46 Williams B. A critical appraisal of posterior fossa surgery for communicat-
47 Payner TD, Prenger E, Berger TS, Crane KR. Acquired Chiari malfor-

NEUROLOGICAL STAMP

Datura stramonium (Jimsonweed)

This plant, also known as thorn apple, devil’s apple, mad apple, stinkweed, apple of Peru and Jamestown weed, is a member of the solanaceae (nightshade) family. Like other members of that family it is extremely poisonous and may cause death. Marc Antony’s troops ate Datura when retreating from Parthia in 38 AD. Delirium, stupor, and death occurred as a consequence. The word Jimsonweed is believed to be a corruption of the common name Jamestown weed. That name refers to an incident (about 1676) when soldiers, sent to quell a rebellion in the Jamestown Colony in North America, put some of the herb into their cooking pot and spent the next 11 days in a state of incoherence. The American physician and botanist Charles Millspaugh stated in his medicinal plants (1892) that Jimsonweed was employed as “a narcotic, soothing drug” for epilepsy and neuralgia. He also noted that it was recommended as an ointment in burns and scalds, and that it had been used externally in folk medicine to treat boils and cuts and asthma. Sufferers inhaled the smoke of the leaves or smoked the dried leaves for relief.

Datura stramonium is portrayed on a set of stamps showing medicinal plants published by Hungary in 1961 (Stanley Gibbons 1776, Scott 1421).

L F HAAS
Datura stramonium (Jimsonweed).

L F Haas

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