

Spring time medicinal weeds and shrubs

- **Catnip** *Nepata cataria*. Family: *Lamiaceae*
 - **Taste:** Pungent, pleasantly sour
 - **Energetics:** drying, warming
 - **Actions:** calms the stomach (carminative), stimulates sweating (diaphoretic), reduces fever (febrifuge), gentle sedative

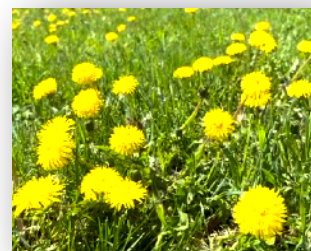
Well known for the way it excites cats, catnip has been highly valued for its gentle action for colds, flu and fever in adults and children. Helps relieve flatulence, and help with indigestion and colic. Can also help with headaches related to digestive issues. A tincture has been used topically as a rub to address arthritis and rheumatism.

- **Creeping Charlie** *Glechoma hederaceae* Family: *Lamiaceae*
 - **Taste:** Bitter, pungent
 - **Energetics:** warming, drying
 - **Actions:** as an expectorant (for moist coughs), anti-inflammatory, digestive tonic, diuretic, calms the stomach, nutritive



This little herb creates dense mats as its stem sends down roots at each node. Like other mints, it like moist soils. Has been used to relieve tinnitus, sore throat, hemorrhoids and diarrhea. High in vitamin C and several minerals. In old England, known as “alehoof” because was used to flavor and clarify ale.

- **Dandelion** *Taraxacum officinale* Family: *Asteraceae*
 - **Taste:** Bitter
 - **Energetics:** drying, cooling
 - **Actions:** powerful diuretic, detoxifying (to liver), stimulates bile (bitter)

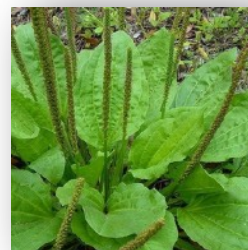


An important first food for bees as they emerge from winter hives, the bright yellow flowers announce spring in the Upper Midwest. Used for generations to help cleans the liver after the heavy meals of winter. Its sharply toothed leaves – particularly the young ones – can be used in a tonic salad. Two-year old roots are dug up in the fall and used dried or roasted. A 2004 study found the root has marked anti-cancer activity. While commercial diuretics often rob the body of potassium, the herb does not because it contains high levels of this mineral.

- **Plantain** *Plantago major*, and *P. lanceolata*

Family: *Plantaginaceae*

- **Taste:** Salty, bitter, sweet, astringent
- **Energetics:** cooling, moistening, softening
- **Actions on the body:** Antimicrobial, demulcent, diuretic, expectorant, anti-inflammatory, nutritive, vulnerary, slightly astringent. The seeds are used as a bulking agent in laxatives. A poultice of the leaves are used for small cuts, bruises and especially for insect bites and stings. The infused oil is used in healing salves and creams. Has been used to relieve dry, hacking coughs.



Prickly Ash *Zanthoxylum americanum* Family: *Rutaceae*

- **Taste:** Pungent, numbing
- **Energetics:** warming, drying, stimulating
- **Actions:** The most northern member of the citrus family, shrub can easily reach 15 feet. Alternate thorns along the stem. Bark is harvested in spring, and the seeds in summer. Chewing twig or berry causes numbing.



Increases peripheral circulation. Has been used for sciatica, arthritis, and peripheral neuropathies. It is an alterative (blood purifier), analgesic, carminative, diaphoretic, and circulatory stimulant. Increases sweating, is anti-rheumatic, and antifungal.

Used as a tincture, infused oil, and decoction. Contains isoquinoline, alkaloids, furanocoumarins, lignans, volatile oils and tannins. Not recommended during pregnancy.

- **Stinging Nettle** *Urtica dioica* Family: Nettle (*Urticaceae*)

- **Taste:** Salty
- **Energetics:** cooling and very drying
- **Actions:** Nutritive, diuretic, anti-inflammatory, alterative,

Found in nearly every garden, farm, and ditch, nettles is one of the first helpful herbs to appear in spring. It likes shade and moist soils. It is used as food, as a tea, and in a variety of remedies. Packed with Vitamin C, minerals, calcium, fiber, potassium, flavonoids, and more. May not be the best for people with dry and cool constitutions. Never consume without first cooking or drying this herb.



- **Chickweed** *Stellaria media* Family: *Caryophyllaceae*

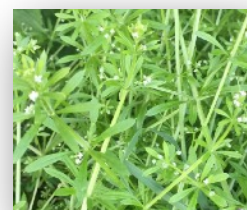
- **Taste:** Salty
- **Energetics:** cooling , moistening, nutritive; demulcent/ mucilaginous
- **Actions:** Nutritive, alterative, inflammatory modulator, lymphagogue, diuretic, expectorant, febrifuge, vulnerary, antiviral against Herpes Simplex 2 and Hepatitis B2



Found in nearly every garden and shady spot chickweed has been used for dry coughs, irritated eyes, rashes. As a wash or salve to address skin inflamed by eczema, blisters, scrapes, boils, insect bites/stings, diaper rash. Nutritive especially for someone recovering from long illness. Its saponins help regulate blood sugar, promote a healthy microbiome.

- **Cleavers** *Galium aparine* Family: *Rubiaceae*

- **Taste:** Salty
- **Energetics:** cooling and slightly drying
- **Actions:** diuretic, anti-hypertensive, detoxifying, hepatic (kidneys), lymphatic



Common names include: bedstraw, catchweed, sticky weed and goosegrass.

One of the first to appear in the spring in the shady, moist spots. It grows at the edges of tree lines and shrubby spaces. Shepherds used it to strain milk.

Fresh plant juice has been taken for kidney stones and urinary issues. Can be taken as an infusion (tea), tincture (made with the dried plant). Has been used for swollen lymph nodes, and applied to wounds to stop surface bleeding, treat sunburn, and other types of burns.

Constituents include: iridoids, polyphenolic acids, anthroquinones (root), alkanes, flavonoids, and tannins.

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