



PLANT FACT SHEET

Alkanna tinctoria Taush.

GENUS *Alkanna* FAMILY Boraginaceae

COMMON NAMES Alkanet, Alkanna, Dyer's Bugloss, Spanish Bugloss

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Vegetable, Flowers, Roots

The leaves are eaten as a vegetable.

A red colouring from the roots is used as a food colouring. This is used to colour cheeses and some wines.

DESCRIPTION

A perennial plant. It grows 20 cm high and 25 cm across. It is spreading and almost lies along the ground. It has a woody base and many leaves near the base. It has rather prickly hairy leaves. The leaves are narrow or sword shaped. The lower leaves have stalks but the upper leaves do not have stalks and clasp the stem. These have heart shaped bases. The flowers are bright blue. They are 6-8 mm across and produced on branched stalks. The lower flowers have large leaf-like bracts.

HABITAT

It grows on soils near the seaside and calcareous soils. It prefers a well drained loamy soil. It dislikes acid soils. Once established it is very drought tolerant and can survive in hot dry places. Plants can survive temperatures down to about -10°C.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from seed, division or cuttings.

NOTES

There are about 30 *Alkanna* species. A red dye is extracted from its roots.

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ONLINE FACT SHEET <https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/f7a13c55-2dca-4505-94c7-9b081d476da9>