

# Growing and Using Medicinal Herbs

By: Stacy Fisk  
Herb Farmer



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# Health Disclosure

- I am **not** a licensed or registered health-care practitioner, and I cannot diagnose health conditions.
- Please consult a medical care provider before using herbal medicine.
- Be sure you are aware of potential contraindications before you consume an herb as medicine.
- Fisk Farm is not responsible for any individual's use of our products or herbs, or products or herbs we recommend.



# Health Disclosure

- It is important to do your own research before consuming medicinal herbs to ensure it is the right choice for you. Including consulting a medical practitioner, especially if combining with prescribed pharmaceuticals or other medicinal herbs, you are pregnant or nursing, or when providing to children.
- Everything you read on the Internet is “Not Always the Truth”!
- The contents on this document is for educational purposes only.



# Deadly Poisonous Plants

- Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*, and other *Digitalis* species, Plantaginaceae) You may be growing this in your garden, never consume it.





# Deadly Poisonous Plants

- Poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*, Apiaceae)
- This species has been found along the Truckee River. If you see it, do not touch it and report it.
- <https://www.rgj.com/story/life/outdoors/2017/05/22/poison-hemlock-booming-near-truckee-river-dont-eat/338049001/>



# Deadly Poisonous Plants

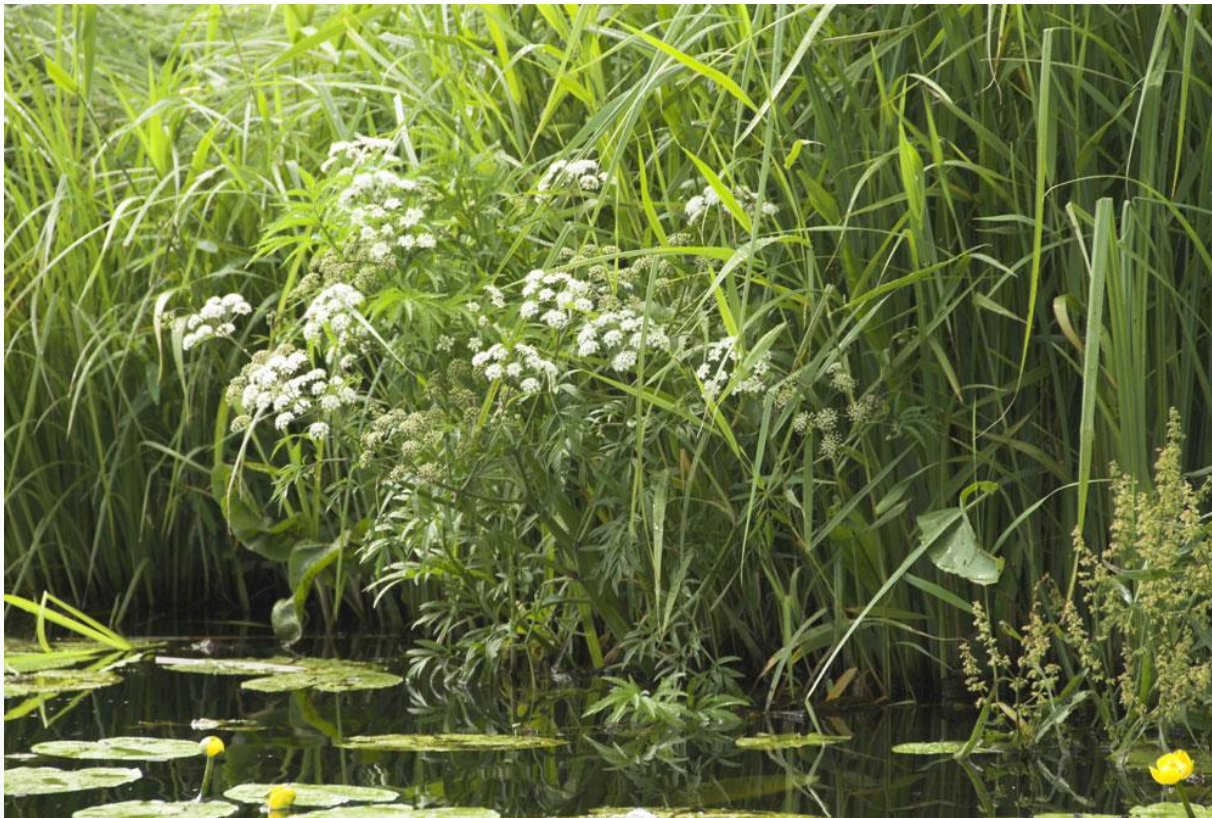
- Groundsels, Ragworts, Staggerweed, and Life Root
- This is a large group of flowering plants (Senecio, Packera, Jacobaea, Ligularia, Asteraceae) that contains some DEADLY POISONOUS members.





# Deadly Poisonous Plants

- Water hemlock (*Cicuta* spp., Apiaceae)





# Foraging Guidelines

- Be absolutely positive of your identification before you harvest and ingest any wild food or medicine.
- Harvest in clean locations. Avoid harvesting near roads, foundations of buildings, electric lines, railroads, floodplains of polluted rivers and fields that may be sprayed with herbicide.
- Only forage for abundant plants with a large population.
- Do not overharvest and when possible, leave part of plant intact so it will regrow or propagate.
- Be aware of the optimal time to harvest and the most regenerative practices.
- Harvest the correct part of the plant that is traditionally used for food and/or medicine.



# Featured Plants

- Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)
- Tulsi – Holy Basil (*Ocimum africanum*)
- Oats (*Avena Sativa*)
- Rose (*Rosa spp.*)
- LemonBalm (*Melissa officinalis*)

# Yarrow

## *Achillea millefolium*

- Externally - highly regarded first-aid plant due to its styptic, anti-inflammatory, astringent, antimicrobial and vulnerary properties.
- Internally - Used as a diaphoretic (which means it encourages sweating) which helps with breaking a fever. Also used as bitter which encourages the digestive juices to get flowing to help break up food that can be processed through the digestive track easier.
- Yarrow looks similar to the deadly poisonous plant known as Poison Hemlock. Use extreme caution when harvesting to ensure you have the correct plant.
- A significant garden ally as well as medicinal herb.

# Yarrow

## A Beautiful Garden Ally

Beneficial Insect Magnet



Lasagna Layers







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Genus: **Achillea**  
Plant Family: **Asteraceae**

Species: **millefolium**  
Common Name: **Yarrow, Common**

## Garden Care

Best propagated by root division.

## Herbal Actions

Action	Detail
Styptic	An astringent herb that helps reduce or stop external bleeding.
Anti-inflammatory	Alleviates inflammation.
Decongestant	Help relieve nasal congestion and inflammation.
Astringent	Tightens or constricts bodily tissue, namely the mucus membranes and skin.
Alterative	Supports the body in healthy cellular metabolism and its natural process of detoxification, cleansing and elimination. Also known as a blood cleanser.
Antimicrobial	Inhibits the growth and production of a broad spectrum of microbes including; bacteria, fungi, viruses, and protozoans.
Vulnerary	Helps heal tissue both when applied topically or taken internally.
Diaphoretic	Stimulates perspiration through peripheral vasodilation or stimulation of sweat glands.
Hypotensive	Lowers blood pressure.
Emmenagogue	Helps bring on menses.
Antispasmodic	Ease cramps or spasms in skeletal or smooth muscle tissue.
Bitter	An herb known for its positive effects on digestive and liver function due to its bitter taste.

## Type of Plant

Herbaceous  
Perennial

## Parts Used

Flowers  
Leaves  
Stock  
Root

## Contraindications

Consult a medical practitioner prior to consuming herbs as medicinals; especially if combining with prescribed pharmaceuticals, you are pregnant or nursing, or when providing to children.

If you have a known allergy to members of the Asteraceae family, exercise caution before consuming this herb.

## Habitat

PH Average 5-7

## Preparations

Cold Infusion  
Decoction  
Tincture  
Poultice  
Powder  
Compress  
Infused Oil  
Salve

# TULSI – Holy Basil

## *Ocimum africanum*

- It is a member of the basil family.
- Most Tulsi is *Ocimum Tenuifolium*, which includes Rama, Vana, Amrita, and Krishna. I grow the temperate variety, *Ocimum africanum*, which is interchangeable in many ways.
- A sacred plant in India, Tulsi has the longest list of herbal actions. Each variety is used for different things in Ayurvedic medicine.
- The temperate makes a great tea and is easily substituted for the common basil.
- Bees absolutely love this plant. Lots of Essential Oils.



# Tulsi – Early to Flower

Cut & Comeback



Best Time to Harvest





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Genus: **Ocimum**

Species: **africanum**

Plant Family: **Lamiaceae**

Common Name: **Tulsi, Temperate**

## Garden Care

Annual: 70 days to maturity. Plant prefers full sun and regular garden soil. Kapoor tends to run fast to flower, especially if the seedlings are crowded. Individualize seedlings early and pinch back any premature flowers. Sprinkle seeds on surface, barely cover, tamp, and keep evenly moist until germ, which takes about a week. Thin or transplant to 1' apart.

## Herbal Actions

Action	Detail
Anticatarrhal	Supports the body to dissolve, remove, or prevent the excess formation of mucus in the respiratory passages.
Adaptogen	A tonic that helps balance the body by supporting its ability to deal with physical, mental, and emotional stress.
Antibacterial	Inhibits the growth and production of bacteria.
Antidepressant	Lessens the frequency, occurrence, or intensity of depressive states.
Antifungal	Inhibits the excess growth and production of fungal infections.
Anti-inflammatory	Alleviates inflammation.
Antiprotazoal	Inhibits the growth and production of protozoans.
Antiviral	Inhibits growth and production of viruses.
Carminative	Aids the release of gas from the intestines and reduces the production of gas.
Diuretic	Increase secretions and elimination of urine from the body.
Expectorant	Aids in the removal of mucus (along with trapped debris and pathogens) from the lungs.
Galactagogue	Encourages the production and secretion of breast milk.
Hypoglycemic	Lowers blood sugar levels.
Hypotensive	Lowers blood pressure.
Immunomodulator	Regulates and balances the immune system.
Anxiolytic	Herbs used to reduce anxiety.
Antimutagenic	These herbs interfere with the mutagenicity of a substance.
Hypocholesterolemic	Lowers blood cholesterol levels.
Radioprotective	Protects against the injurious effects of radiations.

## Type of Plant

Herbaceous  
Annual

## Parts Used

Flowers  
Leaves

## Contraindications

Consult a medical practitioner prior to consuming herbs as medicinals; especially if combining with prescribed pharmaceuticals, you are pregnant or nursing, or when providing to children.

## Habitat

Water Medium  
Sun  
Part Sun/Shade  
PH Average

## Preparations

Tincture  
Compress  
Poultice  
Edible  
Infused Oil  
Vinegar



# Oats- Milky

## *Avena Sativa*

- Oats are Easy to Grow.
- A medicine, food and cover crop. Mulch as byproduct.
- Oat Groats, Straw, and immature seed is all medicinal.
  - Oat Groats – Good for the heart, mucilaginous. Emollient-Coats and soothes.
  - Oat Straw – Nutritive, high in minerals, has nice flavor for a tea base/bulk additive.
  - Milky Oat Tops – Unripe seed. Nervine, anxiolytic and used as a tonic. Good for convalescing or nervous exhaustion.

# Great for You Great for your Garden

Oat Straw Mulch or Tea



Milky Oats - Anxiolytic





## Milky Oats

First Harvest comes around the summer solstice.

The window for harvest is less than one week.

Once you see the heads start to brown on the tip it is time.

Test several heads and if 7 of 10 are milky they are ready to harvest. Some will not be ready.

Collect a second harvest a few weeks later.

Refrigerate until you are ready to process as a vinegar or tincture.





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Genus: **Avena**

Species: **sativa**

Plant Family: **Rubiaceae**

Common Name: **Oats, Cayuse**

## Garden Care

Annual, Sun, fertile soil. Sow in fall or spring.

## Herbal Actions

Action	Detail
Demulcent	A mucilaginous (slimy) herb that soothes and protects irritated mucous membranes.
Emollient	Softens and soothes external tissue.
Hypocholesterolemic	Lowers blood cholesterol levels.
Laxative	Tending to stimulate or facilitate evacuation of the bowels.
Anti-inflammatory	Alleviates inflammation.
Nutritive	Provides nourishment, nutritious.
Nervine	An herb that has a positive effect on the nervous system.
Anxiolytic	Herbs used to reduce anxiety.

## Type of Plant

Annual  
Herbaceous  
Self-Sowing

## Parts Used

Seeds  
Stems  
Leaves

## Contraindications

Consult a medical practitioner prior to consuming herbs as medicinals; especially if combining with prescribed pharmaceuticals, you are pregnant or nursing, or when providing to children.  
Can cause irritation to the skin.

## Habitat

Sun  
PH Average 5-7

## Preparations

Edible - Culinary  
Cold Infusion  
Warm Infusion  
Infused Vinegar  
Tincture  
Tea



# LEMON BALM

## *Melissa officinalis*

- It is a member of the mint family and is highly aromatic.
- Is used as a culinary herb as well as a medicinal.
- Makes an excellent tea that is good for digestion and relaxation.
- You can get two to three harvests in a season.
- Lemon Balm is one of the few medicinal herbs that taste great.
- Gentle nervine, good for children. Also antiviral.
- Lemon Balm Essential Oil is one of the most expensive on the market. Save money and use the crude herb.



# Lemon Balm For Chillaxing

Rest

Digestion





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Genus: **Melissa**

Species: **officialis**

Plant Family: **Lamiaceae**

Common Name: **Lemon Balm**

## Garden Care

Native to the Mediterranean, Russia, Syria, Iran and Turkastan. Flowers yellow to 2 feet tall. Plant prefers shade to part sun and is not picky about the soil. Light-dependent germinator. Scarify seeds lightly on fine sandpaper and sow outdoors in the fall or very early spring or provide 2 weeks of cold conditioning. Barely cover seeds with soil, tamp securely and keep evenly moist. Germination in 10-40 days. Prefers full sun or shade; normal garden soil and minimal water. Plant 1 to 2 feet apart.

## Herbal Actions

Action	Detail
Antidepressant	Lessens the frequency, occurrences, or intensity of depressive states.
Antiviral	Inhibits growth and production of viruses.
Carminative	Aids the release of gas from the intestines and reduces the production of gas.
Diaphoretic	Stimulates perspiration through peripheral vasodilation or stimulation of sweat glands.
Nervine	An herb that has a positive effect on the nervous system.

## Type of Plant

Herbaceous  
Perennial

## Parts Used

Flowers  
Leaves

## Contraindications

Consult a medical practitioner prior to consuming herbs as medicinals; especially if combining with prescribed pharmaceuticals, you are pregnant or nursing, or when providing to children.  
May inhibit Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH).

## Habitat

Sun  
Part Sun/Shade  
PH Average 5-7

## Preparations

Edible - Culinary  
Infused Honey  
Infused Oil  
Infused Vinegar  
Salve  
Tea

# Rose *Rosa spp.*

- The iconic flower of “Love”. The Rose is likely to conjure up a tender feeling of peace and love in our heart. Perhaps it’s because the Rose is the “Heart” herb. It is a nervine, cardo-tonic, and has anti-anxiety and aphrodisiac properties.
- Not only is the flower edible and used medicinally in numerous decoctions, the fruit, called a Rosehip, is a nutritive and has more Vitamin C than an orange.
- The processing options of the Rose flowers, buds, rosehips and leaves are endless. Do a bit of internet research and you will find some great ideas.
- The hairs inside the rosehip are very itchy and must be removed before consuming the fruit. However, if you use it dried in tea don’t worry about it. The Rosehip gives your tea blend a nice citrusy zip.



# Rosa Rugosa

Great Edge Plant

Hips – Citrusy Flavor





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Genus: **Rosa**

Species: **SPP**

Plant Family: **Rosaceae**

Common Name: **Rose**

## Garden Care

Best propagated by root division or cuttings.

## Herbal Actions

Action	Detail
Anti-anxiety	Helps lessen anxiety. Also known as anxiolytic.
Anticatarrhal	Supports the body to dissolve, remove, or prevent the excess formation of mucus in the respiratory passages.
Anti-inflammatory	Alleviates inflammation.
Antimicrobial	Inhibits the growth and production of a broad spectrum of microbes including; bacteria, fungi, viruses, and protozoans.
Aphrodisiac	Excites, nourishes, sustains or elevates sexual or sensual desire.
Astringent	Tightens or constricts bodily tissue, namely the mucus membranes and skin.
Cardiotonic	A tonic herb that has beneficial effect on the heart and blood vessels.
Diuretic	Increase secretions and elimination of urine from the body.
Nutritive	Provides nourishment, nutritious.

## Type of Plant

Woody Perennial

## Parts Used

Floral Buds  
Flowers  
Fruit  
Leaves

## Contraindications

Consult a medical practitioner prior to consuming herbs as medicinals; especially if combining with prescribed pharmaceuticals, you are pregnant or nursing, or when providing to children.

## Habitat

pH Average 5-7  
Sun  
Part Sun/Shade

## Preparations

Cold Infusion  
Compress  
Decoction  
Douche  
Edible - Culinary  
Infused Honey  
Infused Oil  
Infused Vinegar  
Poultice  
Salve  
Syrup  
Tea  
Tincture  
Warm Infusion

# A Few of My Favorite Medicinal Herbs to Grow

- Chamomile
- Echinacea
- Elderberry
- Stinging Nettle
- Mint
- Calendula
- Elecampane
- Comfrey
- Anise Hyssop
- Bee Balm
- Marshmallow
- Skullcap
- Ashwagandha
- Cleavers
- Lovage
- Motherwort
- Ginger
- Lemongrass
- Spilanthes
- Mullein

# Harvesting

- Be sure you know the best time to harvest the plant.
  - Leafy aerial plants are generally harvested a couple times during the season when they look healthy and fresh. Cut back and leave at least 1/3 of the plant and it will generate new growth.
  - Flowers and fruits have their highest medicinal content when they look the most beautiful and vibrant.
  - Roots are generally harvested in the early winter and spring.



# Drying

- Be sure to dry your plants completely. If you fail to dry them appropriately, they will mold, and you will lose your harvest. Dry slow and warm 95 to 110 degrees.
  - Use the crumble test for leaves and flowers.
  - Double check dense flowers, bark and roots every few days for moisture.
- Examples of ways to dry your plants.
  - Bundling Herbs with the Rubber Band Method
  - Drying Loose Herbs in Screens and Baskets
  - Dehydrators
  - Large-Scale Drying
  - Car-as-Greenhouse Method
- Store dried plants in airtight containers in a dark location in a room with a temperature that doesn't fluctuate, between 50-65 degrees is usually ideal.

# Medicinal Preparations

- **Tincture** – Herbs infused with Grain Alcohol to extract herb medicine. You can also tincture with vinegar and glycerin.
- **Salve** – Herbal Infused Oil combined with beeswax to harden.
- Compress – Fresh plant laid on treated area and pressed or held with bandage.
- Poultice – Chopped up to excrete juice and placed on treated area.
- **Tea** – Herbs steeped with hot water to make a tea (usually use the aerial parts of a plant).
- Edible – Culinary consumption of medicinal herbs.
- Decoction – Boiling of herbs to extract medicinal properties (usually used with root herbs).
- **Infused Honey** – Honey infused with herbs and lightly heated over several hours to extract medicine.
- **Syrup** – Syrup infused with herbs or fruit to extract medicine from the plant
- Douche – Herbal infused water or vinegar used externally as a wash on treated area.
- **Infused Oil** – Oil infused with herbs and heated to extract medicine
- **Infused Vinegar** – Vinegar infused with herbs to extract medicine.
- Powder – Herbs or plant matter that has been crushed to a powder and used in an herbal decoction.
- Steam Inhalation – Boiled water laced with herb that release essential oils that are inhaled.
- Cold Infusion – Water infused with herbs to extract medicine and consumed internally.
- Warm Infusion – War, water infused with herbs to extract medicine and consumed internally.

# Resources

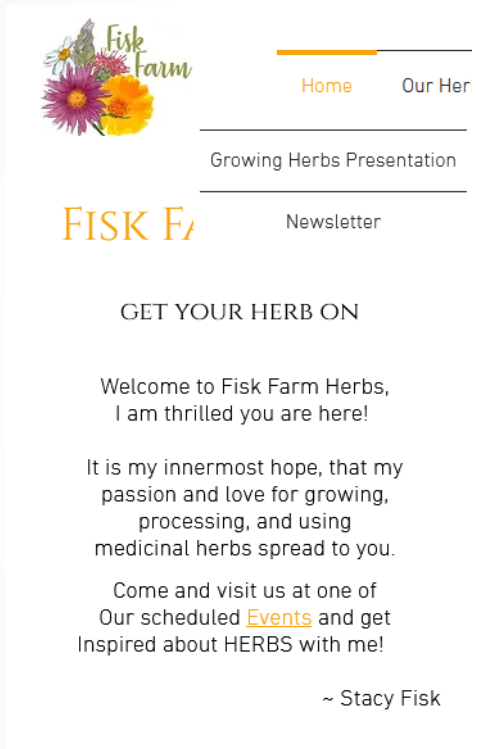
- Internet Resources

- Mountain Rose Herbs – Buy Dried Herbs and Medicine Making Supplies  
<https://mountainroseherbs.com/>
  - Oshala - <https://oshalafarm.com/>
- Strictly Medicinals – Seed Source <https://strictlymedicinalseeds.com/>
- The Naturopathic Herbalist – Herbal Actions of Medicinal Plants  
<https://thenaturopathicherbalist.com/>

- Books

- The Healing Garden “Cultivating & Handcrafting Herbal Remedies”, 2022 by Juliet Blankespoor
- Medicinal Plants of the Mountain West, 2003 by Michael Moore
- Gaia’s Garden “A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture”, by Toby Hemenway.
- Sweet Remedies “Healing Herbal Honey’s, 2019 by Dawn Combs.

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- Seeding Sale Events

Green Goddess Seedling Sale, May 5<sup>th</sup>, Fallon, NV

Great Basin Community Food Coop Seedling Sale, May 18<sup>th</sup>, Reno, NV

Fisk Farm Herbs Seedling Sale, May 11 & May 18, Fallon, NV

- Contact Information:

3700 Alcorn Road, Fallon, NV 80406

[stacy@fiskfarmherbs.com](mailto:stacy@fiskfarmherbs.com)

775-741-4043

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## Thank You!

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