses hold fast roots to hold onto upright substrates for climbing.
- It is not a true jasmine in the genus *Jasminum* but gives of the fragrance of a jasmine.



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Precautions

- Avoid use during pregnancy and breastfeeding.
- Avoid if you are suffering from Diarrhea.
- Consuming high doses of it may cause Convulsions and respiratory diseases.

