

# *Onosma bracteatum*

No Image

**Family:** Boraginaceae

**Local/common names:**  
Dhamani, Ratanjot, Gojihva,  
Gajavan, Gaojavan, Gule-  
gaojavan, Shankhahuli

**Trade name:** Ratanjot,  
Dhamani, Gojihva

**Profile:**

**Habitat and ecology:** The plant requires well-drained, light soil and is generally found on sun-facing slopes. This plant is found in the Western Himalayas and Central Himalayas from Kashmir to Kumaon between the altitudes of 3600-4500 m. In Himachal Pradesh, it has been found from the districts of Kangra (Chhota and Bara Bhangal), Chamba (Pangi and Bharmour area), Kinnaur and Lahaul and Spiti.

**Morphology:** It is a large, herbaceous perennial with a black, woody rootstock, 2.5-5 cm in diameter, terminating in a knotty head from which arise several stems, erect or ascending. The root is purplish red from inside and the stem is simple and rarely branched, thickly studded with calcareous tubercles and armed with bristles. The leaves are entire, thick, petiolate and ovate-acuminate. The lower leaves are stalked, narrow lanceolate, rough, bristly hairy above and paler silky white beneath. The upper leaves are smaller in size. The flowers are deep blue, later turning purplish in colour and are thickly covered by white stiff bristles. The nutlets are ovoid and rough.

**Distinguishing features:** It is a very hairy perennial with narrow leaves.

**Life cycle:** The plant flowers during the months of August-September. Fruiting takes place in September-October.

**Use:** The root is extensively used for colouring purposes. The bruised roots of Ratanjot are applied externally to cutaneous eruptions. The flowers of the plant are used as a stimulant and cardiac tonic. It yields a dye, which is used for colouring silk and wool. The plant is used in rheumatism, syphilis and leprosy. The plant is an alterative, demulcent, refrigerant and tonic. It is considered useful in restlessness, febrile excitement and also in relieving functional palpitation of the heart, irritation of the bladder and stomach. The roots yield a red dye.

**Market rate:** This herb is found locally with no market as such. In local markets, it is sold at Rs. 20-35/kg.