

Weed Walk Notes 7 August 20

There is an APP for Identifying Herbs. Here is also an excellent website for weed identification and use: <https://www.ediblewildfood.com/edible-weeds.aspx>. The owners of this website have published two books. The \$15 book is very useful; the \$10, not so much.

Books recommended by Mick:

The Herbal Home Remedy Book by Joyce Wardwell....25 medicinal and edible plants that grow in much of the US. This is Mick's favorite book on the subject, but the pictures aren't great. https://www.abebooks.com/servlet/SearchResults?sts=t&cm_sp=SearchF--home--Results&kn=&an=joyce+wardwell&tn=the+herbal+home+remedy+book&isbn=

The Medicinal Garden by Anne McIntyre. This is the book with the amazing pages-long chart in the back. The cheapest copy at [abebooks.com](https://www.abebooks.com) is \$25, so here's the Amazon link: https://www.amazon.com/gp/offer-listing/0805048383/ref=tmm_pap_used_olp_0?ie=UTF8&condition=used&qid=1597094788&sr=1-9

Edible Wild Plants East/Central North America by Lee Allen Peterson. This is a good book, but Mick didn't find it very user-friendly. You might like it, though: https://www.abebooks.com/servlet/BookDetailsPL?bi=22526807294&searchurl=an%3Dlee%2Ballen%2Bpeterson%26kn%3Dedible%2Bwild%2Bplants%2Beastern%252Fcentral%2Bnorth%2Bamerica%26sortby%3D17&cm_sp=snippet--srp1--title10

Field Guide to Medicinal Plants & Herbs of Eastern and Central North America, by Steven Foster and James Duke. Another good book, but also not overly user-friendly. https://www.abebooks.com/servlet/SearchResults?isbn=9780547943985&n=100121503&cm_sp=mbc--ISBN--used

Mick took us on a weed walk throughout her property. I will list what I have and have Mick make any corrections or additions. I must have been tired at the end. Mick hope you can make sense of my notes.



Wild Rose – perennial, can use the rose hips, pick when they turn red. Makes a nice tea; put rose hips in a tea ball or cheese cloth to filter out little hairs inside the hips. Can be used fresh or dried.



Peppermint – perennial, make a tea by chopping leaves. To make peppermint oil (not essential oil), put leaves in bottom of jar, cover with olive oil, stir and release air bubbles in jar, steep for 6 weeks. For tincture, vodka can be substituted for oil; use 95% alcohol (obtained in IN or IL). Shake daily. If you have dried leaves you can use 40% Vodka.



Violet – perennial, leaves are heart shaped, glossy on both sides. Eat raw in a salad, white or violet-colored flowers edible also. Eat raw or cooked (save and drink the cooking water as a healthful tea). Violet is a tonic herb that promotes healing from a long illness, some cancers, respiratory illnesses including pertussis (violet, nettles, mullein, and thyme), pick early spring to late fall.



Dandelion – perennial, leaf in salads (bitter taste), or cooked; mix with milder greens. All parts can be eaten--leaves, buds, flowers and roots, and even stems (healthful but not tasty). Open flowers can be batter-fried. Immature flower buds can be brined into "capers." Medicinally, alterative (like violet, burdock, nettles, and plantain) which helps to correct body systems. Can take every day (take one day off a week--this is true for all herbs that will be taken for more than a few days). It is a liver tonic and a natural diuretic. If cooking, save and drink the cooking water as a nutritious tea.



Stinging Nettles - perennial, alterative. Use gloves when cutting; use fresh or dried for tea. For Arthritis, fresh branches are used to flagellate arthritic joints; or could try to use as a poultice. Nettles seeds good for kidneys. Only gather nettles in Spring before it flowers. Can cut it several times in the spring; it regrows quickly. Save and drink the cooking water if nettles are cooked as a green. Nettles can be used to make a vegetable rennet for cheese-making.



Broad



Narrow

Plantain – perennial. Narrowleaf and Broadleaf plantain are interchangeable medicinally. Do not confuse narrowleaf plantain with hawkweed, which has similar leaves. You can tell by the veins--on the back of the leaf they run parallel; when you slowly rip the leaf in half, notice the little hairs in the veins as you pull the leaf apart. Plantain for dental issues, poultice for toothache: place in mouth. Chewed leaves made into a "spit poultice" will stop stinging from Stinging Nettles, as well as the pain and swelling from biting and stinging insects. Young leaves are edible (save and drink the cooking water); older leaves are tougher, but could still be eaten in a pinch. Plantain will help wounds stop bleeding; for this use, it is best dried and powdered. However, the best herb for staunching bleeding is cayenne pepper, at least 90,000 heat units (mail-order it because nothing at the store is anywhere near that hot). Put the cayenne powder straight on the bleeding cut or wound; for severe bleeding, simultaneously take cayenne pepper tincture orally if you have any (it's super easy to make)... otherwise, mix some cayenne pepper in water and drink it. It's hellishly hot, but it could possibly keep someone from going into shock from blood loss.



Lamb's Quarters -- annual; powder on leaves especially on the back of leaves, edible, collect Spring through fall. Eat raw (in moderation because of oxalic acid content) or cooked (discard the cooking water), seeds are edible. There are certain places from which you should never collect lamb's quarters... see this article:
<https://www.mofga.org/Publications/The-Maine-Organic-Farmer-Gardener/Summer-2011/Lambsquarters#:~:text=Lambsquarters%2C%20a%20common%20garden%20weed%2C%20is%20edible.&text=And%20it's%20considered%20a%20weed,lambsquarters%20greens%20received%20more%20respect.>



"Shamrock" Wood Sorrel – heart-shaped leaves taste like lemon. Can be used for seasoning, ie fish (sauté in butter), or tea. High in oxalic acid. Note: foods high in oxalic acid should be eaten raw only in moderation. If cooked and drained of the cooking water, there is very little oxalic acid remaining.



Clover – perennial, leaves are not heart shaped, medicinal, if blood sugar is low, a few flowers are a sweet pick-me-up. Not to use if on blood thinners.



Burdock – biennial, purple flowers; when going to seed, flowers forms burrs. Every part of plant edible (but not the burrs), young leaves for a cooked green (save and drink the cooking water); stalks peel, chop, parboil and sauté with garlic, olive oil, onion and salt and pepper; roots cooked like root vegetables. Tea, tincture for liver and detox; combine with Dandelions... if used alone, it will expel toxins through the skin rather than through the kidneys. To combat a Vaccine combine Burdock root and dandelion root, chop, make a tea steep 4+ hours up to 24 hours before refrigerating. Drink 4-5 cups a day. (Also take activated charcoal and/or bentonite clay if available.) For one quart jar 4 tsp. dried burdock root and 4 tsp. dried dandelion root or leaf; or 8 tsp of each fresh root (or dandelion leaf instead of root); or cook and eat the roots and greens a few times per day to combat a vaccine (it would be easier to make a tea, though).

Note: If no access to multivitamins, then can use a combination of nettles, plantain, dandelions, and alfalfa if you have any.



Mulberry – fruit makes a jam. Also really yummy raw.



Yarrow – perennial, medicinal, fern-like leaves, not edible (some people say otherwise, but it's safer to just use it medicinally). Looks similar to Queen Anne's lace. But crushed yarrow leaf smells "medicine-y," whereas Queen Anne's lace (root or crushed leaf) smells like carrots. Yarrow for colds and flus. Flower tops and leaves for cuts that won't stop bleeding.



Queen Anne's Lace – biennial, white root like carrots. Harvest roots in fall of first year or in spring of second year. If harvested after flowering, then cook to death. Stem hairy and all green. Do not confuse with poison hemlock!



Poison Hemlock – looks like Queen Anne’s Lace, BUT the stalk is not hairy; it is smooth with purple dots. The root and crushed leaf do NOT smell like carrots.



Lady's Thumb – annual, pink, purple or red flowers, leaf has what appears to be a lady's thumb print on it, edible raw or cooked, seeds are like buckwheat.



Poke Weed – perennial; best avoided unless absolutely necessary. In early spring, young leaves can be boiled in two changes of water and then eaten (discard the cooking water after each boiling); this is an old-fashioned spring purgative eaten by country folk like Mick's great-grandparents and grandparents. Dark berries. Berries, raw leaves, and roots should never be eaten. Medicinally, it is a low-dose botanical that should only be used if you have nothing else available. For an ADULT who is severely ill with a viral or bacterial infection the tincture dosage is 5-6 drops 3 times per day. [Note: this is a correction from what I said in the weed walk. Some herbalists think that poke tincture is safe to take in doses up to 10 drops for an adult, but I here list the lower dosage in my favorite herbal book.] If no tincture, then make tea by chopping and steep leaves and giving a small spoonful as a dose. Again, this is a last resort if nothing else is available.



Wild Mallow – annual; geranium-like leaves, low growing, little white-to-light-lavender flowers and seed pods that look like tiny wheels of cheese, contains mucilage for calming down an inflamed respiratory or digestive system. Leaves, flowers, and "cheeses" can be eaten raw or cooked. Roots are the most useful part for gastrointestinal, diarrhea, or respiratory issues (although the leaves can also be used). For respiratory issues, it can be helpful; although a tea of thyme and/or violet and/or mullein leaves might be better first choice(s). Similar action to slippery elm; can use in place of.



Canada Thistle – perennial; little purple flower heads, leaves can be cooked and eaten (drink the cooking water), cut off spiny prickles on leaves (with gloves); boiled leaves make a nourishing tea. Peel stalks and roots; cook and eat. Place leaves in water for a week, makes a good liquid fertilizer (doesn't smell great, though). As is true for all the purple-flowered thistles (which includes the bull thistle), flower heads can be used for vegetable rennet for cheese-making when the flowers just start to brown but before turning to "thistledown."



Milkweed – perennial; seedpods are edible; so are the flower buds and flowers.



Elderberry – perennial, can make a juice or syrup from berries; antiviral. Leaves, stem, and fruit are all medicinal. If used for juice, syrup, or jam, the berries must be cooked. Good for enveloped virus ie Ebola.



Chicory – perennial; sometimes called cornflower, has blue flowers, leaves are long and thin and look kind of like dandelion leaves, bitter taste, root can be used in place of coffee or with coffee for flavoring. Leaves, flowers, and roots can be eaten raw or cooked (probably wouldn't taste great raw).



Pig Weed – annual, amaranth subspecies, gluten-free seeds are edible (sources say they're not hard to harvest, but I don't know), leaves yummy cooked with dandelion and lamb's quarters, or with sauteed summer squash and onions. looks similar to black nightshade, which is toxic. But the leaves of the two are different: black nightshade leaves are a bit glossier. Also, if you pull the whole plant, black nightshade has a white root; but pigweed has a red root (which is why some people call it redroot pigweed). Also, pigweed has inconspicuous flowers that end up bearing seeds in peculiar seedheads; whereas nightshade has small but quite visible flowers which bear their seeds in small green berries that turn black when ripe.



Purslane- annual; succulent, bright green leaves; leaves and stem edible raw, cooked; or pickled, can be used as a tincture or poultice for the healing of old scars. Contains oxalic acid; so raw only in moderation.



Mullein – biennial; flowers steeped for weeks in olive oil are useful for ear infections (especially good if garlic is steeped in the oil at the same time). Leaf tea is used to treat pertussis and other respiratory illnesses; root used for back pain and urinary incontinence.



Tansy - insecticide, yellow flowers. There are people who use this internally, but I never have and don't ever plan to. But dried and powdered, or steeped and made into a spray, it's supposed to be a pretty good insecticide and insect repellent (for use on plants and animals, or for very occasional use on people).



Alfalfa – short-lived perennial, one of the most nutritious herbs on the planet. Makes an incredibly nutritious tea; use fresh or dried.



Bull Thistle – similar to Canada thistle, except with much larger flowers that look like miniature artichokes (and supposedly can be cooked and eaten in similar fashion). Used exactly like Canada thistle.



Velvet Leaf – annual; immature seeds are edible; leaves or roots can be used for treating dysentery.



Sow Thistle – looks like a very tall dandelion, yellow flowers, leaves not prickly; edible flowers, leaves, roots (probably don't need to remove the soft non-prickly "prickles" from the leaf margins); flowers not for use as rennet.



Creeping Charlie – perennial; also called "ground ivy"; little purple flowers; spreads like crazy and nearly impossible to kill. Has a distinctive and very pleasant smell when stepped on or mown. Edible cooked, and reportedly makes a nice tea. Medicinally used for colds, flu, sinus congestion, and other things.



Staghorn Sumac – not poisonous, berries like horns of a deer. Berries can be made into a nutritious drink that tastes like lemonade. Make sure to know the difference between the appearance of staghorn sumac and poison sumac.



Black Raspberries – fresh leaves for tea, chop up, good for late pregnancy and breastfeeding. Many herbalists recommend not using this herb until the last month or so of pregnancy, as it is a uterine strengthener and might promote contractions. Most people who use raspberry for late pregnancy and breastfeeding are using red raspberry leaves, but black raspberry leaves can be used similarly.