Aconitum napellus

COMMON NAMES
monkshood, European monkshood, tiger's bane, dog's bane

BIOSTATUS
Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS
Not applicable

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS
Violet/Purple

GENUS
Aconitum

FAMILY
Ranunculaceae

AUTHORITY
Aconitum napellus L.

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

POISONOUS PLANT
All parts of this popular garden plant are poisonous. It is one of the most poisonous plants in the garden but has a distinctive and unpleasant taste that cases of accidental poisoning are extremely rare though not unknown. The taste is described as initially very bitter followed by a burning sensation and, then, the mouth becomes numb.
The principal alkaloids are aconite and aconitine with the latter aconitine being thought to be the principal toxin. Ingestion of even a small amount can result in severe gastrointestinal upset but it can also cause a slowing of the heart rate which is often the cause of death. The toxin may be administered by absorption through broken skin or open wounds. Florists have been known to become unwell after working with the flowers.

ETYMOLOGY
aconitum: Aristotle's successor, Theophrastusto suggested the name comes from the village of Akonai (which does not exist now) that was part of the land occupied by the Mariandynoi people in Turkey, Another source suggests the Greek word 'akónitos' formed from 'ak', 'pointed' and kônos, 'cone' referring to the pointed leaves. Others say a pointed cone is an arrow and refers to its use as an arrow poison.
napellus: From the Latin 'napus', which means 'turnip' and thus means 'like a small turnip' which refers to the shape of the root.

MORE INFORMATION
https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/aconitum-napellus/

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