

ANOTHER
HERB HERBERT FAVOURITE HERBS
FACT SHEET

Balm of Gilead

Cedronella canariensis



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This genus consists of only one single species. The name Balm of Gilead has been associated with numerous plants which has created some confusion in the past.

The origin of Balm of Gilead dates back to Biblical times. Oleo-resin produced by the species *Balsomodendron opobalsamum* also known as the 'Balm of the Bible' or 'Balm of Mecca' was used extensively for its 'miraculous properties'. Once considered widely available commercially, this species is now thought to only exist in small numbers in the Middle East.

Today the medicinal Balm of Gilead is *Populus candicans*, of which the resinous properties of the Poplar Buds are used in the treatment of upper respiratory infections.

Another plant that carries the name Balm Of Gilead is *Abies balsmea* or Balsam Fir, the oil of which is used in the manufacture of cough syrups.

DESCRIPTION

Cedronella canariensis, a native to the Canary Islands, is a shrubby semi-evergreen perennial with aromatic trifoliolate leaves and a spreading habit. The pink flowers are borne on terminal spikes in summer.

PARTS USED

Leaves

PROPERTIES

An aromatic herb with a camphor-like scent.

USES OF THE HERB

Medicinal

Although there are no known the rapeutic values of this herb, the camphoraceous odour helps to relieve the stuffiness of a blocked nose if you crush a handful of leaves and inhale the aroma.

Insect Repellent

Can be used as a mosquito repellent (rub the leaves on your skin) or hang bunches near windows, doors Or the barbecue.

Aromatic

The leaves can also be dried and added to potpourri for a musky scent.

CULTIVATION

Prefers well-drained soil in a full sun. Protect from frost. Can be grown in a pot in a protected position. The sprawling habit can become untidy, so a regular prune will help to keep it under control.

HARVEST

Harvest leaves for drying before it flowers in Summer.

Height 1.5m (5ft) x Spread 1m(3ft)

