

Catharanthus roseus

Scientific classification

Kingdom : Plantae

Clade : Angiosperms

Order : Gentianales

Family : Apocynaceae

Genus : *Catharanthus*

Species : ***C. roseus***

syn Vinka rosea



Catharanthus roseus

Description:

Catharanthus roseus is an evergreen subshrub or herbaceous plant growing 1 m (39 in) tall. The leaves are oval to oblong, 2.5–9 cm (1.0–3.5 in) long and 1–3.5 cm (0.4–1.4 in) broad, glossy green, hairless, with a pale midrib and a short petiole 1–1.8 cm (0.4–0.7 in) long; they are arranged in opposite pairs. The flowers are white to dark pink with a darker red centre, with a basal tube 2.5–3 cm (1.0–1.2 in) long and a corolla 2–5 cm (0.8–2.0 in) diameter with five petal-like lobes. The fruit is a pair of follicles 2–4 cm (0.8–1.6 in) long and 3 mm (0.1 in) broad.

Medicinal uses:

The species has long been cultivated for herbal medicine. In Ayurveda (Indian traditional medicine) the extracts of its roots and shoots, though poisonous, are used against several diseases. In traditional Chinese medicine, extracts from it have been used against numerous diseases, including diabetes, malaria, and Hodgkin's lymphoma. Many of the *vinca* alkaloids were first isolated from *Catharanthus roseus*, including vinblastine and vincristine used in the treatment of leukemia and Hodgkin's lymphoma.