GOT THYME?

MAY 2023

SEASIDE HERB SOCIETY
ORMOND BEACH, FLORIDA

Monthly Newsletter

Seaside Herb Society Meets on the third Saturday of every month, from September through May. Our Next meeting is on May 20 at 9:30.
Friends and family are welcome to attend our meetings as guests.

Please Visit, Follow, & Like
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https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=seaside%20herb%20society%20volusia%2Fflagler%20counties

EDITORS NOTE

The end of another great year. Our society had a full adventurous fall, winter, and spring. And now, summer break is upon us, that's looking busy too with the maintenance of our garden beds and Eco camp lecture. Before we know it, we will be back again, meeting on the third Saturday of each month.

As the song goes, "See you in September, when the summer is through." This has been a year of many changes- the loss of some friends, but many new members joined.

Have a great summer. -Rebekah

P.S.

I did not forget July! Believe it or not, none of our members were born in July.

Mission Statement: We gather in the spirit of friendship and cooperation to learn more about herbs and to use this knowledge to education and benefit others.

Meet Our Members

Mary Erzinger
"It is what it is."

What a joyfully inviting smile! Mary Erzinger is one of our newest members. Welcome to Seaside Herb Society.

Horseback riding is one of Mary's fondest memories of growing up in Tampa, Florida.

She bought a condominium in southern Florida, where she lived for five years before settling in Ormond Beach.

Here in Ormond, she's tried growing vegetables, which she says was a "NO GO!" (Needs patience and advice because veggies grow great here). She has investigated what palm trees grow best in various parts of Florida, Fox Tails being the variety she loves the most, but "they don't tolerate any frost!"

Mary attended our herb faire last year and joined our next meeting. She's been a delightful addition to our SHS for eight months now. So far, her most memorable presentation was the butterfly lecture. She has not joined any of our committees, but with the enthusiastic energy she brings to each meeting, it's surely only a matter of time.

Now that Mary is a retired NICU nurse caring for premature babies, she simply enjoys playing in the sun. She also enjoys reading. Her favorite author is Janet Evanovich.

Roach Bait

1 c cornmeal
½ c sugar
½ c Boric Acid Powder
Mix ingredients and place in an open dish & place in a dark damp space.

Love Potion for Thy Garden

After a party, don't throw away those opened cans of beer or half-full glasses of wine! Please share it with your compost pile. Beer adds nitrogen, yeast, and sugar that stimulate the decomposition of organic materials, accelerating the composting process.

You can add the spent beer directly to the pile or make an accelerant by combining the beer with ammonia, warm water, and regular soda and adding it to the compost pile.

Yeast stimulates the decomposition of organic materials, accelerating the composting process. Add the spent beer or wine directly to your compost pile, or you can make an accelerant:

Ingredients:

- Old beer and/or wine
- ½ cup Ammonia equal to each 6 – 8 ounces of beer/wine (helps release the nitrogen)
- 2 – 3 gallons of warm water
- Leftover or old flat cola or other wasted soda beverage (optional); this increases the sugar content that bugs so love!

Instructions

Use a clean 5-gallon bucket. Blend ingredients and pour over the compost.

Botanical Intimacy
By Rebekah Mead

Botanical Intimacy is the use of herbs to enhance one's sensuality. Certain organic herbs have natural chemicals that activate the release of specific hormones and chemicals responsible for stimulating our libido and / or enhancing sensual performance. Herbs used in love potions are prepared as concoctions (blended into a mixture) or decoctions (extract the flavor or essential oils). Some herbs are aphrodisiacs, which require no preparation; their action occurs by just using consuming it.

Love potions and aphrodisiacs work like other remedies; they must be used routinely. Would you ever take a prescribed medication one time and, if not cured of your ailment (high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes…) entirely, stop taking it, claiming it didn't work?

Herbal aphrodisiacs & love potions are similar to taking medications. They act immediately for some people, while others initially feel nothing. Maslow's Hierarchy helps explain why. Basic human needs must be met before one can achieve intimacy. Fortunately, herbs that enhance romance also have other health benefits that typically address our basic needs. For instance, chamomile and lavender can reduce performance anxiety, but if other issues are causing this problem, it can also reduce stress from anxiety about health or other security issues.

Regarding relationships, our brains (not our hearts) perceive three primary stages: Lust, attraction, and then attachment. Our brains release specific chemicals at each stage. The biology behind each romantic stage comes with its own palette of hormones and neurotransmitters. Chemicals released by our brain during each phase will subtly overlap but are most predominant during specific phases in a relationship. (Poole, 2017), (Wu, 2017):

- ✓ Lust phase: Estrogen, Testosterone
- ✓ Attraction phase: Serotonin, Dopamine, Norepinephrine, Adrenaline
- ✓ Attachment phase: Oxytocin, Vasopressin

Herbs to enhance lust include Dark chocolate, Ginger, Ginseng, Garlic, and Red Clover.

Herbs to enhance the attraction phase: Turmeric, Green Tea, Basil, Tulsi (Holy Basil), Ashwagandha, and Ginseng.

Once a relationship enters the attachment phase, other priorities may take the front stage to romance. Using specific herbs that simulate lust can revive and enhance intimacy within that relationship. One reason for this is that many of the lust herbs mimic feelings of lust, such as hot peppers, which make our body flush with heat while increasing our heart rate. These feelings shared with a partner can increase an intimate encounter.

A few prevalent Intimacy Herbs:

Chamomile

The key to chamomile's use as an aphrodisiac is its ability to ease stress and anxiety. When the mind is subject to nervous tension, it cannot take pleasure in anything, including intimacy. Our body and mind must be free from stressful conditions to enjoy affection. Studies of the biochemical makeup of chamomile reveal that the herb contains compounds that relax the central

nervous system. This is an excellent love potion. (Srivastava JK, 2010).

Hot Chili Peppers- Capsaicin

Chili peppers contain the chemical capsaicin that generates heat when consumed. The hotter the pepper, the more capsaicin it contains. Capsaicin is known to boost testosterone levels that increase libido. Capsaicin causes our body to release endorphins, our natural painkillers. Chili peppers naturally increase our heart rate and body temperature; this triggers a thermogenic effect on the body. All of which facilitate an erotic experience! Heat is tantamount to passion, making chili peppers an excellent aphrodisiac.

High in Vitamin E increases stamina and energy. It also increases blood flow and oxygen to your genitalia.

Cocoa

The Aztecs used to ingest cocoa to stimulate desire. Emperor Montezuma was said to have eaten cocoa in large quantities to fuel his love life. Chocolate contains chemicals known to boost arousal, giving it a reputation for being one of the most romantic gifts worldwide. Tryptophan, a building block of serotonin (the feel-good chemical), is found in cocoa in addition to phenylethylamine, a stimulant related to amphetamine. Both substances are released when we are in love! Chocolate positively affects mood, so it is often consumed under emotional distress. (Nehlig, 2013). Dark chocolate is rich in magnesium, which can boost your oxytocin levels.

Damiana Leaf (Turnera Diffusa)

In Males: It has particular use for impotence in men associated with anxiety. (Toussona, 2020). Also recommended for inflammation of the prostate in men. It is believed to contain alkaloids that stimulate the body's testosterone levels and effectively treat erectile dysfunction, impotence, and inability to reach orgasm. Damiana significantly increased the percentage of males achieving one ejaculation and resuming a second one. In addition, it significantly reduced the post-ejaculatory interval. As an aphrodisiac in traditional medicine, it has therapeutic properties on erectile dysfunction. (Estrada-Reyes R., 2009)

In Females: Damiana is an estrogenic plant that plays an essential role in preventing memory loss while improving sleep and mood disorders, reducing hot flashes and fatigue, which indirectly enhances our libido. (Echeverria, 2021)**.** Damiana is indicated where anxiety or depression may be involved in the inability to achieve orgasm, often restoring the ability to have an orgasm. (Toussona, 2020). Known to produce a mild, short-lived euphoric state, Damiana can quickly stimulate the genital area by enriching the oxygen supply. Interestingly it is a good tonic for women who are coming off the birth control pill and/or facing menopause, as it is a sexual hormone re-balancer.

Intimate Herbal Ideas:

- ♥ Herbal Teas: Damiana, chamomile, mint
- ♥ Hang sprigs of lavender in the hot steamy shower
- ♥ Ginger cookies made with hot peppers
- ♥ Dark chocolate-covered strawberries
- ♥ Chocolate martini

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PURSLANE *('Purslane oleracea'): The Plant, The Weed, The Herb*

Presentation By Amanda Hale & Betsy Enloe

Purslane Oleracea has been known by another revealing Latin name. This Plant was once known as '*Portulaca neglecta,'* and this name of "neglect" says a lot about what it needs to thrive—very little! This ability of the plant to thrive with NO care helps you understand how that name of '*neglecta'* came into play.

Purslane grows wild in most of the world, often where it is not wanted. Let me remind you of a common definition of a weed: Any plant that is growing where it is not wanted. This plant readily does just that, earning the reputation of one of the world's most prolific weeds!

Common names for Purslane (Portulaca oleracea), are Little Hogweed, Fat weed, and Pigweed, reflecting this standing as a weed. But let's remember this bit of poetry:

"We call them weeds and pass them by,
But they are 'friends' to bird, and bee, and butterfly."

--Anonymous

Purslane is a friend to native creatures but also to us as well. This plant is an herb that actually has MANY wonderful values, as Betsy will tell you. Fittingly enough, some of Purslane oleracea's other names are kinder to this herb. Those names include Moss Rose, Portulaca, Red Moss, Red Root, and Pursley. In Spanish, it is known as Verdolagas, pourpier in France, bakleh in Lebanese, in which countries it is sold as an edible green in local markets. Many recipes exist for its use, both in world cuisines as well as the herbal medicine world.

Here in Florida, as in much of the world, it grows wild. I found it in my own backyard and am now noticing it everywhere! It was featured long ago in Euell Gibbons' books on natural foods. Many videos are out there for identifying it.

You can forage for it safely if you know a few things about the plant.

- ✓ Observe the leaves—they are fleshy/thick.
- ✓ These are succulent leaves, not flat like clover.
- ✓ Observe the stems—they are smooth, not hairy.

If you break off a piece of stem, they do NOT OOZE WHITE!!

Why am I sharing this? Because there exists another group of plants called Spurge, which some people confuse with Purslane. Spurge plants (and there are a few different varieties) do NOT share those 3 characteristics. Spurge plants are somewhat toxic: Inflammation and skin blisters are the most common form of toxicity—get some of the white oozes in your eye and it will be irritated, leading to blurry vision and, in a bad case, temporary blindness.

Why am I telling you this? Because Spurge also grows wild in Florida, and I found spurge in my yard as well. It is clear to me what the differences are, and I am sharing printouts with images of this toxic weed and passing along an actual Spurge I 'potted up' for you. I encourage you to break off some stems to see the WHITE OOZE, but DON'T TOUCH the ooze!!— (Wash with soap and water will remove the ooze).

Spurge has flat non-succulent leaves, often slightly hairy stems, and OOZES white 'sap': Avoid it!

As you can see, there is very little confusion between these two plants once you know the traits that differ between Spurge and Purslane. You can harvest Purslane safely, but only from areas where you are confident no pesticides, road runoff, nor other toxic chemicals have been "feeding" the purslane.

Now, onto the Purslane plant itself.

All parts of this herb are edible: Leaves stems, flowers, and seeds. It produces a lot of seeds and is classed as an annual. In fact, if you've ever had purslane in your yard, there are likely viable seeds still in your soil—these seeds can last for 40 (forty!) years and still, be viable. They are just waiting for a chance to grow.

You can grow purslane from seed. Seeds are available online. The seeds germinate after seven to 10 days if kept between 70 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit. The seeds can be sown 1/4 to 1/2 inches deep into the soil.

Spring is the ideal season to sow purslane from seed. In regions with mild frost in winter, you can wait till the last frost date is over. The soil should have warmed to a minimum of 70 F before planting.

Purslane grows readily from stem cuttings—you can gather your own from the wild or from a friend. All you need to do is remove a piece of the stem (I'd suggest about 2-3 inches minimum), pop off leaves from the bottom inch, and set the stems in a glass of water in your kitchen window. You will see roots forming in just a couple of weeks. You can plant these tender slips into pots if you want more roots, or you can do what I did—I just placed them in a sunny spot in my sand that I enhanced with a trowel of organic material. I watered them well and again every day for 3 days, then every other day for a week. They are growing like mad just 2 weeks later!

There are some things you should know about growing purslane. Obviously, from all the weed talk, it really wants to grow for you—give it sun, and some water, at least at the start, and you can neglect it and it can still thrive. However, Purslane, when forced to endure low water/dry/drought, is less tasty than purslane, which is actively cultivated/tended. Also, Purslane growing without regular water tends to exhibit smaller, slightly less fleshy leaves. So, to grow purslane for eating, DO give it some water—once a week, maybe twice in our dry spells.

Purslane has some interesting growth characteristics. It grows from a central stem and tap root, and that tap root grows deep to get it the water it needs. Its roots also bring up an amazing amount of minerals from the soil/sand, and so even if you treat it as a weed, just turning it under or into the compost pile will give your soil mineral amendments—so even as a 'weed,' it is still useful!!

That characteristic of roots going deep and bringing matter up into the plant is also why you don't want to harvest purslane from somewhere with 'contaminated' soil—Purslane can 'take up' (thus it can contain) those contaminants as well.

So, while Purslane can benefit your compost pile, it also benefits various lifeforms—aside from us humans. It is consumed by various 'critters' (actually, if you have chickens, they love it), and it benefits the plants around it, especially in dryer climes like Florida. The deep roots break the soil leading the way for other plant roots. Still, the additional water that purslane carries in its roots and leaves, along with its habit of low spreading growth, helps keep the soil cool and moist, benefiting nearby plants & soil microbes.

Do be aware that Purslane can overtake your other plants and potentially choke them out. Still, if you periodically harvest it for you (or for the compost pile), you've got the benefit of purslane without the drawbacks.

Speaking of harvesting Purslane, I discovered some interesting points in my research. Purslane apparently changes flavor depending on when it is harvested! The flavor of the purslane is stronger in the morning because of the higher malic acid content. It should be cooled right after harvesting due to its delicate nature.

"Throughout the night, purslane takes in carbon dioxide and transforms it into malic acid, which is the same ingredient that gives green apples their distinctive flavor. This is why purslane is much tangier in taste in the morning than in the late afternoon since purslane converts malic acid into glucose during the day."

You can wrap it in a plastic bag and keep it in the refrigerator, where it will keep fresh for a week. As with any plant, clean under running water before eating. Once it is clean and dry, it can be stored in the freezer for a year. Be sure its e it is completely dry because excess moisture can worsen its quality—Frozen Purslane is best used in heated dishes, as it does not maintain its pleasing 'crunch/snap once frozen.

MANY VARIETIES OF PURSLANE

There are two main varieties you will find in seed form. They are "green" purslane and "Golden" Purslane—the golden is a cultivar of the green or common purslane (purslane oleracea). Both are touted as delicious options.

Additionally, I have found many other cultivars with some beautiful flowers. Since they are purslane oleracea, they would be edible. Still, since they are grown for the flowers (which are edible, too), their flavor may vary slightly—just like different tomato cultivars vary in flavor.

Purslane: A "Superfood" Without a Marketing Team

Purslane, also known as little hogweed, is a common weed worldwide. But just because it's considered a weed doesn't mean it's worthless. In fact, this salty, slightly sour plant is completely edible and provides some impressive health benefits.

Purslane is a succulent that offers a juicy bite. This allows it to grow in conditions that kill even the hardest lettuce. Its sturdy nature makes purslane a great garden-vegetable option for dry, hot regions or gardeners who don't trust themselves to water regularly. Purslane's health benefits are an added benefit for this hearty gardener's treasure.

Health Benefits

Purslane has vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that can provide important health benefits. For example, vitamin A helps your eyes remain healthy as well as improves your immune system. Vitamin A is also critical to the health of your organs because it supports healthy cell division.

Purslane is also rich in vitamin C, which is important to keep your collagen and blood vessels in good shape, as well as helping injuries heal.

In addition, purslane can provide other health benefits, like:

Purslane is full of beta-carotene, the pigment responsible for the reddish color of its stems and leaves. Beta-carotene is one of many antioxidants found in purslane.

These antioxidants have been found to reduce the number of free radicals in your body. Free radicals are oxygen by-products given off by all cells in the body. Lowering the number of free radicals can help reduce the risk of cellular damage. This, in turn, lowers your risk of cancer.

Ethno-medicinal uses of purslane in treating various diseases across the globe.

(Kumar, 2022)

Afghanistan	Seeds are used against diarrhea and throat infections.
Armenia	Leaves and stems are used against liver, gastric, kidney, and bladder diseases and as a hypoglycemic agent.
Azerbaijan	Infusion of leaves is used against diabetes.
Bangladesh	Dried seeds are used for toothache and asthma.
China	Used against dysentery, swellings, abnormal uterine bleeding (AUB), bleeding of hemorrhoids, erysipelas, and eczema. It is also used against snake bites and insect bites.
India	Used as an Ayurveda medicine against diseases of the lungs, liver, kidney, bladder and bowel burning sensation, coughing, and neurasthenia.
Iran	Roots, leaves, and purslane seeds are used to treat diabetes mellitus.
Jordan	Seeds are used as blood purifiers and as aphrodisiacs.
Nepal	Leaves are used for scurvy, kidney, and cardiovascular disorders. Juice is drunk for blood purification.
Pakistan	Aerial parts are used in the treatment of urinary and digestive problems. Seeds are demulcent, diuretic and vermifuge.
Philippines	Used for treatment of kidney infections.
Sri Lanka	Leaves are used against ulcers, wounds, burns, and skin diseases.
Vietnam	The whole plant is used as an antibacterial, anathematic, and anti-inflammatory agent.
Yemen	Leaves are used for gastric pain.
Albania	It is used to treat musculoskeletal disorders.
Italy	Used to treat headache, stomach, intestine, and kidney pains.
Greece	Used to cure inflammation.
Romania	External bath for weakness and sickness.
Spain	Consumption of aerial parts for blood pressure regulation.
Turkey	Leaves are used to cure diarrhea, diabetes, headache, ulcers, urinary disorders, wounds, and constipation.
Australia	Aerial parts are eaten to cure scurvy, irritations, and inflammations and as a diuretic and antibiotic agents.
Algeria	It is used against dyspepsia and also as a diuretic.
Angola	The whole plant is used for burns.
Cameroon	Shoot with leaves is used against headaches and poisoning.
Kenya	The whole plant is crushed, boiled with other herbs, and used against cancer.
Ethiopia	Cooked leaves are eaten for gastritis, peptic ulcers, and constipation. The application of crushed leaves on the skin is used to cure fungal infections.
Morocco	Cooked leaves are consumed to cure hypercholesterolemia.

Heart Health

Purslane is also helpful for supporting your cardiovascular system. It is one of the few vegetables that are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which are important to support healthy arteries and can help prevent strokes, heart attacks, and other forms of heart disease. In fact, purslane has the highest-recorded levels of omega-3 fatty acids of any land-based plant.

Bone Health

Purslane is also a great source of two minerals that are important to bone health: calcium and

magnesium. Calcium is the most common mineral in your body, and failing to eat enough of it can slowly weaken your bones, leading to osteoporosis.

On the other hand, magnesium indirectly affects skeletal health by affecting the growth of bone cells.

Getting enough of both of these minerals can improve skeletal health and prevent complications from osteoporosis and aging.

Nutrition

Purslane is rich in **folate**, which aids in safe cell division and promotes DNA duplication. Doctors recommend that people who can become pregnant consume at least 400 mcg of folate daily because it helps avoid birth defects.

Purslane is also an excellent source of:

Vitamin A
Vitamin C
Potassium
Calcium
Iron
Folate
Choline
Magnesium

Nutrients per Serving

A one-cup serving of purslane contains:
Calories: 7
Protein: Less than 1 gram
Fat: Less than 1 gram
Carbohydrates: 1 gram
Fiber: Less than 1 gram
Sugar: Less than 1 gram

What to Watch Out For

Purslane contains oxalates, which have been linked to the formation of kidney stones. People prone to kidney stones should be careful when eating purslane, especially the seeds. Purslane seeds tend to have higher levels of oxalates than other parts of the plant.

Purslane also tends to be saltier than other vegetables because of its succulent nature. People who prefer low-salt diets should watch their purslane intake to avoid consuming too much salt.

(Almasoud A.G., 2014); (Petropoulos S., 2016); (Palaniswamy U.R., 2001); (Uddin M.K., 2014)

History/Lore of Purslane

Fun Facts about Purslane:

Purslane
Main nutraceutical constituents & concentrations

Nutritional constituent	Concentration
Crude protein (% DW)	23.47
Carbohydrate (% DW)	40.67
Crude lipid (% DW)	5.26
Crude fiber (% DW)	8.00
Ash (% DW)	22.66
Zinc (mg/100 g)	5.83 ± 0.08
Calcium (mg/100 g)	131.44 ± 3.21
Iron (mg/100 g)	72.14 ± 505
Magnesium (mg/100 g)	66.47 ± 1.43
Sodium (mg/100 g)	571.41 ± 16.63
Potassium (mg/100 g)	2842.38 ± 91.68
Manganese (mg/100 g)	9.75 ± 1.02
Phosphorus (mg/100 g)	79.7
Carotenes (mg/100 g)	89.2
Lipids (mg/100 g)	3.81
B1 – thiamine (mg/100 g)	0.047
B2 – riboflavin (mg/100 g)	0.112
B3 – niacin (mg/100 g)	0.480
B5 - pantothenic acid (mg/100 g)	0.036
B6 – pyridoxine (mg/100 g)	0.073
B9 – folates (mg/100 g)	0.012
Ascorbic acid (mg/g)	2.27 (stem) to 3.99 (leaves)
α-tocopherol (mg/100 g)	26.6 mg
Omega-3-fatty acid (mg/100 g)	188.48 ± 6.35
Linoleic acid (LA, mg/100 g)	34.0 ± 5.2
α-linolenic acid (LNA, mg/100 g)	132.8 ± 22.0
LNA/LA ratio	5.2 ± 0.03
α-carotene (mg/100 g)	0.009
β-carotene (mg/g)	0.29 (stem) to 0.58 (leaves)
Lutein (mg/100 g)	5.4
Zeaxanthin (mg/100 g)	0.19

Don't confuse purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*) with "winter purslane," an entirely different (though related) plant, also known as miner's lettuce

(*Claytonia perfoliata*), which has its own interesting history.

Purslane was said to be Gandhi's favorite food.

Author Harold McGee notes in his book, "On Food and Cooking," that purslane's tartness comes from an abundance of malic acid. Succulents like purslane convert malic acid to glucose during the day. This means that purslane harvested in the morning will be tarter than purslane harvested later in the day or evening.

The origin of purslane is not certain, but the existence of this plant is reported about 4,000 years ago. The succulent stems and fleshy leaves of purslane reflect that it may have originated and adapted to desert climates of the Middle East and India. It can be found in Europe, Africa, North America, Australia, and Asia

A fleshy, leafy green, purslane is probably native to Central Asia, the Near East, Europe, or all of the above. Evidence shows that purslane has been eaten for at least 2,000 years; it was cultivated in ancient Egypt and enjoyed by the ancient Romans and Greeks. It was known to the Arabs in the medieval period and may have been cultivated in Europe as early as the 13th century. (Purslane is also commonly wild-harvested.) The plant was first identified in the United States in Massachusetts in 1672. It now grows across the globe; in some places it is considered an invasive weed. Weed or not — purslane is a worthy addition to your salad bowl.

This is going to blow your mind:

Purslane has* the most *omega-3 fatty acids (the fatty acids also found in seafood like salmon) of any green vegetable.

Foodprint.org (Footprint, 2023)**.**

Evidence shows that purslane has been eaten for at least 2,000 years; it was cultivated in ancient Egypt and enjoyed by the ancient Romans and Greeks. It was known to the Arabs in the medieval period and may have been cultivated in Europe as early as the 13th century. (Purslane is also commonly wild-harvested.)

Aliases: Verdolaga, Pigweed, Pursley, Pugsley, Rigla, Pourpier, Ma-Chi-Xian, Arachne, Portulacca, Hogweed

Binomial Etymology: *Portulaca oleracea* *Port-* is "carry;" -ul *a is "little or scar;" -*aca* is "a point/silence/healing;" oler- is "greens/vegetable;" -acae is a generic ending to plant names (Borror, 1960).

Introduction

An ancient ally, Purslane's relationship with humankind stretches into the yawning darkness before written history. The Chinese have utilized it for thousands of years as a medicine and it was known to ancient cooks as a delicate addition to soups and "sallets."

Folk Remedies

The plant has been used topically as a burn dressing or on bruises (Moerman, 2009). It is traditionally utilized as a febrifuge (fever reducer), antiseptic, and vermifuge (worm expeller). (Zhou, 2015).

Pharmacological Effects

Purslane has been studied widely for its antiulcerogenic, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and wound healing properties. (Rohde, 1936).

Magic

Purslane was said to be planted, and worn to ward away **evil spirits** (Northcote, 1903).

History

The name, purslane, is derived from an amalgamation of its Latin name, portulacca, and its archaic French name, pourcelaine (Stephens, 1994). It was highly valued as a garden herb in green or golden form in 17th century England, being mentioned several times in passing by Sir Francis Bacon (1561–1626) in his posthumous publication, *Sylva Sylvarum*. Pliny the Elder (AD 23-AD 79) reported that the ancient Greeks referred to purslane as adrachne (Daubeny, 1865). In Greek mythology, Arachne was a mortal weaver who challenged the goddess Minerva to a competition in needlework. After being defeated by the goddess, Arachne hangs herself in despair, and is subsequently transformed into a spider (Ovid, 1833). Noticing the prostrate growth habit of purslane, it is not hard to imagine the ancient Greeks associating this plant with the spider (Class: Arachnida).

Literature

"Lord, I confess to when I dine
The pulse is thine-
And all those other bits that be
There placed by Thee.
The worts, the purslain, and the mess
Of water Cress." (Herrick, 1896).

"I have made a satisfactory dinner, satisfactory on several accounts, simply off a dish of purslane…" (Thoreau, 1910).

"…the garden patch requires your energy, plus its own, and the more war is waged upon [weeds], the more does it seem to encourage the purslane, which thrives like a freebooter in this sort of warfare." (Kirkham, 1908).

"I found in my yard a purslane that was getting in its work before the frost. It was a new plant, barely three inches long, and The weather had been windy and raw. But in a few days it had not merely come out of the earth, it had lowered, fruited, and opened the lid of one of its cups, showing the seed within, black and perfect. It had crowded into a week the usual life of a month." (Skinner, 1898).

CHERVIL PURSLANE SOUP WITH LETTUCE

Serves 4 to 6

This soup is delicate but full-flavored, with a touch of refreshing tang provided by the purslane. It's especially good before grilled or broiled fish served with parsley and chive new potatoes.

2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
3 cups chicken broth
1/2 cup purslane leaves
1 cup chervil leaves
1 small head shredded leaf lettuce, such as butter or green leaf
1 cup half-and-half, at room temperature
Salt and freshly ground white pepper
Few sprigs chervil and purslane for garnish

Melt the butter in a medium-sized noncorrodible pot over low heat. Stir in the flour and cook over low heat for 5 minutes.

Add the chicken broth and stir well to combine. Cook over low heat for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the purslane and cook for 5 minutes. Add the chervil and lettuce and cook for 5 minutes.

Puree the herbs and vegetables in a blender and return them to the soup. Add the half-and-half and heat the soup over low heat until it is just hot, 2 or 3 minutes. Watch the soup carefully, as it can curdle if the heat is too high or if it is left too long over the heat. Season with salt and white pepper.

Serve the soup hot, garnished with chervil and purslane.

PURSLANE SALAD (serve 8)

2 quarts purslane, washed twice1
cup boiling water
1 medium onion, sliced thinly
2 ripe tomatoes, cubed
¼ cup chopped fresh dillweed
½ cup cider vinegar
⅓ cup nut oil
Steam the purslane in the boiling water in a covered saucepan
for 5 minutes. Drain and cool. Add the remaining ingredients
to the purslane in a large wooden bowl. Toss thoroughly.

Portulaca Rice Pudding
4 Servings

Ingredients
1 cup jasmine rice (*pre-cooked*)
1 cup whole milk
½ cup heavy cream
½ cup coconut milk
½ cup purslane (chopped finely)
1/3 cup sesame seeds
1/3 cup raisins
Sugar to taste (Or Truvia Stevia)
½ tsp turmeric
¼ tsp ginger
Instructions
Simmer purslane, pre-cooked rice, and milk for 5 minutes or until the mixture thickens.
Add heavy cream, coconut milk, turmeric, ginger, raisins, and pumpkin seeds.
Increase heat to a boil for five minutes
Chill and serve

Zucchini Soup with Purslane
Active Time: 25 mins Total Time: 45 mins

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon thyme leaves
- 1 bay leaf
- 8 small zucchini (3 pounds), thinly sliced, plus long zucchini shavings for garnish
- Kosher salt
- 3 cups water
- 2 tablespoons finely shredded basil
- 2 cups ice
- Freshly ground pepper
- 2 cups purslane or baby arugula

Instructions

1. In a large saucepan, heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Add the onion and garlic and cook over moderate heat until translucent, about 8 minutes. Stir in the thyme and bay leaf and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the sliced zucchini, season with salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 10 minutes. Add the water and bring to a boil. Remove the saucepan from the heat. Discard the bay leaf and stir in the shredded basil.
2. Working in batches, puree the soup in a blender until very smooth. Transfer the zucchini puree to a large bowl. Stir in the ice. Refrigerate the zucchini soup for at least 3 hours, until thoroughly chilled.
3. Season the soup with salt and pepper. Ladle into shallow bowls and top with a small handful of purslane and zucchini shavings. Drizzle with olive oil and serve.

Make Ahead : The zucchini soup can be refrigerated for up to 1 day.

Purslane Pork Stew

Prep Time: 15 mins Cook Time: 2 hrs 5 mins

- 2 pounds pork ribs, cut into 2-inch sections
- 1 pound boneless pork shoulder, cut into 1-inch cubes
- ½ cup water
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 onion, quartered
- 6 tomatillos, husked and quartered
- 2 serrano chile peppers
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- water to cover
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled
- salt and ground black pepper to taste
- 3 bunches purslane

Instructions

1. Combine pork ribs, pork shoulder, water, and salt in a Dutch oven over medium heat. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, for 20 minutes. Uncover and increase heat to medium-high. Continue cooking and stirring constantly until all liquid has evaporated and pork has browned, 15 to 20 minutes.
2. Combine onion, tomatillos, serrano peppers, and cilantro in a medium saucepan. Add enough water to cover. Bring to a boil and cook until the tomatillos are tender and have changed color for 5 to 7 minutes. Transfer vegetable mixture to a blender; add garlic and blend carefully until sauce is smooth.

Pour sauce into the Dutch oven, season stew with salt and pepper, and simmer for 1 hour. Add purslane and simmer until pork is tender and purslane is soft, about 20 minutes more.

Authentic Lebanese Fattoush

The salad uses two unusual ingredients: sumac and purslane. Sumac, usually sold ground, is made from ground red berries, and used in Middle Eastern, mainly Lebanese, cooking. Purslane is a succulent with a lemony flavor, making a nice green salad.

Prep Time: 15 mins; Cook Time: 5 mins; Total Time: 20 mins

Dressing:

½ cup water
1 teaspoon cornstarch
⅓ cup lemon juice
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 teaspoons sumac powder
salt and ground black pepper to taste

Salad:

1 head of romaine lettuce, torn into bite-size pieces
2 large tomatoes, diced
1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
1 medium cucumber, diced
1 cup chopped purslane
4 green onions, chopped
½ (5 ounce) package arugula
¼ cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
¼ cup chopped fresh mint
4 pita rounds, toasted and torn into pieces

Make the dressing: Stir water and cornstarch in a small saucepan over medium-high heat until thickening. Remove from heat and mix in lemon juice, garlic, sumac, salt, and pepper. Refrigerate until ready to use.

Assemble salad: Combine lettuce, tomatoes, bell pepper, cucumber, purslane, green onions, arugula, parsley, and mint in a large serving bowl. Toss with dressing and serve with toasted pita.

Chicken Vegetable Stew with Roasted Tomato Sauce

Mexican chicken vegetable stew is a quick, easy weeknight meal! It has all the flavors of Mexico in one dish. Chicken breasts are simmered with potatoes, tomatoes, squash, purslane, and epazote are cooked together in one pot. Two different types of peppers are added to make it even more delicious.

Prep Time 15 minutes; Cook Time 20 minutes
Total Time 40 minutes; Servings 4
Calories 266kcal

Ingredients

- 1 lb. Chicken breast cut into bite-size pieces
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tbs. Vegetable oil
- 1 lb. Tomatoes
- ¼ Medium white onion chopped
- 1 Large garlic clove
- 2 Serrano peppers optional
- 1 Medium-size potato cut into cubes
- 1 Poblano pepper chopped
- 3 Epazote leaves
- 1 Small squash or zucchini chopped
- 1½ cup Purslane or spinach chopped
- 2 Cilantro sprigs

1. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the chicken and cook for 10 minutes.
2. While the chicken is cooking, roast the tomatoes 0n a griddle, turning as needed to obtain an even roasting. Once the tomatoes are ready, set aside.
3. Once the chicken starts getting a little golden, add the diced potatoes and Poblano pepper. Stir and keep cooking for about 3 minutes.
4. Place the roasted tomatoes, onion, and garlic in your blender. Process until you have a very smooth sauce. Pour this sauce into the skillet and keep cooking for 5 minutes.
5. Add the whole Serrano peppers and chopped zucchini to the skillet and keep cooking for 5 more minutes. Finally, add the Purslane (or spinach), cilantro, and Epazote. Season with salt and pepper. Keep cooking for 5 more minutes; make sure all the vegetables are well-cooked before serving. Enjoy.

Purslane Salad Chinese Style Recipe

Ingredients
14 oz fresh purslane
For the salad dressing:
3 tbsp Zhenjiang vinegar
2 tbsp light soy sauce *(I think regular soy would be better)*
1/2 tbsp minced garlic
1 tbsp sesame oil

Instructions
Wash and rinse the purslane well.

1. Fill a stockpot (4 Qt. capacity) with water and bring it to a boil, for about 10 minutes.
2. While waiting on the water, prepare the salad dressing. Peel the garlic cloves and use a compact food processor to mince them into fine pieces.
3. Add everything under "For the Salad Dressing" into a small bowl, mix well. Add the remaining minced garlic into a small container and store in the fridge to use for other dishes.
4. When the water in the stockpot is boiling, add the purslane into the boiling water. Push down to make sure the purslane is submerged in the water and wait for it to reach boil again for about 2 minutes.
5. Turn off the heat, and remove purslane from the pot using a spider skimmer and place in a colander to drain
6. Add freshly blanched and drained purslane to a serving bowl or plate. Pour in salad dressing prepared in the small bowl and mix well. Use a mini spatula to scrape clean the bowl.
7. All done! Enjoy a super refreshing, tasty and healthy purslane salad.

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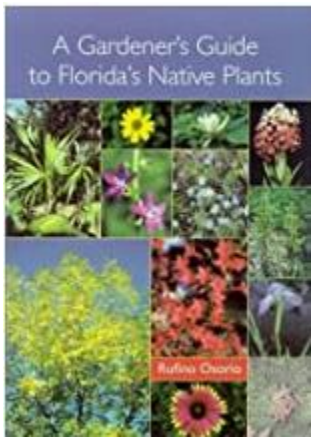
What's on my Bookshelf

By Rebekah Mead



This is a wonderful resource that helps us understand the value of native plants (weeds). Though I don't agree with everything it states, such as pulling every weed as soon as they appear (much of my success as a gardener comes from allowing native plants to grow amongst my crops (many are nurse plants, hyperaccumulators, act as repellants to bugs, in addition to feeding wildlife, which they often choose over my crops.

This book identifies many of our useful native plants that are necessary for a healthy environment. It also explains how to prune plants.