

Scutellaria

Scutellaria is a genus of flowering plants in the mint family, Lamiaceae. They are known commonly as skullcaps.[2] The generic name is derived from the Latin *scutella*, meaning "a small dish, tray or platter",[3] or "little dish",[4] referring to the shape of the calyx.[4] The common name alludes to the resemblance of the same structure to "miniature medieval helmets".[4] The genus has a subcosmopolitan distribution,[5] with species occurring nearly worldwide, mainly in temperate regions.[6]

Most Scutellaria are annual or perennial herbaceous plants from 5 to 100 cm (2 to 39 in) tall, however a few are subshrubs. Some Scutellaria are aquatic. Scutellaria have four-angled stems and opposite leaves, and flowers with upper and lower lips. The genus is most easily recognized by the typical shield on the calyx that has also prompted its common name.

Skullcaps are used in traditional medicine, such as in traditional Chinese medicine.[7] The root of *Scutellaria baicalensis* – a common component of many preparations[8] – is marketed in volumes that have led to the overexploitation of the wild plant. Its rarity has led to an increase in price, and encouraged the adulteration of the product with other species of *Scutellaria*. [9]

In 1773, *Scutellaria lateriflora* became a common treatment in North America for the hysteria and hydrophobia caused by rabies.[10] Today it is still a popular medicinal herb.[11] It is widely available as a commercial product used in western herbalism.[12] The plant reportedly commands prices of \$16 to \$64 per pound dry weight.[13]

The main compounds in skullcap are flavonoids.[9] Isolated chemical compounds include wogonin, wogonoside, and 3,5,7,2',6'-pentahydroxyl flavanone found in *Scutellaria*. [14] Other constituents include baicalin, apigenin, oroxylin A, and scutellarein.[15]

Estimates of the number of species in the genus range from around 300[4][6] to about 350[7][16] or 360[17] to 470.[5][18][2][19][20][21][22]

Selected species include:

