



# Borage

**Botanical Name:** *Borago officinalis*

**Family:** Boraginaceae

**Common Names:** Bugloss, Burrage, Herb of Gladness, Star Flower, Borak, Lisan selvi, Lisan-El-Tour

**Botanical Description:** large green leaves with blue star shaped flowers. Stems are dark purple brown and fuzzy in appearance.

**Parts Used:** aerial parts (leaves and flowers)

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow but sensitive to cold weather. Annual. Can be grown from seed or transplants once temperatures reach +50F. Pinch off flowers to promote more flower growth. To harvest, pick mature leaves and flowers.

**Culinary Uses:** historically eaten, but not recommended today due to special considerations.

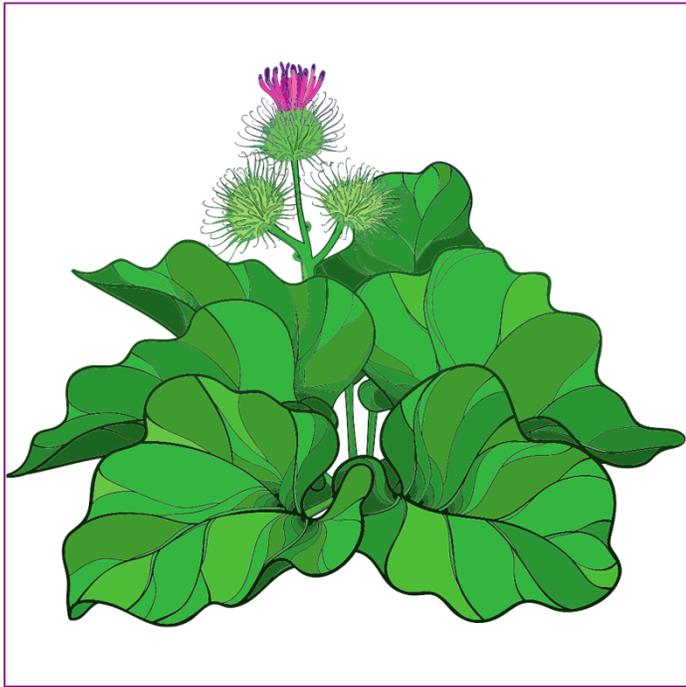
**Energetics:** cooling, bitter

**Actions:** Leaves: adrenal stimulant, galactagogue, diuretic, febrifuge, antirheumatic, diaphoretic, expectorant. Juice: antidepressant, topical anti-pruritic, demulcent, and anti-inflammatory. Seeds: important source of essential fatty acids.

## Medicinal Uses:

- Leaves:
  - Tincture: used 2-5 ml three times daily as a post-steroid therapy tonic and for the effects of stress.
  - Infusion: a standard infusion can be used for the early stages of lung disorders (especially pleurisy) or for feverish colds. In lactating mothers' borage tea can be used with fennel to stimulate milk flow.
  - Juice: use 10 ml three times daily for depression, grief, or excessive anxiety.
  - Lotion: dilute fresh or bottled juice 50:40 with water as a lotion for irritated, dry skin. It can also be helpful for nervous rashes.

**Special Considerations:** Some studies have shown that consumption may cause liver toxicity and cancer.



# Burdock

**Botanical Name:** *Arctium lappa*

**Family:** Compositae

**Common Names:** Lappa, Bardane, Bardana, Beggar's buttons, Burrseed, Clotbur, Cockleburr, Great Burdock, Happy Major, Hardock, Hurrburr, Personata

**Botanical Description:** A large, vigorous plant, with huge broad leaves and pink/purple thistlelike flowers

**Parts Used:** Root, Leaves, Seeds

**Growing and Harvesting:** Aggressive grower and tenacious weed. Likes warm or cool climates and any soil. If left to seed, flowers will self-seed rapidly and take over garden spaces.

**Culinary Uses:** slightly sweet and full of vitamins and minerals. Not many culinary uses.

**Energetics:** cooling, bitter

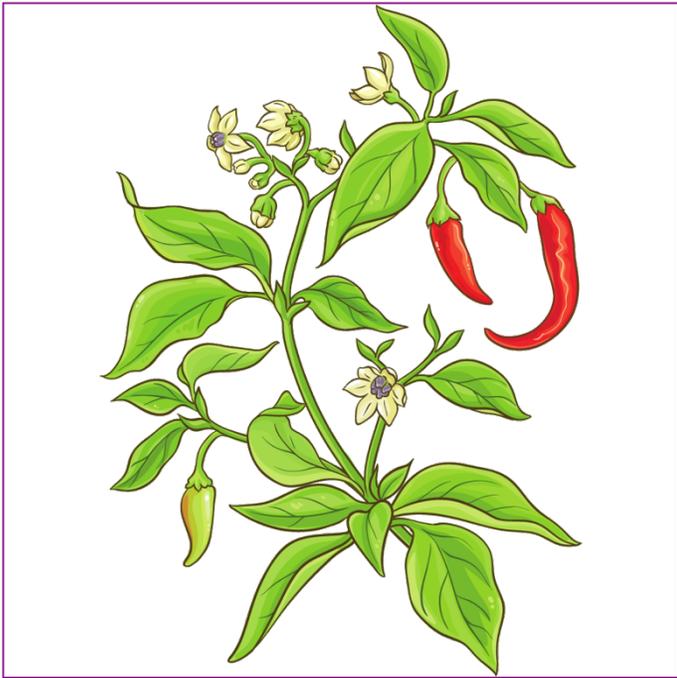
**Actions:** Root: alterative, milk laxative, diuretic, diaphoretic, antirheumatic, antiseptic, antibiotic.

Leaves: aperient, diuretic. Seeds: febrifuge, anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, hypoglycemic.

## Medicinal Uses:

- Roots:
  - Decoction: cleansing remedy for many skin disorders especially persistent boils, sores, and dry, scaling eczema. Can also be used as a face wash for acne and fungal skin infections such as athlete's foot or ringworm.
  - Tincture: in combination with specific arthritic or digestive herbs to detoxify the system or stimulate the digestion; also, for urinary stones and gravel.
  - Poultice: for skin sores and leg ulcers.
- Leaves:
  - Infusion: for indigestion in wineglass doses before meals and as a mild digestive stimulant.
  - Poultice: for bruises and skin inflammations (including acne).
  - Infused oil: a hot infused oil can be used for treating varicose ulcers.
- Seeds:
  - Decoction: for feverish colds with sore throat and cough works well combined with honeysuckle flowers and forsythia berries. Use with heartsease for skin eruptions.

**Special Considerations:** One of the safest and most widely used herbs.



# Cayenne

**Botanical Name:** *Capsicum annuum*

**Family:** Solanaceae

**Common Names:** Cayenne Pepper, Chili Pepper, Christmas Pepper, Ornamental Pepper, Red Pepper

**Botanical Description:** Green stems and leaves with small yellow/white flowers. Peppers start green and turn bright red when ready to harvest.

**Parts Used:** Only the fruit. Leaves, stems, and flowers are toxic.

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow from seed or transplant. Annual. Likes warm climates with full sun and fertile soil. Chilis are ready to harvest once bright red. Chilis can be used fresh or dried.

**Culinary Uses:** Many uses for spicy dishes. Commonly used in Northern and Southern American dishes.

**Energetics:** warming, spicy

**Actions:** circulatory stimulant, diaphoretic, gastric stimulant, carminative, antiseptic, antibacterial.

**Topically:** counterirritant, rubefacient.

## Medicinal Uses:

1. **Infusion:** use half a teaspoon of herb per cup of boiling water and then dilute a tablespoon of this infusion with more hot water and sip as required. Ideal for colds and chills, cold hands and feet, shock, or depression. Use 2-3 drops of undiluted infusion to stimulate digestive function.
2. **Compress:** a pad soaked in the infusion or diluted tincture can be used for rheumatic pains, sprains, or bruising.
3. **Tincture:** use 5-10 drops in hot water as a circulatory stimulant and tonic. Can be combined with nervines like vervain and oats in depression.
4. **Gargle:** use 5 – 10 drops of tincture to half a tumbler of warm water for sore throats or laryngitis; this is especially useful in debilitated and deficient conditions.
5. **Infused oil:** this can be used both as a warming massage for rheumatism, lumbago, arthritis, and similar conditions and to move blood. A little applied to the skin around a varicose ulcer (not on the ulcer) can encourage blood flow away from the congested area. Used 25g of cayenne powder to 500ml of sunflower oil and heat over a water-bath for 2 hours.
6. **Ointment:** both this and infused oil can be used on chilblains, as long as the skin is not broken.

**Special Considerations:** Avoid using the seeds which can be toxic. Excessive consumption can lead to gastro-enteritis and liver damage. Avoid during pregnancy and breastfeeding. Compresses left on the skin for long periods can cause blistering. Caution is needed with very sensitive skins.



# Chamomile

**Botanical Name:** *Matricaria recutita* (German), *Chamaemelum nobile* (Roman)

**Family:** Compositae

**Common Names:** Ground Apple, Heermannchen, Chamaimelon, Camomyle, Manzanilla, Maythen, Whig Plant

**Botanical Description:** Green stems and thin green leaves with small yellow/white flowers.

**Parts Used:** Primarily Flowers, but leaves as well

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow from seed direct in the garden. Self-seeds as flowerheads fall back into garden beds. Prefers cool weather, in hot climates plants will bolt. Harvest by using fingers as a "rake" to pass through flowers and collect them.

**Culinary Uses:** Primarily used in teas.

**Energetics:** bitter, aromatic, neutral

**Actions:** anti-inflammatory, antispasmodic, bitter, sedative, antiemetic

## Medicinal Uses:

- *Flowers:*
  - Infusion: a standard infusion can be used for many digestive problems including irritable bowel syndrome, peptic ulcers, poor appetite, indigestion, liver stagnation, or menstrual problems. Drink a cup at night for insomnia or for anxiety or stress. Strong infusion can also help during early stages of labor – combine with betony or rose petals.
  - Steam inhalation: use 2 teaspoons of flowers to a basin of boiling water as an inhalant for catarrh, hay fever, to avert or reduce the severity of an asthmatic attack, or to ease bronchitis.
  - Baths: add 200 – 400ml of strained chamomile infusion to baby's bathwater at night to encourage sleep.
  - Tincture: standard doses (up to 5ml 3 times per day) can be used for irritable bowel syndrome (combines well with hops, peppermint, or meadowsweet) insomnia, or nervous tension.
  - Mouthwash: use an infusion or diluted tincture for gingivitis or other mouth inflammations
  - Gargle: use for sore throats – combine with sage, lady's mantle, or purple coneflower
  - Eye bath: use 5-10 drops of tincture in an eye bath of warm water for conjunctivitis or tired, strained eyes.
- *Essential Oil:*
  - Inhalation: put 2-3 drops in a saucer of warm water and leave by the bedside table at night in cases of asthma, whooping cough, bad nasal catarrh or other conditions which may make breathing difficult; 1-2 drops can similarly be put onto a handkerchief or pillow as a night-time inhalant.
  - Massage: for muscular aches and pains use 2-3 drops of oil to 5 ml of carrier oil such as almond oil. Combine with thyme or rosemary.
  - Lotion: for eczema use 5 drops of chamomile oil to 50ml of distilled witch hazel (or use equal amounts of rosewater and distilled witch hazel)

**Special Considerations:** Safe to use. However, some may be allergic to Chamomile and have itchy eyes or runny noses. Discontinue use if allergic reactions occur.



# Comfrey

**Botanical Name:** *Symphytum officinale*

**Family:** Boraginaceae

**Common Names:** Assear, Black Wort, Boneset, Bruisewort, Consohda, Consound, Gum Plant, Healing Herb, Knit Back, Knit Bone, Miracle Herb, Slippery Root, Wallwort, Yalluc, Gavez, Smeerwartel, Karakaffes, Ztworkost

**Botanical Description:** light green leaves with small purple to red flowers. Dark brown/black roots.

**Parts Used:** leaf and root

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow from seed direct into garden. Two to three weeks for germination. Harvest leaves when they are mature. Roots should only be harvested as other comfrey plants have matured.

**Culinary Uses:** None. Not recommended for internal use without professional guidance.

**Energetics:** cooling, bitter

**Actions:** cell proliferator, astringent, demulcent, wound herb, expectorant.

## Medicinal Uses:

- **Aerial parts:**
  - **Tinctures:** use a standard dose internally for gastric ulceration, oesophagitis, hiatus hernia and ulcerative colitis. Treatment should not be continued beyond 6-8 weeks because of the potential risk of liver damage due to pyrrolizidine alkaloids.
  - **Infused oil:** make by the hot infusion method and use a massage for arthritic joints, sprains, bruises, and other traumatic injuries. Can also be used for inflamed bunions.
  - **Compress:** soak a pad in the diluted tincture for bruises, sprains, and other painful injuries.
  - **Cream:** for any bone, cartilage, or muscle damage. For osteoarthritis apply cream twice daily for at least two months.
  - **Syrup:** sweeten 500ml of the infusion with 500g of honey for dry coughs or stubborn, thick, phlegm.
  - **Poultice:** use the pureed leaves on minor breaks that would not normally be set in plaster – such as broken toes, ribs, or hairline cracks in larger bones.
- **Root:**
  - **Poultice:** make a paste of powdered root with a little water and use on varicose ulcers and other stubborn wounds. The same paste can be used on bleeding hemorrhoids.

**Special Considerations:** Only take internally under professional guidance; the plant contains pyrrolizidine alkaloids which have been linked by some researchers to liver cancer in rats whose diets were composed of 33% comfrey leaf. Do not take the root internally. Do not use on dirty wounds as rapid healing may lead to trapped dirt. Use is restricted in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and Germany.



# Echinacea

**Botanical Name:** Echinacea angustifolia, Echinacea purpurea

**Family:** Compositae

**Common Names:** Black Sampson, Coneflower, Rudbeckia, Snakeroot, Prairie

**Botanical Description:** Green stems and leaves with large purple/pink flowers.

**Parts Used:** Roots, Leaves, and Flowers

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow from seed or transplant. Perennial. Loves full sun and warm weather.

**Culinary Uses:** Commonly used in teas.

**Energetics:** cooling, bitter

**Actions:** antibiotic, immune stimulant, anti-allergenic, lymphatic tonic

## Medicinal Uses:

### 2. Root:

- Tincture: use small, frequent doses 2-5ml every 2-3 hours for influenza, chills, and urinary tract infections during the first couple of days of acute symptoms. For more chronic conditions use standard doses and combine with other suitable herbs – such as buchu and couch grass for kidney infections; white deadnettle and saw palmetto for prostate problems; or cleavers for lymphatic enlargement and glandular fever. Can also be used in large doses 10 ml for food or animal poisoning (including snake bites)
- Decoction: take 10 ml doses of standard decoction every 1-2 hours for the acute stage of infections. Combines well with hemp agrimony.
- Powder: use powdered root as a dust for infected skin conditions like boils, erysipelas, or weeping infected eczema. Combine with marshmallow root powder for boils.
- Gargle: use 10 ml of the tincture in a glass of warm water as a gargle for sore throats.
- Capsules: take three 200mg capsules up to three times daily at the onset of acute infections (such as colds, influenza, kidney, or urinary tract infections).
- Wash: use the decoction or dilute tincture as a wash for infected, putrid wounds. Bathe affected area frequently.
- Leaf:
  - Infusion: take a glass of a standard infusion 3-4 times daily for common colds.

**Special Considerations:** High doses can occasionally cause nausea and dizziness. Allergic reactions to echinacea are extremely rare but has been reported.



# Elder

**Botanical Name:** Sambucus canadensis, Sambucus nigra

**Family:** Caprifoliaceae

**Common Names:** Alhuren, Battree, Boure Tree, Vour Tree, Eldrum, Ellhorn, Frau Holle, Hildemoer, Hollunder, Hylder, Lady Ellhorn, Old Gal, Old Lady, Pipe Tree, Rob Elder, Sureau, Sweet Elder, Tree of Doom, Yakori Bengeskro

**Botanical Description:** Green leaves and small white flowers that turn to dark blue/black berries. Stems may be red in color and tree may bleed a blood-colored sap.

**Parts Used:** Flowers, Bark, Leaves, Berries

**Growing and Harvesting:** A large perennial shrub reaching 30ft. Easy to grow from cuttings.

**Culinary Uses:** Commonly used in teas and syrups.

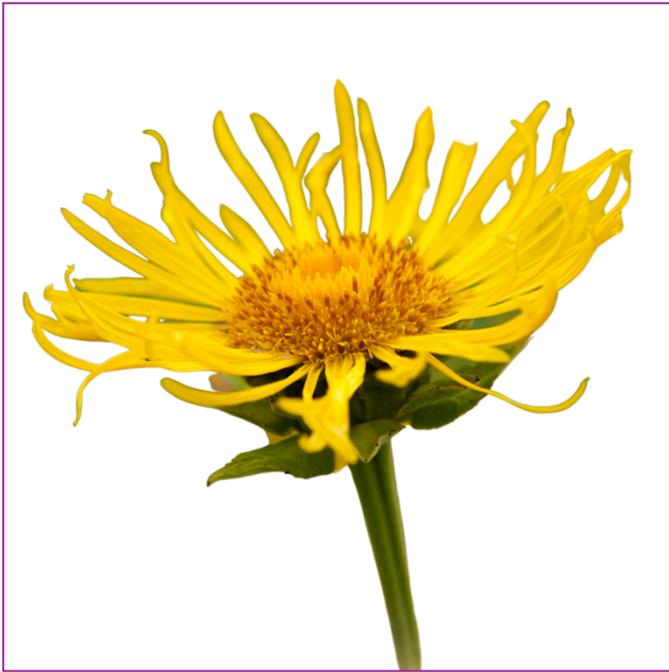
**Energetics:** Acrid, cooling, bitter

**Actions:** Flowers: expectorant, anti-catarthal, circulatory stimulant, diaphoretic, diuretic; locally – anti-inflammatory. Berries: diaphoretic, diuretic, laxative. Bark: internally – strong purgative, emetic (in large doses), diuretic; externally – softening. Leaves: externally – softening, wound-healing; internally – purgative, expectorant, diuretic, diaphoretic. Root: violent emetic and purgative (not used nowadays).

## Medicinal Uses:

- Flowers:
  - Infusion: drink hot for feverish and catarrhal conditions involving the lungs or upper respiratory tract (including hay fever); can be combined with yarrow, boneset, and peppermint in equal proportions.
  - Gargle: use a standard infusion as a mouthwash and gargle for mouth ulcers, sore throats, tonsillitis.
  - Eye bath: use cold, well strained infusion for inflamed or sore eyes.
  - Tincture: use a standard infusion for colds and flu or take from February to April to help reduce hay fever symptoms.
- Bark:
  - Decoction: use 10g to 800ml water for stubborn constipation nor as a general digestive cleanser, also for chronic gout and arthritis
- Leaves:
  - Ointments: for bruises, sprains, wounds, chilblains, or hemorrhoids.
- Berries:
  - Syrup: as a prophylactic for winter colds or in combination with expectorants (e.g., thyme) for coughs.
  - Tincture: can be useful in combination with other herbs for rheumatic conditions.

**Special Considerations:** The bark should be avoided in pregnancy. Do not eat the raw (uncooked) berries in any great quantity, as they can cause digestive upset and diarrhea in some people.



# Elecampane

**Botanical Name:** *Inula helenium*

**Family:** Compositae

**Common Names:** Scabwort, Elf dock, Horseheal, Alantwurz, Alycompaine, Aunee, Elfwort, Nurse Heal, Velvet Dock, Wild Sunflower

**Botanical Description:** Green stems and leaves with large thin petaled yellow flowers.

**Parts Used:** Root.

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow from seed or transplant. Perennial likes cooler climates and is often seen as a weed. To harvest roots, pull at base of plant, roots grow horizontally and may be tangled with surrounding trees and plants. Choose roots specifically attached to the plant for this reason.

**Culinary Uses:** roots are sometimes candied.

**Energetics:** warming, acrid, bitter, sweet

**Actions:** tonic, stimulating expectorant, diaphoretic, antibacterial, antifungal, antiparasitic.

## Medicinal Uses:

- Decoction: use a standard decoction for bronchitis, asthma, and upper respiratory catarrh. Can also ease hay fever symptoms. Take regularly as a general tonic or for long-standing chronic respirator complaints. Can be combined with white horehound, hyssop, or licorice. Also acts as a digestive tonic and liver stimulant.
- Tincture: use as a tonic for debility and chronic respiratory complaints. Combine with vervain for liver stagnation or with calumba or chen pi for digestive weakness.
- Syrup: mix the decoction sugar or honey as a cough syrup. Can be combined with thyme and licorice for bronchitis and emphysema.
- Wash: use the decoction or diluted tincture for eczema, rashes, varicose ulcers, etc.

**Special Considerations:** Only the root has been historically used for medicinal purposes. May cause allergic skin reactions. Do not consume while pregnant or nursing. Not safe to consume in high doses.



# Feverfew

**Botanical Name:** *Tanacetum parthenium*

**Family:** Asteraceae

**Common Names:** Featherfew, Febrifuge Plant

**Botanical Description:** Small green leaves with small white and yellow flowers.

**Parts Used:** Aerial Parts, primarily leaves.

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow from seed or transplant. Perennials growing 4 to 5 feet tall, likes full sun and is cold hardy. Harvest in warm summer months before flowering.

**Culinary Uses:** Limited. Excess consumption can cause mouth sores.

**Energetics:** bitter, acrid, cooling

**Actions:** anti-inflammatory, vasodilator, relaxant, digestive stimulant, emmenagogue, anthelmintic.

## Medicinal Uses:

- Fresh herb: eat one leaf daily as a prophylactic against migraines.
- Tincture: use 5-10 drops at 30-minute intervals at the onset of migraines. It is best for "cold" type migraines involving vasoconstriction and eased by applying a hot towel to the head. For the acute stages of rheumatoid arthritis add up to 2ml of tincture, three times a day to other herbal remedies.
- Poultice: use the hot herb fried in a little oil as an abdominal poultice for colicky pains.
- Infusion: drink a weak infusion (15g to 500ml of water) after childbirth to encourage cleansing and tonifying of the womb; also, for menstrual pain associated with sluggish flow and congestion.

**Special Considerations:** Mouth ulcers are common side-effect of eating fresh leaves. The herb has a salicylate-like anti-prostaglandin action and it should be avoided by patients on warfarin, heparin, and other blood-thinning drugs as it can affect blood clotting rates.

The name feverfew is a corruption of featherfew, a description of its fine petals. In the past, feverfew was primarily known as a woman's herb for womb disorders or delayed menstruation. It was mainly used externally in poultices or "squatting inhalations" (where the woman crouches over a bowl of the steaming decoction, absorbing the herb into the vagina). Today it is mainly used for migraines and as an anti-inflammatory, is also recommended by some for rheumatoid arthritis.



# Flax

**Botanical Name:** *Linum usitatissimum*

**Family:** Linaceae

**Common Names:** Linseed, Linaza, Sib Muma

**Botanical Description:** Thin green leaves with small blue flowers. Seeds are light to dark brown with a shiny shell.

**Parts Used:** Seeds

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow from seed or transplant. Annual. Likes warm climates with full sun

and loamy soil. As flowerheads dry, collect seeds. Flower heads can be pinched off to promote more flower growth.

**Culinary Uses:** Seeds may be consumed raw or cooked. Oil has been made from seeds and is decent for cooking.

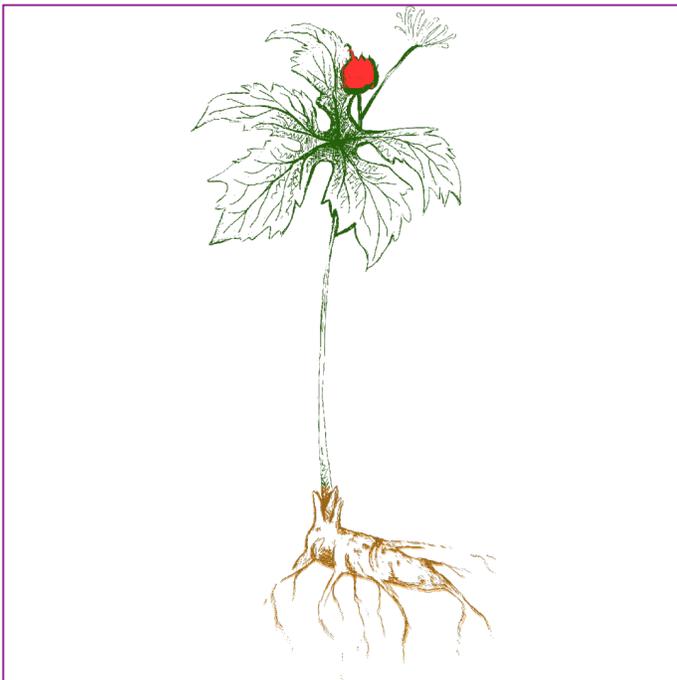
**Energetics:** warming

**Actions:** laxative, antirheumatic, diuretic, demulcent, soothing antitussive, antiseptic, anti-inflammatory

## Medicinal Uses:

- o **Poultice:** crushed seeds can be used for boils, abscesses, and ulcers and also locally for pleurisy pain
- o **Oil:** linseed oil is an important source of essential fatty acids and can be usefully added to the diet in cases of eczema, menstrual disorders, rheumatoid arthritis, atherosclerosis, etc. dose is typically 2 teaspoons of freshly pressed oil or 1-2 tablespoons of freshly crushed seeds daily.
- o **Infusion:** used for coughs and sore throats – best flavored with honey and lemon juice
- o **Maceration:** linseed mucilage is made by soaking the seeds on water. The thick mucilage produced can be taken for inflammation s of the mucous membranes such as gastritis, pharyngitis, etc.
- o **Fresh seeds:** for constipation eat 1-2 tablespoons of seeds followed by 1-2 glasses of water. The seeds swell in the bowel to produce a gentle, bulking laxative. The seeds can be mixed with muesli, porridge or honey and soft cheese and eaten at breakfast. Simultaneous high fluid intake is important.

**Special Considerations:** Linseed oil deteriorates rapidly and should be freshly prepared as required if possible. The seeds contain traces of prussic acid, which is potentially toxic in large quantities, although no cases of prussic acid poisoning from linseed have ever been reported. Do not exceed the stated dose.



# Goldenseal

**Botanical Name:** *Hydrastis canadensis*

**Family:** Ranunculaceae

**Common Names:** Puccoon root, Yellowroot, Eye Balm, Eye Root, Ground Raspberry, Indian Dye, Indian Paint, Jaundice Root, Orange Root, Tumeric Root, Warnera, Wild Curcurma

**Botanical Description:** Broad green leaves with small red flowers. Roots (rhizomes) are dark brown externally and golden yellow internally.

**Parts Used:** Primarily Root, Leaves used in some cases.

**Growing and Harvesting:** Slow growing perennial that loves dark shady hardwood forests. Easy to grow from rhizomes but not from seed. Roots may be harvested after 3 years of growth. Goldenseal is at risk due to its high demand. Only trust organically cultivated sources.

**Culinary Uses:** Limited.

**Energetics:** cooling, bitter

**Actions:** astringent, tonic, digestive and bile stimulant, laxative, anti-catarrrhal, healing to gastric mucosa, hypertensive

**Medicinal Uses:**

- Tincture: up to 0.5 – 2 ml three times a day: larger doses are more laxative. Use for any catarrhal condition: nasal catarrh, mucus colitis, gastroenteritis, vaginal discharge. Also, as a liver tonic for sluggish digestion and for digestive problems associated with food sensitivity and alcohol excess. Use the licorice for gastric ulceration and add to remedies for PMS or heavy menstrual bleeding.
- Mouthwash: use the dilute tincture (2-3ml in a tumbler of warm water) for mouth ulcers, and gum disease. Can also be used as a gargle for sore throats and catarrhal conditions.
- Powder: use the powder as snuff for nasal catarrh. Mixed in water can be used as the tincture
- Capsules: use 1x 200mg capsule three times daily for catarrh and infections (gastric or respiratory) combine with chaste-tree berry powder for symptomatic relief of hot flashes and night sweats at the menopause. Combine with eyebright for symptomatic relief of hay fever.
- Douche: use the dilute tincture as a douche for vaginal discharges and infections (including thrush). Can help vaginal itching (use 5 ml of goldenseal in 100 ml rosewater)
- Ear drops: use a 1ml of goldenseal tincture in 10 ml of water as ear drops for glue ear, catarrhal congestions, "blocked" sensation in the ears
- Wash: use the dilute tincture (5 ml of goldenseal in 100ml rosewater) to bathe irritant skin inflammations, eczema, measles, etc.

**Special Considerations:** Uterine stimulant so avoids in pregnancy. Hypertensive so should be avoided in cases of high blood pressure. Do not use ear drops of any sort if there is a risk that the ear drum has perforated. Goldenseal is now seriously endangered in the wild; avoid buying wild crafted material and use barberry as an alternative in digestive complaints. Long term internal consumption may irritate mucous membranes. Seek professional counsel if using goldenseal for internal use.



# Lavender

**Botanical Name:** *Lavandula officinalis*, *Lavandula angustifolia*

**Family:** Labiatae

**Common Names:** Garden Lavender, Elf Leaf, Nard, Nardus, Spike

**Botanical Description:** tall green stems with small green leaves. Light purple compact flowers in rings around stems. Petals resemble small seed like shape.

**Parts Used:** Flowers

**Growing and Harvesting:** Difficult to grow from seed, but easily grown from cuttings or transplants. Like warm sunny locations. Sandy soil and Mediterranean like climate. Plants can grow large, Harvest flowers just before buds fully open.

**Culinary Uses:** some deserts, sugars, and liqueurs.

**Energetics:** spicy, fragrant, mildly bitter, cooling

**Actions:** relaxant, antispasmodic, circulatory stimulant, tonic for the nervous system, antibacterial, analgesic, carminative, cholagogue

## Medicinal Uses:

- **Flowers:**
  - **Infusion:** use a standard infusion as a relaxing tea for nervous exhaustion or tension headaches. Combines well with betony, chamomile, linden flowers, or vervain. Also, for indigestion. A weak infusion (a quarter of normal strength) can be given by bottle to babies for colic, irritability, and nervous excitement. Drink lavender tea during labor.
  - **Mouthwash:** use a standard infusion for halitosis
  - **Tincture:** use up to 5ml twice a day for headaches, nervous tension, and depression
- **Essential Oil**
  - **Massage:** use 10 drops in 10 ml of carrier oil for muscular pains – combines well with thyme and eucalyptus. Use neat for nervous tension or massaged into the temples and nape of neck for tension headaches or at the first hint of a migraine. The same oil can be applied for sunstroke or to help prevent sunburn. (NB: it is not an effective sunscreen)
  - **Chest rub:** use 20 drops of lavender oil and 5 - 10 drops of chamomile or yarrow oil in 5 ml of carrier oil for asthmatic and bronchitis spasm.
  - **Baths:** add 10 to 20 drops of essential oil for a soothing and relaxing bath that can be helpful for insomnia. Add 2 to 5 drops to children's baths.
  - **Creams:** a few drops of lavender oil can be added to chamomile cream used for eczema.
  - **Hair rinse:** dilute 5-10 drops in water as a hair rinse for lice or use a few drops of neat oil on a fine-toothed comb to run through the hair for nits. Lavender hair rinse may also help baldness.
  - **Lotion:** a few drops of oil in a little water can be used as a lotion for sunburn or minor scalds. Use a stronger concentration of lavender oil for more severe burns.
  - **Oil:** use the oil neat on insect bites and stings.

**Special Considerations:** Generally considered safe. Recommended that pregnant women avoid using internally in large doses.



# Lemon Balm

**Botanical Name:** *Melissa officinalis*

**Family:** Labiatae

**Common Names:** Melissa, Balm

**Botanical Description:** Green spiky leaves with green stems and small white flowers when in bloom.

**Parts Used:** Leaves

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow from seed or transplant. Perennial. Likes warm climates with full sun and fertile soil. Harvest leaves as needed.

**Culinary Uses:** Primarily in teas or garnish on lemony desserts.

**Energetics:** sour, spicy, cooling

**Actions:** sedative, antidepressant, digestive stimulant, peripheral vasodilator, diaphoretic, relaxing restorative for nervous system, antiviral (possible due to polyphenols and tannins), antibacterial.

## Medicinal Uses:

- *Leaves:*
  - Infusion: make with fresh leaves, water which is off the boil and in a pot with a lid to avoid evaporating too much of the essential oil. Ideal for depression, nervous exhaustion, indigestion or nausea and the early stages of colds and influenzas.
  - Tincture: best made from fresh leaves and with a rather stronger but similar action to the infusion. Small doses (5-10 drops) are usually more effective.
  - Ointment: useful for sores and insect bites. The plant also contains citronella which can help to repel insects.
  - Infused oil: use as the ointment or as a gentle massage oil for tension or chest complaints. Make by the hot infusion method (less effective than essential oil-based extracts)
  - Compress: use a pad soaked in the infusion for painful swellings such as gout.
  - Mouthwash: use the infusion for mouth ulcers.
- *Essential oil:*
  - Massage oil: use 5-10 drops of essential oil in 20 ml of almond or olive oil for depression, tension and as an antispasmodic for asthma and bronchitis.
  - Ointment: use 5ml of oil to 100ml of an ointment base for insect bites or as a preventative to deter pests.

**Special Considerations:** Lemon balm is considered a thyroid inhibitor; those suffering from hypothyroidism or low thyroid activity should use under the guidance of a health-care practitioner.



# Licorice

**Botanical Name:** *Glycyrrhiza glabra*

**Family:** Leguminosae

**Common Names:** Lacris, Licourice, Lycorys, Reglisse, Sweet Root,

**Botanical Description:** feather shaped leaves with pale blue to violet pea-like flowers

**Parts Used:** Root

**Growing and Harvesting:** Perennial hardy in warm climates. Easy to grow from seed or propagations. Harvest root once plant has been able to mature and smaller plants are established.

**Culinary Uses:** sweetener, primarily in confections.

**Energetics:** neutral, sweet

**Actions:** anti-inflammatory, antiarthritic, tonic stimulant for adrenal cortex, lowers cholesterol levels, soothing for gastric mucosa, possibly anti-allergenic, antipyretic, expectorant.

## Medicinal Uses:

- **Tincture:** used for lung disorders, gastric inflammation, or to encourage adrenal function after steroid therapy. Also used as anti-inflammatory in arthritic and allergic conditions. Helps to disguise the flavor of other medicines.
- **Fluid extract:** slowly dissolving the juice sticks by macerating in cold water produces a strong extract which can be conveniently used as the decoction or in syrups. For stomach ulceration, pieces of juice stick can be dissolved in chamomile tea.
- **Decoction:** useful for reducing stomach acidity in cases of ulceration.
- **Syrup:** combine the decoction with honey to make a soothing and expectorant cough syrup. Combines well with thyme, hyssop, or elecampane. Useful for asthma, bronchitis, etc.
- **Wash:** use the dilute tincture for skin inflammations and itching.

**Special Considerations:** Avoid in hypertension as licorice is believed to cause fluid retention. Should not be used by people taking digoxin-based drugs. Excessive use of licorice-containing sweets and chewing gums has been linked to hypertension and abnormally high blood potassium levels.

Individuals with a history of high blood pressure, water retention, heart palpitations, and other signs of heart and/or kidney stress should use licorice only under the guidance of a qualified health-care practitioner.



# Marsh Mallow

**Botanical Name:** Althaea officinalis

**Family:** Malvaceae

**Common Names:** Mallards, Mauls, Schloss Teai, Cheeses, Mortification Koot, Malow, White mallow, Common marsh-mallow, Mortification root, Sweet weed, Wymote

**Botanical Description:** green fan-like leaves with small white to pink flowers.

**Parts Used:** Roots, Leaves, Flowers

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow. Perennial. Likes warm, damp climates with partial shade and fertile soil. Plants can become large (4ft tall). Harvest flowers and leaves off of mature plants as desired. Roots should be harvested once additional plants mature.

**Culinary Uses:** Mainly used in teas.

**Energetics:** cooling, moistening

**Actions:** Root: demulcent, expectorant, diuretic, wound herb. Leaves: expectorant, diuretic, demulcent. Flowers: expectorant

## **Medicinal Uses:**

- Roots:
  - Tincture: used for inflammation of the mucous membrane in digestive and urinary systems
  - Maceration: 25g of root to 500ml of cold water and allowed to stand overnight. This can be very thick and mucilaginous and may need further dilution but is a good soothing brew for oesophagitis, gastric ulceration, or cystitis.
  - Poultice: use the root or a paste of the powdered root mixed with water for skin inflammations and ulceration
  - Ointment: for wounds, skin ulceration, or to help draw splinters, melt 50g anhydrous lanolin, 50g beeswax, and 300g soft paraffin together over water bath. Add 100g of marshmallow root powder and heat for an hour. When this mixture has cooled to room temperature, stir in 100g of powdered slippery elm bard to form a thick mixture.
  - Compress: compresses soaked in the tincture or decoction can be used externally as the poultice.
- Leaves:
  - Infusion: mainly used for bronchial or urinary disorders: use standard doses.
  - Tincture: used as the infusion. For coughs, it can be combined with herbs like white horehound or hyssop, while for urinary complaints combine with yarrow and buchu, for example.
- Flowers:
  - Syrup: a cough syrup can be made by combining a standard infusion of the flowers (25g to 500ml) with 500g of honey or sugar.
  - Infusion: can be combined with coltsfoot, sweet violet, and corn poppy flowers to make the French "tisane des quatre fleurs" used as an expectorant and anticatarrhal tea.

**Special Considerations:** Completely safe and well loved.



# Motherwort

**Botanical Name:** *Leonurus cardiaca*

**Family:** Labiatae

**Common Names:** Lion's-tail

**Botanical Description:** spiky green leaves with small white to pink/violet flowers.

**Parts Used:** Leaves

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow from seed. Perennial. Likes warm climates with full sun. Harvest leaves off mature plants. Can be invasive.

**Culinary Uses:** Primarily in teas.

**Energetics:** bitter, spicy, cooling

**Actions:** uterine stimulant, relaxant, cardiac tonic, carminative

## Medicinal Uses:

- Infusion: as a tonic useful for menopausal syndrome, anxiety, and various heart weaknesses. Motherwort tea, flavored with cloves, can also be drunk during labor. Taken after childbirth motherwort tea helps restore the womb and reduce the risk of hemorrhaging.
- Syrup: in an infusion it does not taste particularly pleasant, so traditionally syrups or conserves of motherwort have often been used instead for similar complaints.
- Tincture: used as the infusion or combined with other heart herbs like lily of the valley and hawthorn when a strengthening tonic is needed.
- Douche: use an infusion or diluted tincture for vaginal infections and discharges

**Special Considerations:** Uterine stimulant: avoid in pregnancy although it can be used in labor. Seek professional advice for all heart conditions.

Useful as a tonic and for the heart, the aerial parts are ideal for palpitations associated with anxiety and nervous tension. Its alkaloids, stachydrine, and leonurin, also encourage and ease uterine contractions making it a valuable herb both for menstrual pains and during labor. It can also stimulate menstrual flow.



# Mugwort

**Botanical Name:** *Artemisia vulgaris*

**Family:** Compositae

**Common Names:** Moxa, Artemis herb, Artemisia, Gelon Herb, Muggons, Naughty Man, Old Man, Old Uncle Henry, Sailor's Tobacco, St. John's Plant

**Botanical Description:** leaves are hairy with a cottony texture when shredded. Flowers are typically reddish brown.

**Parts Used:** Leaves

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easily grown from rhizomes and cold hardy. Herbaceous perennial that can withstand drought.

**Culinary Uses:** Limited.

**Energetics:** bitter, acrid, warming

**Actions:** bitter digestive tonics and uterine stimulants. Stimulating nervine, menstrual regulator, and antirheumatic.

## Medicinal Uses:

- Infusion: for menopausal syndrome.
- Tincture: used for many types of menstrual disorders including scanty menstruation, prolonged bleeding, or menstrual pains. In childbirth used for prolonged labor and retained placenta. A good bitter stimulant in liver stagnation and sluggish digestion.
- Decoction: combine with dry ginger to make a warming tea for menstrual pain.

**Special Considerations:** All Artemisia species should be avoided during pregnancy and breastfeeding. They are uterine stimulants and may cause fetal abnormalities. Take for short periods only.

Mugwort has also been smoked to help with shaking, nervousness, and insomnia.



# Nettles

**Botanical Name:** *Urtica dioica*

**Family:** Urticaceae

**Common Names:** Stinging Nettle, Ortiga Ancha

**Botanical Description:** Spiky green leaves with thin spines on each leaf.

**Parts Used:** Aerial Parts, Roots

**Growing and Harvesting:** Prefers fertile, rich soil, that is semi shaded. Grows wildy in many places but can be propagated from runners.

**Culinary Uses:** Limited.

**Energetics:** bland, bitter, cooling

**Actions:** astringent, diuretic, tonic, nutritive, hemostatic, circulatory stimulant, galactagogue, hypoglycemic, antiscorbutic.

**Medicinal Uses:**

- **Aerial Parts:**
  - **Juice:** the juice from the whole fresh plant makes a good tonic for debilitated conditions and anemia. It can also be used for nettle stings. The fresh juice is also diuretic and is used for cardiac insufficiency with edema.
  - **Infusion:** use the young fresh shoots to make a spring tonic. A standard infusion can be used to stimulate the circulation and cleanse the system in arthritis, rheumatism, gout, and eczema. Also, to increase milk flow in nursing mothers.
  - **Tincture:** used in combination with relevant herbs for arthritic disorders, skin problems or heavy uterine bleeding.
  - **Wash:** for burns, insect bites, wounds.
  - **Compress:** a pad soaked in the tincture can be applied to painful arthritic joints and used for gout, neuralgia, sprains, tendonitis, and sciatica.
  - **Ointment:** for hemorrhoids (piles)
  - **Powder:** the powdered leaves can be inhaled as snuff for nosebleeds
- **Root:**
  - **Hair rinse:** a decoction can be used for dandruff, falling hair, and as a general conditioner.
  - **Decoction:** use with saw palmetto for benign prostate enlargement.

**Special Considerations:** Nettles “rob the soil,” making them rich in vitamins and minerals, including iron, so a good tonic for anemia. The high vitamin c content also ensures that the iron is properly absorbed. They help clear uric acid from the system so are good for gout and arthritis, while the astringency makes them valuable in stopping bleeding. Nettles “sting” because of histamine and formic acid in the hairs, which trigger an allergic response. Fresh nettle leaves will sting, harvest with gloves.



# Plantain

**Botanical Name:** *Plantago lanceolata*, *Plantago major*, *Plantago media*

**Family:** Plantaginaceae

**Common Names:** Cuckoo's bread, Englishman's foot, the Leaf of Patrick, Patrick's Dock, Ripple Grass, St. Patrick's Leaf, Slanlus, Snakebite, Snakeweed, Waybrfead, Waybroad, Weybroed, White Man's Foot, Ribwort, Greater plantain

**Botanical Description:** Large green leaves to slender green leaves, easily identified by parallel veining of leaves.

**Parts Used:** Seed, root, leaves

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow from seed or transplant, but probably already in your yard. Harvest leaves of mature plants, and roots similarly as plants nearby mature.

**Culinary Uses:** Mainly teas.

**Energetics:** Bland, cooling

**Actions:** Leaves: relaxing expectorant, tonifying to mucous membranes, anti-catarthal, antispasmodic, topically healing; seeds: demulcent, laxative

## Medicinal Uses:

- **Leaves:**
  - **Juice:** pressed from fresh leaves for inflamed mucous membranes in, for example, cystitis, diarrhea, lung infections (e.g., whooping cough). Use 10ml three times daily.
  - **Infusion:** second best to the juice but suitable for similar conditions.
  - **Tincture:** make from fresh leaves if possible. Good for catarrhal conditions or where a more astringent effect is needed.
  - **Syrup** combine honey with the juice or infusion to make a cough syrup useful if the throat is sore or inflamed.
  - **Poultice:** use fresh leaves for slow-healing wounds or chronic ulcers. Apply fresh leaves to insect stings.
  - **Wash:** use the juice or infusion for inflammations, sores, or wounds.
  - **Ointment:** for wounds, burns, and hemorrhoids.
  - **Gargle:** use the infusion or diluted juice for sore throats, mouth, or gum inflammations.
- **Seeds:** pour a cup of boiling water onto a teaspoon of seeds. Allow to cool and then drink the mucilage and seeds as a bulking laxative for constipation. Best taken at night.

**Special Considerations:** Perfectly safe. No known reactions or harmful side effects.



# Sage

**Botanical Name:** *Salvia officinalis*

**Family:** Labiatae (Lamiaceae)

**Common Names:** Garden sage, red sage, sawge

**Botanical Description:** velvety grey/green leaves with a variety of colored flowers. There are 750 salvia varieties to choose from.

**Parts Used:** Leaves

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow from seed or transplant. Perennial. Likes warm climates with full sun and fertile soil. Pick leaves as needed.

**Culinary Uses:** Many uses for a variety of dishes. Common kitchen spice for vegetables, poultry, and fish.

**Energetics:** warming, drying

**Actions:** Leaves: carminative, antispasmodic, astringent and healing to mucosa, antiseptic, peripheral vasodilator, suppresses perspiration, reduces salivation and lactation, uterine stimulant, systemically antibiotic, hypoglycemic, cholagogue. Essential Oil: antiseptic, antispasmodic, astringent, hypertensive, stimulant, emmenagogue, antioxidant.

## Medicinal Uses:

- Infusion: use 20g to 50ml water as a general tonic. Also, as a liver stimulant and to improve digestive function and circulation in debilitated conditions. Can also be used to reduce lactation at weaning and for night sweats and other menopause symptoms.
- Gargle/Mouthwash: use a weak infusion as a gargle for sore throats, tonsillitis, quinsy, or as mouthwash for mouth ulcers, gingivitis, and similar problems.
- Tincture: used in menopausal remedies for night sweats and as a digestive stimulant. Also used to reduce salivation in parkinsonism, giving symptomatic relief.
- Cream: popular in France to treat minor skin sores, grazes, and insect bites.
- Hair rinse: for dandruff or to restore the color to gray hair.

**Special Considerations:** Contains thujone which can trigger fits in epileptics who should avoid large amounts of the herb. Do not take therapeutic doses of sage leaf in pregnancy. Sage will cause a decrease in milk flow in lactating mothers.



# Skullcap

**Botanical Name:** *Scutellaria lateriflora*, *Scutellaria galericulata*

**Family:** Labiatae

**Common Names:** Greater skullcap, helmet flower, hoodwort, madweed, quaker bonnet

**Botanical Description:** small green leaves with purple hooded flowers

**Parts Used:** Aerial parts.

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow from seed or transplant. Invasive. Can grow in a sidewalk crack.

**Culinary Uses:** Limited.

**Energetics:** bitter, cooling

**Actions:** Relaxing and restorative nervine, antispasmodic

## Medicinal Uses:

- o Infusion: use the fresh herb if possible as a calming tea in nervous exhaustion, excitability, over-anxiety, etc. the tea can also be helpful for PMT or taken – combined with wild lettuce or passionflower at night for insomnia.
- o Tincture: best made from the fresh herb and a very potent calming nervine. Take 5ml as a simple or combine with lemon balm (1ml) for any nervous stresses or depression.

## Special Considerations:

A comparative newcomer to the European Materia medica, blue skullcap was used by Native Americans for rabies and to promote menstruation. It is characterized by its dish shaped seedpods and flowers grow on only one side of the stem, hence its botanical name *S. lateriflora*. Today it is considered as one of the best herbal nervines – sedative, tonic, and antispasmodic. It can also be helpful in premenstrual tension and has been used for epilepsy. Harvest late in the flowering period when some of the characteristic skullcap-shaped seed pods have formed.



# Sweet Basil

**Botanical Name:** *Ocimum basilicum*

**Family:** Lamiaceae

**Common Names:** Albahaca, American Dittany, "Our Herb," St. Joseph's Wort, Witches Herb, Nijilika, Balanoi, Feslien

**Botanical Description:** large green leaves or purple leaves with small white or purple flowers. Woody stems from brown, to purple, to green.

**Parts Used:** aerial parts (leaves and flowers)

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow but sensitive to cold weather. Annual. Can be grown from seed or transplants once temperatures reach +50F. Pinch off flowers to promote bushy growth. To harvest, pick mature leaves. For pesto, or large basil use, plant multiple plants 6 to 8 inches apart.

**Culinary Uses:** many, commonly used as a spice in Italian cuisines. Popular in dishes such as pesto sauces, soups, pizza, salads, and garnish.

**Energetics:** warming

**Actions:** antidepressant, antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, antiemetic, tonic, carminative, febrifuge, expectorant, antispasmodic, stimulates the adrenal cortex

## Medicinal Uses:

- *Essential oil:*
  - Baths: use 5-10 drops in a bath for nervous exhaustion, mental fatigue, melancholy, or fear.
  - Chest rub: use 5 drops in a 10ml or almond oil as a rub for asthma or bronchitis. Can be combined with thyme or hyssop oils.
  - Massage oil: use the diluted oil for nervous weakness; can be applied to prevent insect bites.
- *Leaves:*
  - Fresh herb: rub leaves on insect bites to reduce itching and inflammation.
  - Tincture: this is almost as potent as the essential oil and can be combined with wood betony and skullcap in nervous conditions or with elecampane and hyssop for coughs and bronchitis.
  - Steam inhalant: pour boiling water on basil leaves as an inhalant for head colds. Alternatively add 2-3 drops of the essential oil to a basin of very hot water and inhale.
  - Infusion: combine with motherwort and drink a standard infusion immediately after childbirth to prevent a retained placenta.
  - Juice: mix with a decoction of cinnamon and cloves for chills; combine 50:50 with honey as a syrup for coughs or use the same honey/basil juice mixture externally for ringworm and itching.

**Special Considerations:** Basil oil should not be used in pregnancy. Not recommended for internal use in toddlers and infants.



# Valerian

**Botanical Name:** *Valeriana officinalis*

**Family:** Valerianaceae

**Common Names:** All-Heal, Amantilla, Bloody butcher, Capon's Trailer, Cat's Valerian, English Valerian, Fragrant Valerian, Garden Heliotrope, Phu, Red Valerian, St. George's Herb, Sete Wale, Set Well, Vandal Root

**Botanical Description:** Feather-like leaves with compound pink to white flowers.

**Parts Used:** Root.

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow from seed or transplant. Perennial. Likes partial shade to full sun, with moist soil. Plants can get 3 to 5 feet tall and is fairly hardy.

**Culinary Uses:** Limited primarily to tea.

**Energetics:** warming, spicy, bitter

**Actions:** tranquilizer, antispasmodic, expectorant, diuretic, hypotensive, carminative, mild anodyne.

## Medicinal Uses:

- o Maceration: soak two teaspoons of the chopped, preferably, fresh root for 8 to 10 hours in a cup of cold water. Used as a sedating brew for anxiety and insomnia. Add 2-3 drops of peppermint water to disguise the flavor.
- o Tincture: dosage can vary considerably with individuals – up to 5 ml may be required but, in some people, this can cause headaches so start with low doses. Use as a sedative or for insomnia. The tincture can be combined with licorice and other expectorants for coughs.
- o Wash: use the infusion or maceration for chronic ulcers, wounds, or for drawing splinters.
- o Compress: a pad soaked in the tincture can ease muscle cramps.

**Special Considerations:** Easily confused with the popular garden plant red "American" valerian. Do not use for more than two or three weeks without a break as continual use or high doses may lead to headaches and palpitations. Enhances the action of sleep-inducing drugs so avoid if taking this type of medication. Generally considered safe. However, for some there may be opposite effects. Some may experience the sedative properties; others may find them irritating. Use caution when driving or using machinery when taking Valerian internally. Valerian may increase the effects of other sedation medications.



# Witch Hazel

**Botanical Name:** *Hamamelis virginiana*

**Family:** Hamamelidaceae

**Common Names:** Snapping Hazelnut, Spotted Alder, Winterbloom

**Botanical Description:** Large shrub or small tree reaching 30ft high to 20 ft wide. Broad brown/green leaves with small yellow to red spindly flowers.

**Parts Used:** Bark and Leaves

**Growing and Harvesting:** Grow from propagations or established roots. Likes sunny areas with well-draining soil. May take years before plants are mature enough to harvest. Harvest leaves and bark in small amounts as to not damage the shrub.

**Culinary Uses:** Limited.

**Energetics:** Bitter, neutral

**Actions:** astringent, stops internal and external bleeding, anti-inflammatory

**Medicinal Uses:**

- **Leaves:**
  - Infusion: take for diarrhea or bleeding piles. A daily cup can also help combat capillary fragility associated with steroidal therapy.
  - Mouthwash/gargle: use the infusion for sore throats, mouth ulcers, tonsillitis, pharyngitis, and spongy or bleeding gums.
  - Wash: use the infusion to bathe varicose veins, bruises, grazes, irritant, skin rashes, and areas of capillary fragility.
  - Distillate: commercially available distilled witch hazel can be used as a wash, like the infusion, or to soak a cotton swab as a nasal plug for nosebleeds or applied to cuts and grazes to stop bleeding.
  - Eye pads: use a cotton swab soaked in an infusion or distilled witch hazel to relieve tired eyes.
- **Twigs:**
  - Decoctions: use as an infusion of the leaves
- **Bark:**
  - Tincture: the dilute tincture can be used externally as a substitute for distilled witch hazel
  - Ointment: use on piles or irritant varicose veins.
  - Cream: use for minor cuts and grazes or bruising.

**Special Considerations:** The healing properties of Virginian witch hazel were highly valued by various native American peoples: the menominees rubbed the decoction in to their legs to keep them supple during sports, while the Potawatomi's put witch hazel twigs into sweat baths to relieve sore muscles. The herb was adopted by settlers and listed in the US national formulary until 1955. Distilled witch hazel is widely available today and is well known in domestic first aid.



# Wood Betony

**Botanical Name:** *Stachys betonica*, *Stachys officinalis*, *Betonica officinalis*

**Family:** Labiatae

**Common Names:** Bishopwort, Lousewort, Purple Betony

**Botanical Description:** short reddish-greenish leaves, with tall flowers ranging from yellow, to red, to purple.

**Parts Used:** Aerial parts

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow from rhizomes. Perennial that does spread easily. Likes full sun and rich soil. Harvest in summer while flowering.

**Culinary Uses:** Limited.

**Energetics:** bitter, cooling

**Actions:** sedative, bitter digestive remedy, nervine, circulatory tonic particularly for cerebral circulation, astringent.

## Medicinal Uses:

- Infusion: use in low doses (1 tsp per cup) as a general relaxing and tonic herb for everyday drinking. In therapeutic doses it can be used for menstrual pain, migraines, and other headaches, nervous tension, as a digestive stimulant and cleanser. Combine with elderflower or yarrow and drink hot at the onset of colds or flu. The hot infusion can also be drunk during difficult or painful labor.
- Tincture: use as the infusion. Especially helpful for nervous headaches when it combines well with lavender. For catarrhal conditions use with ground ivy or coltsfoot. Also useful as a cleansing herb in toxic and arthritic conditions.
- Poultice: for wounds and bruises.
- Tonic wine: macerate 50g of betony with 25g each of vervain and hyssop in 750ml of white wine for two weeks. Use for nervous headaches and tension in liqueur glass doses.
- Mouthwash: use an infusion for mouth ulcers and gum inflammations. Also, as a gargle for sore throats.
- Wash: use an infusion for leg ulcers and infected wounds.

**Special Considerations:** Uterine stimulant; avoid high doses during pregnancy but drink betony tea during labor. Wood betony was the most important herb in the Anglo-Saxon repertoire. Wood betony had around thirty uses in the Leech Book of Bald. Mainly used for headaches and nervous disorders, the herb is also a good digestive remedy – stimulating and cleansing for the system – with a mild diuretic action. It can be used as a pain killer and wound herb and may be helpful for catarrh and coughs.



# Yarrow

**Botanical Name:** Achillea millefolium

**Family:** Compositae

**Common Names:** AchiUea, Bad Man's Plaything, Carpenter's Weed, Death Flower, Devil's Nettle, Eerie, Field Hops, Gearwe, Hundred Leaved Grass, Knight's Milfoil, Knyghten, Lady's Mantle, Milfoil, Militaris, Military Herb, Millefolium, Noble Yarrow, Nosebleed, Old Man's Mustard, Old Man's Pepper, Sanguinary, Seven Year's Love, Snake's Grass, Soldier's Woundwort, Stanch Griss, Stanch Weed, Tansy, Thousand Seal, Wound Wort, Yarroway, Yerw

**Botanical Description:** Bushy, feather-like green leaves with small compound flowers ranging from white, to yellow, to pink..

**Parts Used:** Aerial Parts.

**Growing and Harvesting:** Easy to grow from seed and will self-seed readily. Perennial. Harvest when in flower for highest potency.

**Culinary Uses:** Limited.

**Energetics:** warming, spicy, bitter

**Actions:** aerial parts/flowers: astringent, diaphoretic, peripheral vasodilator, digestive stimulant, restorative for menstrual system, febrifuge.

## **Medicinal Uses:**

- *Aerial Parts:*
  - Infusions: use to encourage sweating to reduce fevers. Combine with elderflowers and peppermint for colds and influenza. Also makes a good appetite stimulant and digestive tonic.
  - Tinctures: use a standard dose for cardiovascular problems, urinary disorders, or menstrual irregularities.
  - Compress: use a soaked pad in infusion on dilute tincture to soothe varicose veins
- *Leaves*
  - Fresh: Single leaves, inserted in the nostrils can be used to stop nosebleeds.
  - Poultice: for emergency first aid bind washed fresh leaves to cuts and grazes
- *Flowers*
  - Steam inhalation: use 1 tbsp of fresh flowers in a bowl of boiling water for hay fever/mild asthma.
  - Infusion: use externally as a wash for eczema or internally drink as tea for hay fever and upper respiratory catarrh.
- *Essential Oil*
  - Massage oil: use 5 to 10 drops of yarrow oil in 25 ml of infused St. John's wort oil for inflamed joints as in arthritis or tennis elbow.
  - Chest rub: combine with essential oils of eucalyptus, peppermint, hyssop, or thyme in a carrier oil for chesty colds. Use no more than a total of 20 drops of essential oil in 25 ml of base (almond or sunflower oil)

**Special Considerations:** In rare cases yarrow can cause an allergic reaction, usually in the form of skin rashes, and prolonged use can increase skin photosensitivity. Large doses should be avoided in pregnancy.