

Rampion—*Campanula rapunculus* L.¹

James M. Stephens²

Rampion is a biennial plant grown as an annual vegetable for its leaves and roots. Rampion, a native of Britain, was once used much more widely than it appears to be today. It is occasionally grown in Florida gardens. Elsewhere, rampion is grown in Europe, Asia, and Africa, in addition to some areas in the United States.

Description and Use

Rampion leaves are entire and long-oval in shape, 6 inches or more in length. They form a rosette at the root crown. The roots are up to 1 foot long, slender, and white. Roots may be cooked or eaten raw, as are some forms of radish, and the tops may be eaten raw in salads or as a cooked green. An old recipe suggests the roots should be boiled and stewed with butter and oil and sprinkled with black pepper. The flavor is more sweet and nutty than radishes. The roots often are scraped before using and stored in the refrigerator for later use.

Culture

Culture is similar to the ordinary radish. Although a biennial, the rampion plant will sometimes go to seed in a hot summer. Therefore, for best results, it should be sown from seeds September through March in Florida. However, in trials at Gainesville, rampion performed poorly when planted in early fall. Rows should be spaced 9 inches apart, with 3–4 inches between plants. Seeds are available in herb seed catalogs.

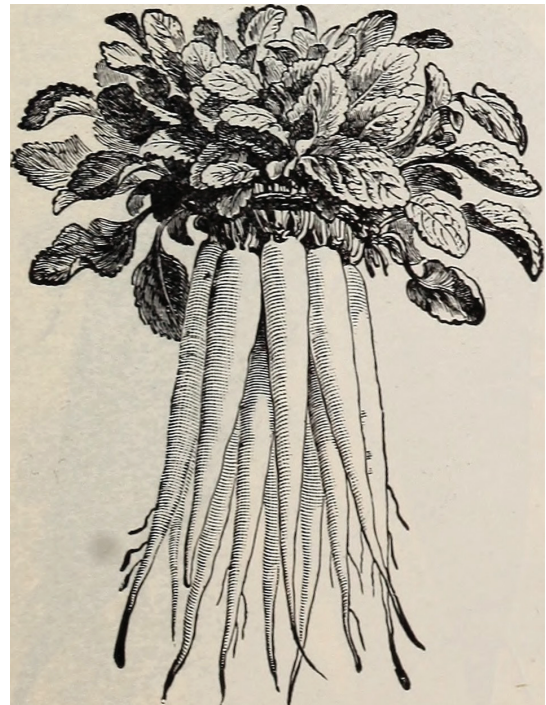


Figure 1. Rampion.
Credits: J. M. Thorburn & Co.

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