



The Herb Society of America Promising Plants Profiles

***Origanum vulgare* 'Yunnan'**

Genus: *Origanum*

Specific Epithet: *vulgare*

Cultivar Name: Yunnan is used but is not an official cultivar name

Common Names: wild marjoram, oregano

Family: Lamiaceae (mint)

Flower Color: pink

Form: perennial

Hardiness Zone: 6

Soil: well-drained loam

Sun: full sun

Uses: ornamental, medicinal, craft



"This oregano was raised from seed. The seed came from Deni Bown in England who received the seed from an Australian friend who received it from the collector who acquired it in Yunnan, China. *Origanum* seeds are small (that is using the word loosely). I managed to get three plants and soon lost two of them. I raised one to maturity (i.e. large enough to plant in the Pharmacy Garden [at Festival Hill in Roundtop, TX] in the China bed). It has a mounding growth habit. [The] stems are very blue in winter. The leaves are hairy and warm to the tongue with the strong aroma typical of *Origanum vulgare*. It bloomed last September while I was away. When I returned home in October there were only a few pink buds left. The inflorescence was bluish lavender. The bluish stems likely will green up as the weather warms. Art [Tucker] has identified this as an *Origanum* and until more information is found I have carried it as *O. 'Yunnan'* in the collection records and garden inventory. As with so many of the *Origanum* sp., it is likely used as a fever reduction plant or as a soothing tea for the stomach. This is not a culinary herb, but is used in potpourris and perfumes. It is rhizomatic and will eventually spread to form a ground cover over time. The leaves are a little sticky to the touch and have a peculiar smell like that of musk. This is a stunning specimen in the herb garden or perennial border. I hope I can contact the original collector for further information as to its usage." – Madalene Hill, HSA Pioneer Unit and South Texas Unit member, Promising Plants Presentation, 2003

Photo by Gwen Barclay

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