

The Four Seasons Herbal Guild Newsletter



The Board

Mary Schmidt & Torie Foote - Co-presidents

Cara Hagar - Treasurer

Melody Getman - Secretary

Mary Schmidt - Herbalists Without Borders & Garden
Chair

Jessica Spurr - Faire Chair, Newsletter, Site & Social Media

Two seats are up for election this year and ballots will go out in January. We hope to get your votes when we send that out! We also have several open seats available (you don't need to take an executive seat) but having your input on what we offer each year is important and the more ideas the better. Please consider joining the board! We meet the first Wednesday of the month at 12:30 for one hour.

Dues, are due

January 5th

\$25 annually is the cost of being a member of our guild

What does this bring you?

☞ Free access to our classes (otherwise \$10/class)

☞ Access to the blog part of our website (coming soon) where one can find reipes & monographs.

☞ Access to this newsletter four times a year.

This has been free in the past, we are changing this to only being free once a year and the other three will be for paying members. This newsletter takes us all a lot of time and effort, we feel that it is worth it to offer it to paying members as a way to encourage membership, finances and support for our Herbalist Without Borders doings.

Social Media

We're on Instagram!

@fourseasonshg

Follow us for herbal knowledge & recipies, HWB happenings, guild updates & more

And Facebook!

Like/Follow us

@FourSeasonsHerbalGuild

Covid

Due to a tumultuous climate concerning COVID protocols the Four Seasons Herbal Guild has been put in a position where taking a public stance is necessary. We have respect and tolerance for all protocols during this pandemic; should one choose to vaccinate or otherwise is a personal choice. As our events are open to guild members and the paying public, we must employ boundaries to protect everyone, including potential immunocompromised individuals. We will ask everyone in attendance to remain six feet apart; to be vaccinated, or to have had a negative COVID test from the previous 72 hours.

Our local chapter of Herbalists Without Borders will continue to provide herbal preparations to those in need, including serving tea at some locations as a way of promoting health, wellness and comfort in a cup. Our volunteers have been taking precautions to help protect ourselves and others, in the way that feels most appropriate to us, and we hope those whom we serve will do the same. At this time, we do not have any in person "clinics", and hope to have a call-in number for herbal aid, in the future.

New Website Coming!

We hope by Spring of 2022 we will launch our new & improved site! Paying members will have access to the informative blog; this will include articles, recipes and herbal monographs, the rest of the site will be open to the public.

The Faire

We are looking to late Spring of 2022 as a time for the Faire to re-emerge. As the dates and pertinent information become more clear we will keep you all updated here as well as via email.

Please contact Jessica Spurr for more information,
earthlyapothecary@gmail.com

Check out the site!

www.spokaneherbalfaire.org

Burdock

Arctium lappu, A. minor

Asteracea

by Mary Schmidt

Family: Asteraceae

Biennial

Full sun to part shade

Parts used: roots, seeds, leaves

Taste:

Roots: sweet, slightly bitter- *Seeds (Fruits):* acrid
Leaves: bitter Energetics: cooling, balancing dry and damp (drying)

Plant Properties:

alterative, nutritive, lymphatic, diuretic, diaphoretic (seeds), hepatic

Plant Uses:

normalize sebaceous glands, promote healthy skin, support liver health, nutrient dense food, pre-biotic, move stagnant lymph, reduce fluid retention

Plant Preparations:

food, tincture, tea, decoction

TCM indication

“clear Wind Heat for a sore, red, swollen throat with fever and cough, for red swellings such as boils, and it moistens the intestines for constipation with internal heat or toxin with sore throat, rashes or acne”.

Uses:

Skin issues: such as acne, boils, eczema and current scientific research in using burdock to protect the skin and to fight against cancer.

Uric Acid: breaks down extra uric acid in the joints, helping with gout & arthritis.

Bitter - aids digestion and promotes appetite

Alterative:

Alterative herbs were historically used to, “cleanse the blood.” support detoxification organs and elimination

functions,

Burdock root’s main affinity is with the skin and elimination through the skin. For hundreds of years, burdock has been used for all sorts of rashes, from eczema to psoriasis, as well as acute skin infections such as acne and boils. Burdock also has noticeable effects on the urinary system and the liver. Because burdock affects multiple systems of elimination or detoxification, we can see why it is such an archetypical alterative herb.

Roasted Roots

If you haven’t tried Burdock it might be worth it to mix it in with some other fall roots, the medley of flavors & colors will likely appeal to your eyes & palate.

Preheat oven to 400

Burdock Root, Carrots, Potatoes, Turnips washed and sliced into ¼” thick medallions

Salt

Pepper

Olive Oil

Sesame Seeds

Toss veggies in a bowl with olive oil, salt and pepper.

Arrange on a cookie sheet.

Bake for about 10-15, flip over and bake another 10 or so minutes.

Enjoy!

Burdock is considered as a herb which helps in restoring the balance of fluids in the body and strongly supports the immune system. Because of its detoxifying and immune stimulating properties, some people even use it as supporting herb when healing from cancer.

Energetics:

The energetic profile of most alterative herbs is cooling and drying, the root is a mild diuretic and the seed more so. Any time an herb promotes fluid loss, we designate it as drying. Herbalists have been specifically using burdock for dry and scaly skin rashes for hundreds of years. Using a drying herb for a dry condition is outside of the box of western herbal theory, which typically uses opposite actions as treatment (therefore a moistening herb for a dry

condition).

The explanation is that burdock root and seed is specific to altering the health of the sebaceous glands, the small glands in the skin that secrete sebum, a lubricating oily substance. Sebum helps to lubricate the skin and hair and also has broad antimicrobial activity. “Inability to digest, metabolize and use lipids. Dry skin, dry scalp and hair” (Matt Wood) Oily sweat warms and protects the skin.

Pre-biotic:

Burdock root is high in inulin - 45-50% in the fresh root.

Seeds:

It is generally agreed upon that burdock seeds are stronger in action than the root. The seed is more beneficial in acute stages of an illness while the root is better for chronic issues. The seed having more diffusive qualities while the root is more permanent in action.

Leaves:

Burdock leaves are mostly used externally as fresh

poultices, especially for burns.

“Dioscorides and others: recommended *Arctium* leaves as a poultice to heal old ulcers, ‘heal wounds with a lot of pus and rotten flesh,’ and ‘to soften hard swellings and to pull out evil substances with pus.

“I’ve given the leaf as a nice diuretic appetite-enhancing liver herb. Bitter, bitter, bitter, but actually ingestible if you add a splash of vinegar or lemon juice to your burdock leaf tea.

Burdock has been famously used for people with cancer for at least a hundred years. It was a main herb in the two famous cancer formulas from the 1920s:

Essiac and the Hoxsey formula.^{xp}

Summary:

Burdock is a favorite alternative that is especially used by herbalists for restoring healthy skin. The root provides deep nourishment and is best used long term for chronic illnesses. The seeds offer faster acting results that are often used for more acute symptoms, such as red swollen throats or urinary problems. The large leaves of burdock can be used externally as poultices for burns or rheumatism. While there are many important uses for burdock, it’s rarely “convenient” medicine. The roots can be difficult to dig and



What is the immune system?

The immune system is what protects your body from diseases and infections. It’s the bodily system that produces the response to defend your body from foreign substances, cells, and tissues.

The immune system is a network of biological processes that protects an organism from diseases. It detects and responds to a wide variety of pathogens, from viruses to parasitic worms, as well as cancer cells and objects such as wood splinters, distinguishing them from the organism’s own healthy tissue. Many species have two major subsystems of the immune system. The innate immune system provides a preconfigured response to broad groups of situations and stimuli. The adaptive immune system provides a tailored response to each stimulus by learning to recognize molecules it has previously encountered. Both use molecules and cells to perform their functions.

The immune system includes various parts of the body including the thymus, spleen, lymph nodes, special deposits of lymphoid tissue (such as those in the gastrointestinal tract and bone marrow), macrophages, lymphocytes including the B cells and T cells, and antibodies.

Sources:
Meriam Websters & Wikipedia

What is Herd Immunity?

The term herd immunity refers to a reduction in the likelihood of someone catching a specific infectious disease because a significant proportion of the people in that person’s community are immune to it.

If you are less likely to come in contact with an infectious person, you are less likely to get infected yourself. The people in a community can be immune to a particular disease especially through previous exposure or vaccination.

Your Immune system is not static, it gets stronger or weaker depending on your environment, what you eat or take, things you get exposed to, etc. One can also grow out of or into immunity to something. As a child one can be immune to certain illnesses but find later in life they are able to get sick from that illness.

Warrn's Winter Wellness Wisdoms

Healthy lifestyle choices are a good place to start for supporting our immune systems and keeping us healthy through the winter season. A few places to consider are: A good diet including nutrient rich foods with many colored vegetables and fruits, fermented foods to boost pro and pre-boiotic support of the digestive system, low sugar and GMO foods and lower glyphosate sprayed foods especially non organic flour. Increase exercise, adequate sleep, sunshine and Vitamin D3, de-stress, laugh and recreate.

Immune Support

Astragalus and Codonopsis added to soups or chai teas
Elderberry when exposed to viruses. Syrup, tea, tincture.
Coat throat often.
Garlic reduces inflammatory cytokines and stimulates
natural killer cells.
Reishi, turkey tail, shitake, maitake & lion's mane.

Warm yourself!

Cold and flu season remedies can be added to prevent or speed recovery from virus. Consider adding:

- ☛ Warming spices to your food:
Cayenne, ginger, black pepper, garlic, cinnamon, turmeric, oregano and thyme.
- ☛ Fire Cider
- ☛ Mushrooms, especially medicinal
 - ☛ Echinacea tea
 - ☛ Garlic honey
- ☛ Warming Teas: Chai, Cayenne with ginger & honey tea.
- ☛ Salt water gargle
- ☛ Elderberry, syrup with elecampane, ginger and licorice



Fire Cider

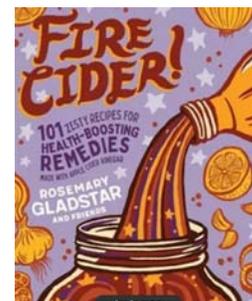
This special recipe is rich with immune and respiratory supporting herbs:

- 1 Ginger Rt
- 1 Tumerick Rt
- 1 Garlic Head
- 1 Onion
- 1 Hot Pepper
- 1 Lemon

Handful of Rosemary, Oregano and/or Thyme
Apple Cider Vinegar

There is no wrong way to make this recipe, the amounts and ingredients are entirely up to you. Chop everything up, and add it to the jar, cover with ACV (add some more in 24 hrs) and let it sit for a month. Then, strain out your goodies, put your liquid in a pot, and warm gently adding as much honey as you'd like so that you will happily take your creation.

Bottle, and enjoy, is shelf stable for a LONG time.
Elderberries, Burdock Rt, Nettles, Dandelion Rt... the possibilities are endless.
There is a wonderful book:



Then what about the Marc? The leftover goodies that you strained out -dehydrate and grind into a powder, sprinkle on your food, or encapsulate. Freeze and add in with bones when making stock. What else? Email us and let us know what you do!

earthlyapothecary@gmail.com

Balancing your Internal Winter Wonderland

As winter sets upon us, I put my attention on the changes of the season and how they affect the way our systems work.

Energetics often has to do with the body's temperature; hot/cold, moisture; wet/dry and working state; tense/relaxed. This causes the tissues of the body to shift in their ability to function and to return to homeostasis.

A **hot state** often referred to as 'excitation' will look over stimulated and excited with increased activity, often with flushes of red skin or yellow coloring to tissues or mucus.

A **cold state**, known as 'depression', will present as under stimulated, often pale and cool to the touch with decreased activity.

A **dry state**, 'atrophy', shows tissues dried out, either not enough water or lipid (fat).

A **damp state**, 'stagnation' has fluids congested, often stuck, not flowing.

Tense is '**constriction**', tissues appear tight, maybe in spasm, nervous or strained.

'**Relaxation**' lacks tone and don't hold fluids.

Our body functions well when we are in balance with hot/cold, wet/dry, and tense/relaxed. Somehow, we have the ability to find homeostasis when in ideal health, but what we eat, where we live, what we watch on TV and the weather, all have influence on our systems and can throw us off balance.

Usually, the last thing we want in the middle of a summer heat wave is a big bowl of steaming soup, but now, as the temperatures drop, that soup sounds much more appealing. This is because the external temperatures effect how we are able to heat or cool ourselves. In addition, we may have our furnace running which dries out the humidity in the air we breathe. And let's not forget the CoVid 19 crises we are all dealing with, just to add to the often-stressful lives we lead. Now our internal balance is off and this effects how all our systems work. This scenario sets us up for a cold, dry, tense condition which lowers our immune system and makes it easier to get sick.

Let's consider a few ideas to help ourselves through the cold winter months. Warm foods and liquids are a good way to start and avoiding icy sodas is advised. The stomach works best at its 120-degree normal temp so cooling it down with cold foods and liquids lowers the efficacy of the system. Any warming spice can be added to food or beverage and will

help stimulate circulation and warm a body up. I love to use: Cinnamon, ginger, cayenne pepper, garlic, onion and even horseradish. One suggestion for cold feet is to sprinkle some cayenne in your socks and go for a walk or do some exercise.

Whether you need moistening or drying, herbs can be very helpful. To aid in a dry condition, such as a dry cough, demulcents can help. Commonly used are: marshmallow, violet, mullein, slippery elm or licorice. If you are too moist, fluids are not moving, then we use bitters, stimulants and aromatics. Motherwort and blue vervain as well as hops and yarrow are good bitters for lots of uses. These tend to relax musculoskeletal tissues and allow for fluid movement.

Stress has its ongoing influence over our entire physiology. We can use relaxing aromatics to calm and soothe us when tense. Aromatic means that there are volatile oils in the plant and so they will have a scent. This scent disperses into the air and is a signal of how they affect us. They get things moving, release tension and lighten us up. If our tissues are too relaxed, lack tone and won't hold fluids, we can use astringents to tighten up and pull together the proteins in our tissues. This helps with tissue function and will dry out a boggy area.

The winter environment will influence how our body functions with its cold temps, dry air and inactivity. Much can be done to help the body stay in balance and keep our immunity up. Activity, good real food, limited blue screen time, warm clothes and getting out into the sunshine and fresh air can go a long way in keeping us healthy. When we need a little extra help, we can always turn to our friends the herbs, with a nice cup of hot tea.

Be Well!
~Mary Schmidt



from
Rosalee De La Foret

Demulcent Herbs for Dry Coughs

MULLEIN (*Verbascum thapsus*) Long used to support general lung health, mullein leaves can benefit people with weak, pollution or wildfire smoke inhalation

PLANTAIN (*Plantago major*, *P. lanceolata*) dry, hacking cough that seems endless and oh so painful? The one you typically get at the end of a cold or flu or from inhaling small particles such as dust or smoke.

Plantain soothes hot, dry, and spasmodic coughs. It moistens the lungs and cools the heat, thus relieving the irritation causing the cough. I prefer plantain as a tea for coughs, but it can also be used as a tincture.

MARSHMALLOW and Mallow (*Althaea officinalis* or *Malva neglecta*, *Malva* spp.) The many different mallows out there are wonderfully demulcent

VIOLET (*Viola* spp.) soothing and moistening herb as well as a gentle lymphatic.

Anti-Spasmodic herbs for Dry Coughs

(*inflata*) as a tincture or vinegar extract in drop dosages (increasing slowly as needed) to stop spasmodic coughs.

VALERIAN (*Valeriana officinalis*) Valerian is a powerful anti-spasmodic herb that also promotes sleep.

CRAMP BARK (*Viburnum opulus*) Cramp bark can relieve muscle spasms including those from a dry cough with cinnamon and ginger to offset the taste.

Stimulating Expectorant Herbs for Congested Coughs

These warming herbs also thin mucus:
Garlic, ginger, cayenne, thyme and oregano are all effective.

Elecampane (*Inula helenium*)
Elecampane root is one of my favorite herbs for lung congestion.

Freshly Squeezed Ginger Juice Tea +/-
Fresh Ginger Infusion

Flu Elixir Recipe

The formula is based on Kiva Rose Hardin's elderberry elixir and Kami McBride's cold and flu elixir, which use brandy to extract the plant constituents and honey to sweeten it up. The recipe is very versatile in that you can use fresh or dried herbs and make additions or substitutions of herbs based on your own preferences (although be sure to use dried elderberries since it won't be cooked). We like to add a few tablespoons of cinnamon chips and extra ginger and honey.

Ingredients:

- 1 C fresh (or 2/3 C dried) calendula (*Calendula officinalis*) flower
- 2/3 C dried elder (*Sambucus nigra* or *S. canadensis*) berry
- 1/2 C fresh (or 1/3 C dried) elder (*Sambucus nigra* or *S. canadensis*) flower
- 1/2 C fresh (or 1/3 C dried) rose (*Rosa* spp.) hip
- 2 tbsp fresh (or 1 tbsp dried) orange (*Citrus sinensis*) peel
- 1 tbsp fresh (or 1 tsp dried) ginger (*Zingiber offi.*) root, grated
- Brandy
- Honey

Directions

Fill a glass quart jar (4-cup capacity) with herbs. Add brandy, pouring until herbs are covered by 1-2 inches of brandy and jar is approximately 3/4 full.

Add honey, leaving 1 inch of space at the top of the jar. Poke chopstick into jar to release any trapped air bubbles and ensure brandy and honey are fully coat the herbs.

Cap jar with a lid and label with ingredients and date.

Let steep for 4-6 weeks in a dark place, shaking daily.

How to use:

mix into hand sanitizers, use 2-3 drops on face masks and refresh hourly; can also use in an oil diffuser, room humidifier or the old fashioned way, a few drops in a pan of water place on the stove on a very low heat.

Filter elixir by pouring through a fine mesh filter or several layers of cheesecloth over a bowl or wide-mouth jar. Press the plant material (marc) to squeeze out every last drop of elixir.

- Compost the marc and cap and label the elixir.

Store for up to 1 year.

- To use, take 2-3 teaspoons every 2-3 hours at the first sign of an infection.

Frequent doses are the key to effective use! Listen to your body to tailor the dosage to your needs.

Solstice



The season of Solstice, of winter, of pulling in, of quiet, of thinking and planning for the coming year, enjoying the canned, dried and frozen goods from the harvest season, perhaps reading or doing puzzles, enjoying board games, indoor housework, pulling out sensory bin supplies, and finding other crafts for snowy afternoons with children.. these are some of the things that cross my mind when I think of the season of winter. Officially, the three months of winter begin on the day of the Solstice, this falls between December 20 and 23 in the Northern Hemisphere. The date changes because our Gregorian calendar year of 365 days does not exactly match the tropical year (364.24 days), this is the time it takes the earth to fully orbit the sun, we compensate for this every four years with our leap year.

Solstice comes from the latin word, solstitium, this translates to "sun standing still" this indicates something else that is happening at the solstice. For about three days the Sun appears to rise and set in the same place, high noon doesn't appear to change either. Then, after the three day pause the sun appears to begins its gradual declination. This return of the Sun has been known to humans

for a long time... depending on your view of history.. what is certain is that many ancient humans had physical means to commemorate and celebrate this shortest day of the year.

Stonehenge in England, Chichen Itza in Mexico, Tical in Guatemala, Chaco Canyon in New Mexico, the pyramids in Egypt are all physical calendars on our planet, where at the time of Solstices & Equinoxes there are created plays of light to signify the date. Why were these days important? One theory suggests these societies, being Agricultural in nature, were very interested in knowing the time of year so they knew when planting and harvesting seasons would come.

Also, in the more Northern hemispheres, where winter brings a barren landscape, dark and cold, many societies had beliefs that supported rituals to commemorate the return of the Sun, bringing with it its life giving warmth and light. Often a similar story in cultural mythology of the celestial bodies can be found, it looks something like this: the Sun is swallowed, killed or otherwise disappeared, and is reborn as a result of a Goddess, Mother, Light or otherwise feminine figure. This story can be found in ancient Greece, Persia, Egypt, India, Guatemala and many other countries and regions about the world.

So the winter Solstice is the acknowledgement of the shortest day in the northern hemisphere for the year, the celebration that, the Sun will indeed return, that the days will lengthen and warm, the ground will again accept seeds to grow the food for the survival of the people the following winter.

These days, many humans live in way utterly removed from Nature and her cycles. While we are acutely aware of the seasons, it is perhaps more on account of how this effects our wardrobes and car tires as opposed to the thought of when we may next be able to plant corn.

Peoples of long ago may not have been enjoying fresh tomatoes in January, but they were doing something this time of year that we can all relate to; celebrating, eating, enjoying each others company, and remembering that while winter is cold and dark, this time too will pass and Spring will come again.

Enjoy your winter, this sweet time of rest, maybe with a dose of chaga or kava hot chocolate,

an extra long snuggly night on the couch or a good bit of baking to warm the house and make the taste buds pay attention. This time of darkness, of rest and pulling in is upon us, what will you do with the coming months of winter? What will you plan? Create? Read? Dive into? Explore? What will you do to allow yourself to rest before the coming spring? Whatever you find to do, or not do to I pray it brings peace to your heart and rest to your soul. May the return of the Sun bring us a new hope and a new appreciation of the light.

Warmly, Jessica Spurr

Healthier Hot Cocoa

- 1 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 cup coconut sugar (or other granulated type sugar)
- 2 tablespoons arrowroot powder
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. vanilla extract, powder or seeds scraped from a 1" piece of Vanilla bean
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. fine sea salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup milk powder

Instructions:

Combine all the ingredients except milk powder into a blender and blend until fine and powdery. Add the milk powder and blend well, or stir together in a bowl.

To serve: Place 4 heaping tablespoons into a mug and stir in 1+ cup of hot water. Stir until dissolved. Add more to taste. Or you could add to heated milk of any kind.

Top with marshmallows or whip cream!

Store tightly covered.

Will last for several months

~Dianna Michaels

Ponderosas of the past, to the future

12/2021

As the crispy air nips at my nose and ears I am warmed greatly by the evergreen trees present in my neck of the woods. Fortunately the Inland Northwest is plentiful in Ponderosa Pines and Douglas Firs, and their lovely green shade keeps my heart happy in the dark of the winter, which is otherwise leafless and drably beautiful in browns and reds.

These ancient beauties are a sight! Have you ever seen a full grown Ponderosa Pine? Probably not, unfortunately as this area was logged over a hundred years ago now, nearly all the ancient trees were taken. The current oldest living Ponderosa pine is in Colorado, it is roughly 850 years old, they have been recorded up to 1,000 years old; other species of pine, such as the Great Bristlecone Pine, the oldest coming in at 5,066 years old, found in the White Mountains of California, their size at that age is almost incomprehensible. The picture you see here is of a great elder tree I had the pleasure of meeting, I am holding my then three month old; I'm about five feet tall, and this tree was a bit more than six feet across. Not until I met this tree did I really begin to comprehend the travesty of having lost all our old growth... most of us really have no idea what it is like to be in an ancient pine forest... because most everything is logged in 60-80 year cycles.

Can you imagine walking in a pine forest that has trees that are four to five feet in diameter? Trees that are 200+ feet high? I'd like to imagine it, I wish that nearly every ancient tree hadn't been logged for lumber so that any of us could have this experience. It would be truly majestic, a forest of



that size and age, humbling. Perhaps, some of our state and federally protected land will provide such an opportunity a hundred years or more ahead, maybe more people will grasp the value of protecting land as opposed to blindly developing everything. I would love to know future generations might experience a mature pine forest in the truest sense of the term.

The oldest trees most of us see in town is, often up to 120 years old, at most. Trees grow out, and up from their top, as a tree ages it usually widens, drought and lack of space to grown can impede outward growth, this is visible in grow rings that are very close together. There are some sparsely dispersed patches of old growth, and perhaps on private property there may be ancient pines, and if one drives out in the Palouse there can be seen on the edges of farm fields older trees, tree that are 150 years or so old. The ancient trees have thick bark, it is fire resistant, particularly to understory fires. The first branches that are growing on an ancient tree can begin 20 feet or so up the trunk, in other places branches may begin 60 to 80 feet up, another element of a species having adapted to a fire prone landscape.

These ancient giants offer so much love to us! Their sap is an incredible anti-microbial additive to salves of all kinds. I have been making salve for over ten years now, and the ones that I have added Pine Pitch to have never once gone rancid. The smell is intoxicatingly woody, it feels warming and opening to me. Be gentle in your harvest, there is much to be found on the ground around the tree.

The needles are rich in vitamin C, it is amazing that anyone ever died of scurvy around here, little did they know

they were surrounded by their remedy. The tips are more palatable than the whole needles, I read in Wild Remedies by Rosalee de la Foret that one study found that in the winter Pine needles were higher in vitamin C in the winter. I encourage you to try them! Next time you are walking in the woods call on your inner squirrel and take a nibble of the tips of the needles, what do you taste? How does your mouth feel?

There is oil to be made from the needles too. Grab a handful from a downed branch and bring them into your kitchen, chop up your fresh needles and put them in oil in a double boiler, warm to 110-120 degrees, and allow to cool, repeat again and again, maybe three or four times. You will end up with a lovely green oil that is quite piney indeed. Add to salve or make your own lotion.

Bacon Bark? No really it is a thing! I read about this in Mother Earth News last winter and I was quite surprised. If for some reason you have cause to harvest the inner bark, try frying it in a pan with some bacon grease. Be gentle in your harvest, a live tree that has had its bark stripped is vulnerable and will have to produce extra pitch to cover the wound.

And one other wonderful way to enjoy Pine? Bring some needles inside and boil them in a pot without a lid, let the woody steam waft about your space. How about some tea? A strong cup of pine needle tea will warm you from the inside out, add some honey to please your palate. You could bathe in a strong tea (decoction) too, this would warm the bones from a cold day. The Wild Remedies book mentioned earlier gives delightful recipes for conifer infused salt, forest facial cream, an oxymel and a liqueur, not to mention a host of other wildly useful bits of information.

Our forest friends are often indoors this time of year, holding treasured ornaments, greeting visitors in a circle at the door or perhaps wound on a railing with bows. As we enjoy their evergreen presence, let's also remember their place in the wild. Their true form in size and height, let us imagine an ecosystem with full grown trees, every single one of them generations old. What does this feel like? Is it worth creating? Is it worth holding on to? Thank you trees, for you ever giving green, and continual gifts, may you grow old and ancient, standing healthy and strong.

~Jessica Spurr, Earthly Apothecary LLC



www.fourseasonsguild.com

Our mission is to develop and support community health and wellness through herbal education, connection and empowerment at personal, local, and global levels.

