

Common Name: **Mugwort**

Genus: *Artemesia*

Species: *vulgaris*

Family: Asteraceae

AKA: Felon Plant, St. John's Plant, Mater Herbarum, Cingulum Santi Johannis



Historical Uses:

Medical:

“Ye juice of it being kneaded together with myrrh, & applied, doth draw from the matrix as many things as ye Insession; ye hair of it is given in drink ye quantity of 3 dragms for ye bringing out of ye same things. If any have ye herb Artemesia with him in ye way, it dissolves weariness, & he that bears it on his feet, drives away venomous beasts & devils. After that ye blood is hardened about ye joints, taking ye greater branches with Rosaceum & having made it seeth in a pot, anoint ye sick man all over as he goes to sleep; and it helps very much woman womb-strangled, assuageth ye strangury, & ye rupture of ye Opisthotonum.” (1)

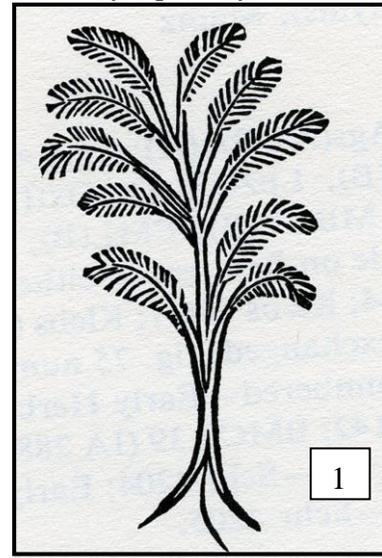
“*Pliny* sayeth that mugwort doth properly cure women's diseases. *Dioscordies* writeth, that it bringeth down the termes, the birth, and the after-birth. And that in like manner it helpeth the mother, and the paine of the matrix, to be boyled as bathes for women to sit in; and that being put up with myrrh, it is of like force that the bath is of.

And that the tender tops are boiled and drunk for the same infirmities; and that they are applied in manner of a pultesse to bring downe the monthly course.

Pliny sayeth that the traveler or wayfaring man that hath the herbe tied about him feeleth no wearisomnesse at all; and that he who hath it about him can be hurt by no poisonous medicines, nor by any wilde beast, neither yet by the Sun itself; and also that it is drunke against opium or the juice of blacke Poppy. Many other fantastical devices invented by poets are to be seene in the works of the ancient writers, tending to witch craft and sorcerie, and great dishonor of God; wherefore I do of purpose omit them, as things unworthy of my recording or your reviewing.

Mugwort pound with oyle of sweet almonds and laid to the stomache as a plaster, cureth all the paines and griefes of the same. It cureth the shaking of the joints, inking to the palsie, and helpeth the contraction or drawing together of the nerves and sinews” (2)

“Mugwort [biboz] is very warm and its juice is very useful. If it is cooked and eaten as a paste, it heals sick intestines and makes a cold stomach warm. If someone eats or drinks





Plant grow to excess of 48"

something that causes pain, let the person cook and eat Mugwort with meat, or with lard, or in a paste, or in some other condiment, and it will attract the foulness and chase it away. If bad humors, gathered in some place in a person's body, flow out through broken skin where there is no infected wound, let the person take Mugwort and express the juice. Add honey to this juice so that the honey exceeds the Mugwort juice, and then run it on the place where it hurts. Also cover it with a little egg white and tie with a pieces of cloth. Do this until the person is better." (3)

"An emmenagogue and a diuretic; also used to expel the placenta and aborted fetus. Also reputedly a remedy for epilepsy" (4)

"Being made up with hog's grease into an ointment, taketh away wens, and hard knots and kernals that grow about the neck more effectually, if some field daises be put with

it. The herb itself being fresh, or the juice thereof taken, is a special remedy upon the over-much taking of opium."(5)

"The 13th century Welsh herbal *The Physicians of Myddfai* recommended: if a woman be unable to give birth to her child let the mugwort be bound to her left thigh. Let it be instantly removed when she has delivered, lest there should be hemorrhage." (6)

Culinary: "A flavoring for pork, goose, and rice, a tobacco substitute, a pot-herb (in Japan) and an insect repellent." (7)

Folklore/Astrology: "Named for **Artemis**, the twin sister of Apollo, who assisted his birth by **Leto** with the herb afterwards called Artemisia. The Queen of Caria and wife of **Mausolis**, also named **Artemisia**, claimed the plant as her own and bestowed her own name upon it. It is warm and dry in the second degree and is a herb of **Venus**, (but all other



Mugwort: New growth

artemisiads belong to **Mars**). A leaf of the plant, placed under the foot, preserved one from weariness, demons, beasts, poison, the heat of the sun, and effects of the evil eye. Placed beneath a pillow it could foretell the outcome of a patient's illness: restlessness tokened a fatal end whereas sleep meant a recovery. The plant was also given to induce precocious puberty." (8)

Other: Mentioned in the Leechbook of Bald.

Contemporary Uses:

Parts Used: Leaves

Medicinal: "Internally for depression with loss of appetite, dyspepsia, threadworm and roundworm infestations, and menstrual complaints (in the west mainly to encourage menstruation: in the East to control uterine bleeding and threatened miscarriage). In traditional Chinese medicine the compressed, dried leaf, known as moxa is burned briefly on the skin to warm the acupuncture points in cases of internal cold. Used mainly in Ayurvedic medicine for the female reproductive system, nervous complaints, and as a wash for fungal infections." (9)

"a digestive and tonic herb, mugwort has a wide variety of traditional uses. Milder in action than most other Artemisia species, it can be taken over the long term at a low dose to improve appetite, digestive function, and absorption of nutrients. In addition to encouraging the elimination of worms, mugwort increases bile flow and mildly induces the onset of menstruation. The European conception of mugwort as a uterine stimulant is contradicted by Chinese usage, in which it is prescribed to prevent miscarriage and to reduce or stop menstrual bleeding. Mugwort is also an antiseptic and has been used in the treatment of malaria." (10)

Culinary: One of the more palatable wormwoods, used in traditional recipes (especially in the UK, Germany, and Spain) in dishes of eels or carp, and in stuffings for geese, duck, pork, and mutton. Used in China and Japan to flavor and color rice cakes and dumplings. Dried leaves and flowering tops used for tea" (11)

Cautions: "Not given internally to pregnant or lactating women." (12)

Area of Origin: Southern Europe to temperate Asia

Physical description: Semi-evergreen subshrub

Plant type: Perennial

Height: 36+"

Flower color: Tiny, yellow

Flowering period: August to September

Hardiness zone: USDA 4-10

Sun requirements: Full sun

Sources

1. Dioscorides, Book 3, plant 127 & 357
2. Gerard p. 1104
3. Von Bingen p. 99
4. Anderson p. 41
5. Culpepper p. 95
6. Chevallier, p. 173
7. the Anderson p. 41
8. Ibid
9. Bown p.134
10. Chevallier, p. 173
11. Bown p.134
12. Ibid
13. Ibid
14. Hildegard p. 99-100
15. Culpepper p. 95

Illustrations:

1. Schoffer
2. PSUMG 2012
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