

Sweet Violet

(Viola odorata)

Long a harbinger of spring, the violet has been associated with love and affection since Venus and Aphrodite enchanted the ancient Greeks. It has been a symbol of fertility and the emblem of Napoleon's party. Of the many varieties of violets, the sweet violet is the most fragrant.

Culinary uses

Fresh blossoms and fresh leaves can be added to salads, fruit soups, and fruit desserts. Crystallized violets are an attractive decoration frequently used on candies, cakes, and pastries.

Other uses

Use violets in potpourris and sachets, and in a cleansing facial steam.

Cultivation

Violets are easy to grow by transplanting runners in early spring. They do best in rich, moist soil in partial shade.