

**Botanic name :** *Swertia cordata* (Wall.exG.Don)C.B.Clarke.

**Family:** Gentianaceae.

**Common name:** Heart-leaf Swertia

**Habitat:** Terrestrial

**Distribution :** Swertia is native to India, found in the Himalayas, indigenous to the temperate Himalayas, from Kashmir to Bhutan and NE India (Meghalaya, Assam)

**Description:** Annual herb, 0.6–1.5 m tall. Stems erect, 4-angled, with wings on angles, branched; leaves are stalkless, ovate to ovate-heart-shaped, , base heart-shaped and nearly stem-clasping; Flowers are borne in narrow, dense, many-flowered thyrses,5-merousSepals are lanceshaped to ovate-lanceshaped, white, with purple veins; at the base of each petal, is a circular greenish, viscous spot; Ovary unilocular with ovules laminal placentation parietale; two stigmas. Capsules are ovoid-ellipsoid

**Phytochemicals:** Pharmacologically bioactive compounds like xanthenes and their derivatives, alkaloids, terpenoids, flavonoids, lignans, iridoids, secoiridoids, and other compounds like chiratin, palmitic acid, ophelic acid, oleic acid, and stearic acid, including swertiamarin (anti hepatitis, anticancer), swerchirin (hypoglycemic), amarogentin (hypoglycemic, anticancer), sweroside, mangiferin (hypoglycemic, antiatherosclerotic), amaroswerin, and gentiopicrin (Kumar & Staden 2015)

**Medicinal/Economic uses:** A traditional Ayurvedic herb is used by different indigenous population groups in multiple ways . Antioxidant, antibacterial, antidiabetic, antihepatitis anticancer, anti-arthritis, anti-HIV, antimalarial, antileishmanial, having a wide spectrum of pharmacological properties. Essential oil from aerial parts of this plant was found active against gram positive bacteria and fungi.

More read: Kumar & Staden (2015) Frontiers in Pharmacology 6:308.