

Common Name: **All Heal**

Genus: *Prunella*

Species: *vulgaris*

Family: Lamiaceae

AKA: Self-Heal, Hook-Heal, Slough-Heal, Brunella, Heart of the Earth, Blue Curles, Carpenters herbe, Sicklewoort Hercules Wound-wort, Clownes Wound-wort



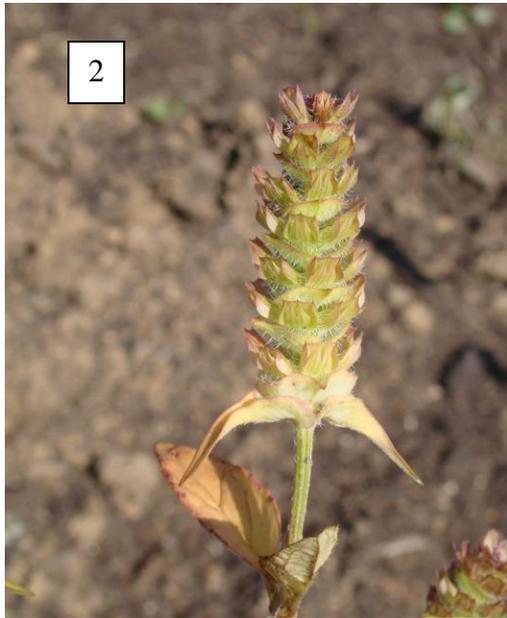
Historical Uses:

Medical: “To begin with, one plant called All-heal is found in Syria, of which we have recently spoken. Then come three other kinds, known as that of **Chaeronea**, that of **Asclepios**, and that of **Heracles**. That of Chaeronea has a leaf like monk’s rhubarb, but larger and rougher, a golden flower, and a small root; and it especially loves rich ground; they use it for the bites of snakes, spiders, vipers and other reptiles, administering it in wine or anointing the place with it mixed with olive oil. In treating a snake-bite they use a plaster of it, and also give a draught of it mixed with vinegar; and they also say that it is good for sores when mixed with wine and olive-oil and for tumours when mixed with honey.” (1)

Gerard makes reference to two different types of All-heal. The first is Hercules Wound-wort, the second is Clownes Wound-wort. These both carry the genus name of *Panax*. The plants having the genus name of *Prunella* are called out in his work as Selfe-heal. Of all three images in Gerard’s Herbal associated with these plants, the one which most closely resembles the plant *Prunella vulgaris*, is the plant Gerard is calling Selfe-heal.

Hercules Wound-wort: “The seed beat to powder and drunke in Wormwood wine is good against poison, the biting of mad dogs, and the stinging of all manner of venomous beasts. The leafe or root stamped with honey, and brought to the forme of Unguent or Salve, curreth wounds and ulcers of great difficultie, and covereth bones that are bare or naked without flesh.” (2)





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Close-up of the seed head

Clowes Wound-wort: “The leaves hereof stamped with Axungia or hogs grease, and applied unto greene wounds in a manner of a pultesse, healeth them in short time, and in such absolute manner, that it is hard for any that have not had that experience thereof to believe.” (3)

Selfe-heal: The decotion of Prunell made with wine or water, doth joine together and make whole and sound all wounds, both inward and outward, even as Bugle doth. Prunell bruised with oileof Roses and Vinegar, laid to the forepart of the head, swageth and helpeth the paine and aking thereof. To bee short, it serveth for the same as Bugle doth, and in the world there are no two better wound herbs, as hath been often proved.” (4)

“ If it be accompanied with Bugle, Sanicle, and other the like wound herbs, it will be more effectual to wash or inject into ulcers in parts outwardly. Where there is cause to repress the heat and sharpness of humours flowing to any sore, ulcers, inflammations, swelling, or the like, or to stay fluxes of blood in any wound or part, this is used with some good success; as also to cleanse the foulness of sores, and cause them more speedily to be healed. It is an especial remedy for all green wounds, to solder the lips of them, and to keep the place from any other inconveniences.” (5)

“An antidote for envenomed bites. It was also used for quinsy, small pustules of the mouth, and all ailments of the oral cavity and throat” (6)

Folklore/Astrology: “These herbes are of a temperature of *Bugula* (Bugle or Middle Comfrey), that is to say, moderately hot and drie, and something binding” (7)

“Here is another herb of Venus, Self-Heal, whereby when you are hurt you may heal yourself” (8)

Contemporary Uses:

Parts Used: Whole plant, flowers

Medicinal: “lowers fever and blood pressure,



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Typical leaf structure

stimulates the liver and gall bladder, and promotes healing. It has diuretic, antibacterial and alterative effects” “for hemorrhage and excessive menstruation” “for minor injuries, sores, burns, bruises, sore throat, mouth inflammations, and hemorrhoids” (9)
“Self – heal is an undervalued astringent and wounded healer with tonic activity. In common with other members of the mint family, such as Rosemary and Sage, it has powerful antioxidant and tissue protective activity making it potentially of value in many chronic illnesses. It’s antioxidant and astringent activity makes it beneficial in conditions such as sore throat, inflammatory bowel disease, and diarrhea, and to heal internal bleeding.” (10)

Area of Origin: Europe, temperate Asia, North Africa

Physical description: Creeping, aromatic perennial with 4-angled stems and oblong-ovate, toothed leaves

Plant type: Perennial

Form: Small, low, creeping

Height: 20”

Flower color: Purple

Flowering period: Summer to autumn

Soil type/requirements: Moist, well-drained soil

Hardiness zone: USDA 4-9

Sun requirements: Full sun or light shade

Propagation: By seed sown in autumn or spring; by division in spring

Sources:

1. Theophrastus, Book 9, chapter 9, part 1
2. Gerard, p. 1003-1004
3. Gerard, p. 1004-1005
4. Gerard, p. 633-634
5. Culpepper, p. 146-147
6. Anderson, p. 250
7. Gerard p. 633
8. Culpepper p. 146
9. Bown, p. 331
10. Chevallier, p. 250

Illustrations/Images:

1. Fuchs’ Herbal 1543
2. PSUMG 2016
3. PSUMG 2016