

## WELCOME TO HERBAL SAFARI© AT BULL BROOK KEEP

**W**e're Dave Toftness and Sylvia Burgos Toftness — owners and stewards of Bull Brook Keep, a 72-acre farm. After many years of breeding, grazing and direct-marketing 100% grass-fed beef, we now focus on nurturing the dozens of medicinal plants, shrubs and trees that thrive in our challenging climate.

We're glad you added us to your **Apple River Farm Tour** itinerary!

Herbal Safari is about learning how to identify and **appropriately** use the many helpful plants that may be growing in your own backyard. Holistic medicinal herbalism isn't about substituting an herb for a pharmaceutical drug. It's about knowing the plants, knowing your constitution and challenges, understanding how plants may interact with medications, and acknowledging the impact of diet, exercise and mental health.

Sylvia has been studying medicinal herbs for about 10 years and is pursuing a master's recognition, Midwest School of Herbal Studies (Plymouth, MN). David is a retired chiropractor and state certified nutritional counselor.

You can learn about future walks and classes by visiting <https://herbalsafari.com>

High summer: while some plants are reaching their peak, others are setting seed, and in some cases leaves are beginning to dry. Some berries have come and gone (thanks to the birds), and others will ripen over the next few weeks. What you see today depends on the temperatures and rainfall of that last several weeks.

Some of the helpful plants you may encounter today. The descriptions reference historical usages.



### **Amaranth** (*Amaranthus retroflexus*) aka Pigweed, Red root

**Energetics:** drying

**Taste:** sweet, salty, astringent

**Tissue states:** damp, cold

**Actions:** astringent, anti-inflammatory

Stout annual that can grow up to 6', but usually 2-4'. Leaves long and alternate, some may be tinged with red. Flowers at top of stem and from leaf axils. Grow in waste land and on cultivated ground. Over 100K tiny black seeds per plant.

Young leaves may be used sparingly as potherb all season. Ripe seeds in fall can be roasted then cooked as porridge.

Contains pro-vitamin A, vitamin C, saponins, mucilage, and iron.

Is astringent: useful for soar throat and diarrhea. Is hemostatic, with reputation for staunching external bleeding, as well as bowel hemorrhage and heavy menstrual bleeding. Valued as an alterative. Used as a wash for ulcers, hives, eczema and psoriasis.

**Boneset** (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*) aka Feverwort, Thoroughwort. Flowering tops

**Energetics:** cooling, drying

**Taste:** sweet, salty, astringent

**Tissue states:** damp, cold

**Actions:** astringent, anti-inflammatory

A perennial growing up to 5 feet high, boneset was the single most important flu botanical used by Native-Americans, colonial Americans, and white American pioneers of the 1800s. It was also used by American Eclectic physicians in the 1850-1920s to break up the common cold, “especially when accompanied by deep-seated, aching pain and slight or no fever.” They used it safely and fairly successfully during the flu pandemic of 1918-19.

Each set of opposite leaves is joined at the base of the stalk. In fact, it looks as if the stalk is growing through the leaves, which are long, leathery looking and somewhat wavy along the edges. The leaf bottoms are downy. Prefers swampy regions, moist soils.

Moreover, in 2016, German scientists used boneset to inhibit the growth of an influenza-A clinical isolate and to prevent that virus from attaching to host cells.

Laboratory research has confirmed powerful immuno-stimulating activity for this plant's polysaccharides and sesquiterpene lactones.



**Burdock** (*Arctium lappa*)

**Energetics:** cooling, moistening, nourishing

**Taste:** bitter

**Tissue states:** hot, stagnant

**Actions:** detoxifying, blood cleanser, mild diuretic, antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, antifungal, bile stimulant

Thick leaves emerge from a rosette, and get larger throughout the season. Leaves can be 18”+ long with wavy edges. In its second year, it sends up a flower stalk 3-5 feet high that bears thistle-like tubular florets on long, branching stems.

Root: Harvest first-year root in fall. Use fresh or chop and dry. Fresh roots may be sliced and cooked as a vegetable. Leaves: less effective than the root, but can be used especially for stomach upset. Harvest leaves before flowering or during early flowering. Can be used as a poultice. Seeds: are harvested in the fall from the mature burs.

Historically used to stimulate the production of digestive juices, particularly bile. Used to support and cleanse the liver, to aid conditions such as acne, eczema and psoriasis. Has been used to support and aid kidney function.

**Creeping Charlie** *Glechoma hederaceae* Family: *Lamiaceae***Energetics:** warming, drying**Taste:** bitter**Tissue states:** damp and stagnation; tissue depression and heat.**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*

Common names: Dandelion, *pu gong ying*; in French, *pissenlit* (*pee the bed*)

**Energetics:** Cooling and drying**Taste:** leaf is bitter and salty; flower is bitter and sweet**Tissue States:** damp stagnation, tissue depression, heat**Actions:****Flower:** emollient, vulnerary, nutritive, anodyne**Root:** hepatic, cholagogoue, nutritive, galactagogue, antibacterial, aperient, laxative**Leaf:** tonic, diuretic, cholagogoue, nutritive

Digestive stimulant: Directly increases stomach production of hydrochloric acid to relieve gas, bloating and and heartburn (particularly useful for elders with decreasing function).

Americans spend millions of dollars every year to rid their lawns of this hardy and assertive herbaceous annual. While some say dandelions arrived here with the first European ships, some Native Americans assert it was used centuries before Columbus.

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), uses the entire plant as a diuretic and liver stimulant. In Western herbalism, used to address edema, especially with heart problems. The root is used to increase bile flow and aid the liver, helping to digest fats and and remove toxins.

**Goldenrod** (*Solidago canadensis*, *S. spp.*) Family: Asteracea

**Energetics:** warming, stimulating, drying

**Taste:** bitter

**Tissue states:** lax, cold

**Actions:** diuretic anti-catarrhal, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, astringent, carminative, vulnerary, diaphoretic, stimulant. Specific for mucous membranes and clearing inflammation.



Grows all across North America except AL, GA, LA, SC and FL. There are 100 species of Goldenrod — most of them native to North America. It can be difficult to distinguish the varieties because many easily hybridize.

An important pollen source for bees, food for butterflies, and forage for livestock. Spreads aggressively via rhizomes and seeds. Because the intense flowers are so visible in late summer, Goldenrod is often blamed for seasonal hay fever. Not so: Goldenrod pollen is heavy and requires insects to spread it around. In fact, Goldenrod works to address the irritation caused by ragweed pollen, which is in the air at the same time Goldenrod blooms. Goldenrod is one of the first herbs to consider when there is congestion in the upper respiratory tract, especially the sinuses.

In addition to working as an anti-histamine, this herb stimulates the kidneys which, in turn, addresses skin conditions as well as urinary system sluggishness.

First Nations people have a long history of using Goldenrod infusions as a wash for wounds, burns and infections. Can relax spasm, cramping and tightness due to sprains.

Goldenrod's antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory qualities, as well as its safety, make it a good remedy for bladder infections, cystitis and prostatitis. It has also been used as a specific for sluggish kidneys, and used in combination with other herbs to prevent the formation of kidney stones. Can help move suppressed urine and scant output.

It is also an effective digestive tonic. As an astringent it can be helpful for diarrhea.

An infused oil made with the flowers can be used as a remedy for sprained and strained muscles.

Leaves are gathered throughout the summer before it blooms. Flowers are gathered just as they are beginning to open.

Can be drying, so be aware of over-consumption. Avoid during pregnancy.



**Hawthorn** (*Crataegus ssp*) Family: *Rosaceae*. aka *May tree, Thorn apple*.

**Energetics:** *cooling, moistening*

**Taste:** *sweet, sour, astringent*

**Tissue states:** *stagnant circulation, inflammation.*

There are hundreds, if not well over 1,000, species of Hawthorn in the US and across the world's temperate climates. This shrubby tree has been used for hundreds of years by many cultures.

Parts used: leaves and flowers as the tree is blooming. The haws (berries) in the fall.

• Actions:

- Cardio-tonic
- Cardio-protective
- astringent
- antioxidant
- relaxant
- digestive
- diuretic
- nutritive
- vasodilator

Used as tea, jelly, beverage, tincture as

- a heart tonic, nourishes heart tissue
- to tone cardiac blood vessels
- help heart imbalances (arrhythmias, palpitations, congestive heart failure, hypertension)
- for bloating and stagnations, especially after a greasy meal
- to decrease excessive heart rate
- has been used to treat angina and coronary heart disease



**Lamb's Quarters** (*Chenopodium album*) aka *Goosefoot, Fat Hen*

**Energetics:** *moistening, cooling*

**Taste:** *sweet, salty, sweet*

**Tissue states:** *atrophy, heat*

**Actions:** *demulcent, emollient, expectorant, immunomodulator, nutritive, vulnerary*

Found throughout North America in disturbed soils. Alternate leaves 1-4" long are somewhat triangular in shape with wavy edge. Mealy, white underside as if dusted with fine white powder. Minute flowers in dense clusters in spikes at stem ends. These produce papery seeds.

Contains oxalates, alkaloid, scopoletin, pro-vitamin A, Vitamin C, minerals, riboflavin and niacin.

Has been used as a diet staple raw or cooked. Historically used for its astringent and anti-inflammatory properties to treat burns, headache, soar throat, arthritis, and diarrhea. **Caution:** Pregnant women should not consume seeds, which can be abortive.



**Mallow** (*Malva neglecta*) aka *cheeseweed*. Family: *Malvaceae*

**Energetics:** moistening, cooling

**Taste:** sweet, salty, sweet

**Tissue states:** atrophy, heat

**Actions:** demulcent, emollient, expectorant, immunomodulator, nutritive, vulnerary

Growing from a central, hairy stem, branching out to a bushy stand a foot or more tall. Alternately arranged leaves are rounded or kidney-shaped with dentate edges. They feel hairy or velvety. Five petaled, pale striped flowers grow from base of leaf stalks.

Prepared as cold infusion for use internally and externally, decoction, food, low-alcohol tincture.

It's mucilage helps sooth internally and externally: hot, dry lungs; digestive inflammation, dry and itchy skin, spasmodic coughs. Has been used to address cold and flu symptoms, relieves burning of urinary tract infections.

Used as a cold infusion, food, low-alcohol tincture, and tea.

Has been used as a diet staple raw or cooked. Historically used for its astringent and anti-inflammatory properties to treat burns, headache, soar throat, arthritis, and diarrhea. **Caution:** Pregnant women should not consume seeds, which can be abortive.

### **Oak** (*Quercus* ssp)

Left to right: Pin Oak, White Oak, Red Oak.

**Energetics:** drying and constricting

**Taste:** bitter

**Tissue states:** lax, edemic

**Actions:** anti-diarrheal, antiseptic, antivenemous, astringent, hemostatic, styptic



Contains large amounts of tannins. Oak is a powerful astringent (pulls together loose and fluid filled issues). Has been used internally for hemorrhoids and varicose veins. Used as a gargle for sore throats, or as a mouthwash for bleeding gums. Can be constipating or cause indigestion if taken in large amounts or for an extended period of time.

Historically, powdered dry bark has been used as a styptic, and sprinkled on eczema to dry the affected skin. Oak tincture can be applied to insect bites and stings.



**Pine - White** (*Pinus strobus*, etc.)

*Pine (Pinus) is one of the 11 genera within the Conifer family. There are hundreds of species of conifers, including spruces, Douglas Fir, Eastern Hemlock, and Tamarack. There are many Pine (Pinus) species in the Upper Midwest: White, Red, Lodge, and more.*

**Energetics:** warming and drying

**Taste:** pungent, bitter, sour,

**Tissue states:** lax, edemic

**Actions:** antiseptic, aromatic, drawing, expectorant, testosterone-enhancing, analgesic, nutritive (Vitamin C), antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory and wound healing.

Pine resin, bark, needles and pollen have been used as food and remedies for generations.

Pine gum has been used for wound healing and to draw out pus and slivers. Pine pollen helps strengthen muscles and tendons, and helps with tissue repair. The pollen contains testosterone and has been used as a male tonic.

The bark and needles used in a tea, or as a tiny bit of pine resin, helps to thin and remove (expectorate) mucus from sinuses and lungs. As a salve or infused oil as a topical treatment for itchy, inflamed skin and dry rashes.

**Pineapple Weed** (*Metricaria discoidea*) aka wild chamomile, disc mayweed. Family

**Energetics:** moistening, cooling

**Taste:** sweet    **Smell:** Like pineapple

**Tissue states:** heat, inflammation

**Actions:** anti-inflammatory, antispasmodic, mild anti-microbial and antifungal.

2-8" tall, hardy annual. Grows in disturbed and compacted soils.

History of use to promote relaxation and reduce anxiety. Mild sedative qualities, like chamomile. Used to address indigestion, bloating, gas, stomach cramps and menstrual cramps. Has been used to soothe minor skin irritations, such as insect bites.

Caution: may cause skin irritations to people sensitive to the Asteraceae family (daisies, ragweed). Pregnant women should seek medical counsel before using.





**Plantain** (*Plantago major*) Family: *Plantaginaceae*. aka Snakeweed, cart tract plant

**Energetics:** moistening, cooling, softening/drying

**Taste:** sweet, salty, astringent

**Tissue states:** atrophy, heat, relaxation

**Actions:** demulcent, vulnerary, astringent, antimicrobial; seeds: bulking agent

This perennial grows 4-10" high all across the continent wherever soils are disturbed. Inadvertently brought to the Americas by settlers. Grows from basal cluster of elongated oval leaves borne on thick petiole. Leaves are smooth edged and bear 3-7 parallel veins extending from the base of the leaf to the tip. A central stalk is covered with inconspicuous flowers that become seed pods. Leaves may be used in salads.

Contains iridoid glycosides, flavonoids, phenolic acids, fatty acids, unsaturated fatty acids, enzymes, mucilage and tannins.

Historically used for sores and ulcers, bleeding of the gums, hemorrhoids. Tea or diluted tincture has been used for inflamed gums or mouth. Poultice used for inflamed and blistered feet, swellings, cuts and sores. Plantain has also been used to draw out or neutralize wounds, boils, insect bites and stings. Used to reduce itching.

Has been used as a diuretic to address urinary gravel, urinary tract infection, cystitis. As an expectorant, it has been used to ease coughs, and the pain and irritation of chronic bronchitis.

**Prickly Ash** (*Zanthoxylum americanum*). Family: *Rutaceae* aka toothache tree

**Energetics:** warming, drying, stimulating

**Taste:** Pungent, numbing

**Tissue states:** stagnant circulation, inflammation.

The most northern member of the citrus family, shrub can reach 15'. Alternate thorns along the stem. Bark is harvested in spring, and seeds in summer. Chewing berries causes numbing.



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

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

**Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*)****Energetics:** cooling, relaxing**Taste:** sweet**Tissue states:** hot, inflamed**Actions:** vulnerary, depurative, lymphatic, sedative, expectorant and antispasmodic

Six to eighteen-inches tall on sprawling, hairy, branching stems. Compound leaves consist of three leaflets, each oval and with a lighter crescent at mid-leaf. Tiny flowers of pink or magenta in color cluster into a flower head at the end of the stem.



Has more than 125 constituents, including: coumarins, isoflavones, flavones, salicylic acid, essential oil; carbohydrates, calcium, chromium, copper, magnesium, potassium, and phosphorus, and well as vitamin C and B. Sweet taste.

Traditionally used as a salve to heal sores, ulcers and burns. An alterative helpful for eczema and psoriasis. A strong lymphatic useful for hard milk glands and lymphatic swellings. Its sedative and expectorant qualities lent its use as teas for persistent coughs.

Eclectic and Thomsonian herbalists, and some Native American tribes used red clover used to treat cancer.

This herb is contraindicated during pregnancy due to its hormonal affects.

**Self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*) aka Heal-all, Woundwort, Slough heal****Energetics:** moistening, cooling, nutritive**Taste:** bitter, somewhat pungent/acrid, hints of sweetness**Tissue states:** excitations, heat, atrophy, stagnation**Actions:** hemostatic, astringent, demulcent, vulnerary, diuretic, hypotensive, hemostatic, inflammatory modulator, immunomodulator, antiviral - especially against herpes simplex, HPV and even HIV (in-vitro studies), lymphatic stimulant

Used in the form of a tea or tincture, in salves and creams, as an external wash. Used to address diarrhea, stomachache, sore throat, to heal wounds and soars. Used to address herpes simplex.

**Yarrow** (*Achillea millefolium*) Aster family**Energetics:** drying, cooling**Taste:** bitter, pungent**Tissue states:** heat, inflammation**Actions:** antiseptic, anodyne, antimicrobial, aromatic, astringent, carminative, diuretic, inflammatory modulator, relaxing diaphoretic, styptic, vulnerary

Found all over the Northern Hemisphere. Used for wounds, bleeding, urinary tract and other infections, varicose veins, fevers, Remedies used have been as an oil, poultice, salves, teas, suppository, steam and tincture.

In Greek mythology, Achilles is said to have used yarrow to stop the bleeding of soldiers wounded in battle. It's astringency helps pull tissues together, and its broad antimicrobial properties help keep wounds clear of infection.

Taken as a hot tea, yarrow promotes sweating. It promotes circulation to the periphery by dilating capillaries and encouraging heat to leave the body through the skin. Yarrow tea can also help relieve soar throat.

Taken as a cool tea, it acts as a diuretic, promoting urine flow. When used to address a urinary tract infection, yarrow is often combined with echinacea, juniper and maze.

Because it is bitter and aromatic, it helps support digestion.

A big plus: you can use its aromatics to repel insects, including mosquitoes.

### Resources

These are some of the sources I rely on because they are written/produced by trained herbalists with decades of clinical experience, and because they reference scientific studies. They are highly regarded by their peers, and are recognized by the American Botanical Council and/or the American Herbalist Guild.

#### Books

- Matthew Alfs, Edible & Medicinal Plants of the Midwest
- Nicole Apelian and Claude Davis, The Lost Book of Herbal Remedies
- Richo Cech, Making Plant Medicine
- Rosalee De La Foret and Emily Han, Wild Remedies
- Rosemary Gladstar, Medicinal Herbs
- David Hoffmann
- Tomas Easley and Steven Horne, The Modern Herbal Dispensatory
- Kat Maier, Energetic Herbalism: A Guide to Sacred Plant Traditions Integrating Elements of Vitalism, Ayurveda, and Chinese Medicine
- Anne Stobart:
- Matthew Wood, The Earthwise Herbal Repertory
- Matthew Wood, The Book of Herbal Wisdom
- David Winston

#### Professional Organizations

- American Botanical Council
- American Herbalist Guild
- United Plant Savers

*This event and written materials are meant for informational purposes only. They are not intended to substitute for or supplement medical care and counseling. Please do not attempt self-care of a medical problem without consulting a qualified healthcare practitioner.*