
PINEAPPLE WEED

Matricaria discoidea

Pineapple weed is a low-growing plant that is also known as wild chamomile, or disc mayweed. It belongs to the family Asteraceae*, as does chamomile. It is widespread throughout North America where it likes to grow in disturbed, compacted soil like roadsides, driveways and gravel areas. The flowers do not have petals and exude a pineapple aroma when crushed.

Pineapple weed has a relaxing/sedative effect similar to chamomile and makes a great bedtime tea.

*Avoid if allergic to plants in the daisy family.

To make a tea:

- Gather a handful of fresh flower heads, making sure they not from an area where they could be contaminated by pesticides, fuel or other sources.
- Place 1 tbsp of flowers in tea ball or bag
- Pour boiling water over the flowers, quickly covering the mug
to prevent the essential oils from escaping
- Steep for 10 minutes, strain and enjoy
- Sweeten with honey, if desired

TIP: Dry some pineapple weed flowers to take with you in your pack - you can make a bedtime tea to sip while you relax after a long-days hike.



OREGON GRAPE

Mahonia nervosa, *Mahonia aquifolium*

Oregon grape is a flowering plant in the family Berberidaceae, native to western North America. It is a commonly recognized plant, growing in mixed coniferous forests. Oregon grape is antibacterial and antifungal and is a useful bitter when taken internally - soothing nausea and improving the overall function of the digestive system. It is thought to be effective against Giardia, which makes this an excellent addition to your back-country first aid kit. Oregon grape has a long history of traditional use by First Nations in North America as both a food (berries), a dye (berries and bark) and a medicine (berries and bark).

To make a wound healing spray:

- Gather root or stems and scrape gently to expose the yellow layer of bark underneath.
- With a sharp knife, shave the yellow layer only (not the white layer underneath)
- Dry for 24-48 hrs until the bark snaps cleanly.
- Place 1 tablespoon of dried root in 1 cup of water. Bring to a boil and then simmer for 10 - 15 minutes.
- Allow to cool and then bottle in spray bottle.

Use as a wound wash on scrapes and cuts.

To make a tea:

- Use 1 tablespoon of dried root per 2 cups of water.
- Bring to a boil then simmer for 10-15 minutes.

You can drink 2 cups/day as a remedy for stomach issues.

TIP: Bring some dried oregon grape bark with you in your pack - it's light and you can boil it up on your campstove if you need to make an on-the-spot wound wash or tea.



PLANTAIN

Plantago major, Plantago lanceolata

Known in Gaelic as 'the healing plant' plantain is part of the family Plantaginaceae and is frequently found roadsides, parking areas, driveways, lawns and gardens, in disturbed ground. Plantain arrived in North America with European settlers and for this reason was dubbed "white man's foot" by many First Nations as it popped up wherever settlers had travelled. It is widespread throughout the world. It is antimicrobial and astringent and has been used as a medicinal for centuries. Roman soldiers would use plantain leaves on long marches to heal sore and blistered feet. Fresh leaves have traditionally been chewed before applying to affected areas.

To make an insect bite/blister healing salve:

Oil to Beeswax ratio: 3:1

Step 1:

- pick 5-6 fresh leaves
- cut or tear into small pieces, drop into mason jar
- cover leaves with oil of your choice, olive, coconut, avocado
- press the leaves vigorously to bruise (helps release the healing constituents)
- place jar, uncovered, in a crock pot water bath, make sure water level is above the level of oil.
- set to warm, and leave for 24 hours
- Strain off, pressing leaves to get all the plant 'goodies' in your oil

Step 2:

- set up a double boiler, put 1" of water in the top pot as well
- measure out 1 tablespoon of beeswax into a pyrex measuring cup, place in top pot
- bring to a boil, wax will melt slowly, stir with skewer
- when fully melted, stir in 3 tablespoons of your freshly made plantain oil
- return to heat as needed to remelt the wax (it will harden when you add the oil)
- pour into salve jar/container and let cool

Use to soothe and heal pesky insect bites and blisters

