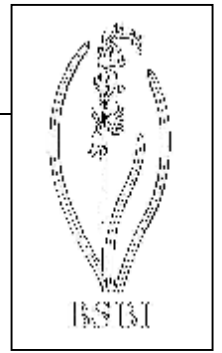


Plant Crib



NIGELLA

Five species of *Nigella* L. have been recorded in Britain; specimens should not be assumed to be *N. damascena*, the commonest taxon, without closer examination (Wurzell 1990).

- | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| 1 | Follicles united from base to tip, forming an inflated capsules, not tuberculate; flowers sky blue, surrounded by a conspicuous leaf-like involucre | <i>N. damascena</i> L. |
| 1 | Follicles separating towards the tip (\pm united throughout in <i>N. sativa</i> but then tuberculate on back); involucre absent (rarely present in <i>N. arvensis</i>) | 2 |
| 2 | Follicles 3-veined, united for about 1/2 their length | <i>N. arvensis</i> L. |
| 2 | Follicles 1-veined, united for about 2/3 their length | 3 |
| 3 | Follicles usually densely glandular; flowers 4-5 cm, bright blue | <i>N. hispanica</i> L. |
| 3 | Follicles smooth or scarcely glandular; flowers 2-3.5 cm, shades of pale blue, dull cream or grey-white | 4 |
| 4 | Anthers distinctly mucronate; leaves with broadly linear segments | <i>N. gallica</i> Jord. |
| 4 | Anthers not mucronate; leaves with narrowly linear segments | <i>N. sativa</i> L. |

Reference Wurzell, B. (1990). *BSBI News* **54**: 24-25.