



Fall 2021



# OUR MOUNTAIN Herbs

NEWSLETTER

## ABOUT WVHA

West Virginia Herb Association  
How to join, our mission,  
current board members & staff  
PG2

## FEATURED HERB PROFILE

This year Parsley was  
nominated as the  
herb of the year  
PG2

## EVENTS & UPDATES

Spring Gathering April 2022  
PG1  
Fall Gathering September 2022  
Other near & far events  
PG4

## ARTICLES

A review of Jewelweed by one  
of our founding mothers  
PG3  
Pick the weeds, Pick me!  
PG3  
Elderberry Champagne  
PG4

## HERBS IN THE NEWS

Herbal studies and updates  
PG3

## SEED HOLIDAY GIFTS

Share seeds of your harvest for  
Autumn Equinox  
PG3



## LETTER FROM WVHA PRESIDENT

### *Hello Herb Enthusiasts!*

What a challenging time this has been, and it continues. We have all been through such upheaval and stress. As representatives of the WV Herb Association, the board took a pause, just as the rest of the world has. For me, it has been a time for deep reflection and for delving deeper into herbal medicine. I truly believe, actually I Know, for a fact that herbs can help heal. The trauma that we all experienced in 2020, COVID, isolation, political upheaval, social upheaval, has many of us experiencing post (even present) traumatic stress syndrome. For me, one of the beautiful things about living so closely with the plants, is that they reside in Reciprocity, always, and the simple act of sharing time with them Soothes me and Heals me. Science has finally caught up with what many of us know; plants live in relationship with one another. They communicate, they have a web of connection and they nourish one another. Let's be like the plants. One of the ways that we can counter the social upheaval is practicing Reciprocity in our daily lives, in relation to our neighbors, and by neighbors I mean, plants, animals, insects, as well as our human neighbors. Let's be like the plants. We have hope for many new possibilities.

I would like to welcome Jennifer Geib as the new editor of our newsletter. She has skills!!! And I think we will all be pleased with the results of her efforts.

We are in the process of building a new website so watch on Facebook, as we will announce when it is up. I hope that everyone is having a wonderful summer of healing and walking with plants.

~ Barbara Volk

## SPRING HERB GATHERING at Tygart Lake State Park ~ [click here for info](#)

Date: Saturday, April 23rd, 2022, 9am-5pm | Address: 1240 Paul E. Malone Rd, Grafton, WV 26354

A one-day gathering of herbalists and herb/plant enthusiasts wanting to learn from mentors and naturalists to deepen their knowledge about herbs and their uses. Several classes and a plant walk. Bring your own lunch.

Entrance fee (includes all classes): \$10. You can pre-pay or pay at the door. If you want to volunteer to help you can gain free entry! Want to share your wares? 12 vendor booth spaces, reserve by April 1, booth fee is \$10 and includes entry pass. For registration see page 4, or go to [www.wvherbassociation.org/springgathering.htm](http://www.wvherbassociation.org/springgathering.htm).

*“To me, it's not a negative thing to know that there will be great changes. It's not negative, it's evolution. When you look at it as evolution, it's time, nothing stays the same. You should learn how to plant something. That is the first connection. You should treat all things as spirit, realize that we are one family. It's never something like the end. It's like life, there is no end to life.”*

~ Floyd Red Crow Westerman, Hopi Elder”



## About Us

*Founded in 1992*

West Virginia Herb Association is a non-profit, educational organization whose mission is to promote the ethical and environmentally sound propagation, cultivation, harvest and use of herbs in West Virginia. The WVHA provides a forum for those interested in herbs by creating opportunities for members to get to know one another, to network, share knowledge and experience, and build community. We are a diverse network of people with a wide range of knowledge across many regional states. Our primary focus areas are: herb cultivation, medicinal herbs, culinary herbs and herbal crafts.

### ● WVHA Board

President ~ Barbara Volk  
 Vice President ~ Laura Yokochi  
 Secretary ~ Jane Birdsong  
 Treasurer ~ Theresa Gain  
 Members At-Large ~ James McCormick and Joan Beard  
 Newsletter Editor ~ Jennifer Geib

### ● Our Founders

Nona Conley Sue Meyer  
 Marion Harless Nicole Molnar  
 Dot Montgillion Linda Cristen  
 Myra Bonhage Hale Nicole Shatz

### ● How to Join

Yearly membership fees  
 Individual: \$20.00  
 Family: \$30.00  
 Business: \$50.00  
 New members can join any time.  
 Ongoing membership dues are due on or before April 30, 2022 (no dues 2021)

See page 4 for our contact information.  
 Join and receive the complete newsletter.  
[Click here for membership information](#)

## PARSLEY... a perfect plant

*Herb of the year for 2021*

*by Jennifer Geib*

Truly, I never liked parsley, and I was surprised to see it nominated by the [International Herb Association](#) as the plant of the year for 2021 being that an anti-viral plant may have been a more appropriate selection. However, after I grew flat leaf parsley, successfully used it in cooking as well as medicinally, I became impressed with the plant and was happy to see it chosen. We need strong, vital, life-giving plants in these uncertain times; ones that will persevere through winter and provide us with very green strength. Parsley does not directly help the world condition, and offers no direct viral recovery support, but it is a beneficial herb in many ways.

Here in the USA the tightly curled-leaf (*Petroselinum crispum*, var. *crispum*) is the most popular variety being used primarily as a garnish or decoration and as a dried spice. I tried eating it, once, but truly found the taste terrible and never bought any variety for eating or cooking. So when the IHA selection was announced I decide to give the flat leafed variety a go on the tasteful suggestion of a chef friend.



There are three general varieties, all in the Umbelliferae (carrot) family, hailing from the Mediterranean region. Our curly leaf as noted above, the flat leaf “Italian” (*Petroselinum crispum*, var. *neapolitanum*) and Hamburg Parsley or German Parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*, var. *tuberosum*) which is primarily grown for its large roots, similar to parsnip. Outside of the USA the flat leaf is used extensively in numerous culinary dishes, and it is said to be stronger in flavor, although I find it to be richer, gentler and a more acceptable flavor over

the curly leaf. All parsley types are filled with green goodness, vitamins A and C, calcium, iron, boron and fluorine, and they make wonderful parsley pesto.

I started to wonder, since parsley has such a broad use in cooking it must have some medicinal value and, after digging through a number of books, I discovered its uniqueness as a medicinal herb. In herbalism the root and leaf are traditionally used, to bring on delayed menstrual flow, to relive gas and bloating, and when eaten in more copious amounts may have a tonic effect on the cardiovascular system and assist in reduction of menopausal symptoms. But its traditional use was as a diuretic. The seeds can also be used with care.

In historical European ethnobotany the parsley plant has an interesting and sad misconception of being an herb of death. It was planted on graves and graves were lined by the Romans with parsley. Much of the lore around parsley relates to death in the European culture. It is said that if you pick parsley and give it to someone that a death will occur in their family shortly thereafter; however if you invite someone into your garden and let them pick the parsley themselves that it will bring good fortune. I’m sure there is much more to its herbal history because the flat-leaf parsley plant has been used for thousands of years in Middle-Eastern and Mediterranean culture, so maybe the real story hasn’t been uncovered.

I just love finding an herb that is readily available and can be grown outside my front door. Parsley is a bit finicky, and it can take up to 3 weeks to sprout. Supposedly prefers a rich soil and plenty of water; but, that doesn’t fit with the Mediterranean climate which is more arid. So the growing instructions may need to be discovered in your garden for the specific parsley type.

Happily, I was able to sprout the seeds successfully in early spring and my three-foot square box of parsley grew tremendously, I was able to use it fresh and dried, and slowly I became extremely fond of it. I used the air-dried, deep green parsley leaves throughout last winter which gave me such joy, flavor and health! I encourage you to grow parsley too!

## JEWELWEED, a gem in our garden

This article was written by Marion Harless, Herbarist & Founder

Appearing after the year's first frost-free night, the thin discs of pea-green are often the first sign of spring. Our father, Everett Harless, who grew up in Logan, called the wildflower "waterweed." Our mother, Jane Hoag Harless from Weirton, knew it as "touch-me-not." Both names are good descriptions. I was taught in a 1950 biology class that it was also called "jewelweed." Jewelweed has very juicy stems and grows in damp places. Its seed pods pop open with any disturbance, sending the still ripening seeds flying in all directions.

Many writers refer to the resemblance of the dangling flowers to a lady's earring, the origin of the name "jewelweed." An herbs workshop participant introduced us to her belief that the name comes from the ripe seed: peel off the black exterior to see the robins-egg blue or turquoise gem inside.

American traditional medical uses followed European customs of applying bruised plant leaves to aches, pains, rashes and bruises. Today jewelweed is primarily used for relieving the itching from any type of rash. It is a common ingredient in over-the-counter poison ivy remedies. We used the plant on nettle stings and mosquito bites. Jewelweed is also a strong fungicide and is effective against ringworm. For Native American uses, see Daniel Moerman's *Native American Ethnobotany*, and his ethnographic references.

Jewelweed has a long bloom season and very abundant blossoms which make it an important food source for honeybees and hummingbirds. In West Virginia, we have two species: *Impatiens capensis* is typically orange with freckles and grows in sunshine while *Impatiens pallida* is a pale yellow and likes to grow in shade.

After succumbing to the first frosts, the plants present a spooky appearance, orange skeletons of stems may linger for a while before collapsing and decomposing. The orange "death" color gives an indication of jewelweed's use as a dye plant, which yields various shades of yellow to orange-beige.

Be sure to include this useful and easy-to-grow colorful annual wildflower in your landscape, especially in bee yards and the trendy important "pollinator" gardens.



## HERBS IN THE NEWS

*Plants are our source of food, health and bring beauty to our lives. We, as herbalists, have a deep and profound connection with the earth and plants we use as medicine. It is interesting to see science catch up to our innate knowledge.*

### PSILOCYBIN MUSHROOM ALERT

Science Alert. July 6, 2021. A new research study conducted with mice has revealed that a single dose of psilocybin, the hallucinogenic compound found in "magic" mushrooms, was able to increase the density and size of neuronal junctions in the brain with the effect persisting for more than 30 days after administration. "Psilocybin, the active psychedelic compound in magic mushrooms, has some curious effects on the human brain, and is of increasing interest to scientists with a potential effectiveness as an antidepressant." Read more: <https://www.sciencealert.com/one-dose-of-psilocybin-regrows-lost-brain-connections-in-mice>

### CANNABIS UPDATE

Insider. July 12, 2021. Scientists have synthesized a novel cannabinoid that selectively targets endocannabinoid receptors in the stomach and intestines to boost appetite without affecting the brain. The "scientists at Artelo Biosciences in California are developing a synthetic cannabis molecule, or cannabinoid, that gets a user hungry, but not high. It's currently being studied in the UK." Read more: <https://www.insider.com/synthetic-weed-molecule-only-gives-munchies-without-high-treat-cancer-2021-7>

### FOOD AS MEDICINE

Chia (*Salvia hispanica*, Lamiaceae) Many in the United States likely associate chia with terra cotta figurines. In its native Mexico and Guatemala, however, the chia seed has served as a remedy for fatigue, infections, and skin conditions for millennia. The tiny seeds pack an oversized punch in the nutrition department as well, providing greater and more complete amounts of essential nutrients like protein, fatty acids, and more. Read more: [http://herbalgram.org/resources/herbalegram/volumes/volume-17/number-3-march-2020/food-as-medicine-update-chia/](http://herbalgram.org/resources/herbalegram/volumes/volume-17/number-3-march-2020/food-as-medicine-update-chia/food-as-medicine-update-chia/)



## PICK ME! PICK ME!

By Barbara Volk

Everyone that knows me, knows that I love the weeds. I love the weedy weeds and the ones that many people work to eradicate from their yards. I develop deep relationships with them and they offer their help to me. All plants offer some form of food or medicine for humans. There are a few exceptions, but not many, and the exceptions offer benefits to animals or insects. I prefer to call the invasive plants Immigrants. They are here to stay and the sooner we can accept that and learn how they can help us, the better for all. In fact some of the immigrants are so useful that they can help to relieve native populations. Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) comes to mind. This plant is very high in Berberine, which is the constituent that is sought after in goldenseal which is quickly becoming rare in its native habitat by over-harvesting. But I digress.

Pick me! Pick me! When we begin to develop relationships with the plants that share our home, we begin to see the ebb and flow of their living patterns. Some move around like St. Joan's/John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) and many others become firmly established, such as Elderberry (*Sambucus spp.*). And some become suddenly prolific; these are the

plants that are saying Pick me!!! This is an important thing to notice because I believe that plants know things that we don't. One example of this is back in the fall of 2019 (seems like ages ago), Boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*) was more abundant than I have ever seen it here. I mean it was prolific. In my world this is a plant saying "Pick me!!!", so I did. I harvested and tintured a gallon of boneset. When COVID hit, boneset showed herself as being useful as a preventative as well as a reliever of symptoms and has antibacterial, antiviral as well as many other actions. This summer, the elderberries are calling. I am seeing them in places where I've never seen them before. I've seen whole creek sides covered with them. I will be making a large quantity of elderberry tincture this year. It is one of the most well-known antivirals in the plant world.

Elder flower tincture is a fever reducer and works well for children. My favorite thing to make in the spring with the flowers is Elderflower cordial, or as some folks call it, champagne.

So.... I challenge everyone to develop relationships with the plants that grow around you and see who is saying Pick me! Pick me!

See next page for Champagne recipe.



## How to make ELDERFLOWER CHAMPAGNE

### What You'll Need to Make 1-Gallon

- 16 cups water
- 6 - 8 large clusters of unwashed elderflowers
- 2 Tablespoons cider vinegar
- 3 lemons, washed and thinly sliced
- 1 1/2 pounds sugar

### INSTRUCTIONS:

In a saucepan, boil 4 cups of water, remove from the heat, and dissolve the sugar in it. Combine it with the other 12 cups into a clean, non-reactive glass or ceramic bowl or crock, and let it cool to room temperature.

When cool, separate the elderflowers from their stems. Add them to the cooled sugar syrup, along with the sliced lemons, and the vinegar. Stir everything together, cover loosely with a dishtowel, and let it ferment from 1 to 5 days at room temperature. I have found that the citrus can get a bit bitter if left in for the whole time, so I remove it after the first day.

Stir the brew once a day. By day three, you should notice small bubbles forming when you stir. Depending on the temperature of your kitchen, you can leave for another 1-2 days depending on how strong you want your brew to be.

After fermentation, strain the elderflower liquid through a jelly bag then funnel it into the sterilized bottles (see below). Leave a few inches of air space at the top of each bottle and seal. Store them in a cool dark place for at least a week. As the liquid continues to ferment it produces carbon dioxide, which builds up pressure in the bottles and forces the gas to dissolve into the liquid. The pressurized gas will be released as Champagne-like, fizzy bubbles when the bottle is opened.

**How to sterilize your bottles:** Glass flip-top bottles are best. Pour two teaspoons of vodka into each bottle, shake it around, then add 1 cup water and shake again. Pour out and rinse the bottles thoroughly with very hot water. Drain and they are ready to use immediately.

**Notes:** Pressure continues to build as the bottles sit, and if plastic bottles are left unattended, they may explode. I prefer to use the flip cap glass bottles rather than plastic for this reason as well. I have stored it for up to a year and it gets better with age.

Solid particles will settle out of the beverage and fall to the bottom of the bottle, so try not to shake the bottle around when pouring so as not to stir up the sediment. The sediment is harmless, but makes the beverage cloudy. When it's time to open a bottle, you'll need some patience. Set the bottle in the sink and slowly open bottle top to let the gas escape. Open it too far too fast, and the foam will overflow wasting the precious drink. Enjoy!

## Celebrate Fall with a Seed Collecting Project



September 22 is the Fall Equinox and now is the time to collect seeds to create your own seed packets using paper and twine as shown above. Growing herbs and native plants from seeds is one of the best ways to become familiar with a plant you intend on using for medicine making. By watching the plants grow from seeds you learn all of their life stages and thereby be able to more easily identify them in the wild. Did you know it is easy to grow most medicinal herbs in pots? You can then give them their favorite soil and light (sun to shade) preference. Best of all you can touch and talk to them each day.

**FREE SEEDS!** See if you can specifically identify all 4 herb plants in the circles on Page 1. Email the names to [info@wvherbassociation.org](mailto:info@wvherbassociation.org). The first 10 people with correct answers will be mailed a free native plant seed packet.

### Here are some places to buy seeds & plants

Ed Daniels, Shady Grove Botanicals, WV  
<https://www.shadygrovebotanicals.com/>  
Prairie Moon Nursery [www.prairiemoon.com](http://www.prairiemoon.com)  
Prairie Nursery [www.prairienursery.com](http://www.prairienursery.com)  
Seed Savers [www.seed savers.org](http://www.seed savers.org)  
Strictly Medicinal Seeds  
<https://strictlymedicinalseeds.com/>  
JL Hudson Seedsman  
<https://www.jlhudsonseeds.net/>  
USA Farm/Wild Organically Grown Herbs:  
<http://www.healingspiritsherbfarm.com/>

## CONTACT US

West Virginia Herb Association  
Weston, WV  
[www.wvherbassociation.org](http://www.wvherbassociation.org)  
Facebook: [WV Herb Association](https://www.facebook.com/WVHerbAssociation)  
Email: [info@wvherbassociation.org](mailto:info@wvherbassociation.org)

## EVENTS NEAR & FAR

**WVHA** Spring Gathering, April 23, 2022 from 9-5 Tygart Lake State Park, 1240 Paul E. Malone Rd, Grafton, WV 26354, \$10 per person (bring your own lunch). [Email us](mailto:info@wvherbassociation.org) for registration form, or to request a vendor registration form. Free passes for volunteers. More information online at [www.wvherbassociation.org/springgathering.htm](http://www.wvherbassociation.org/springgathering.htm)

**WVHA** Fall Conference in September 2022 with keynote speaker: Susan Weed. Watch for announcement in the Spring Newsletter.

**Midsouth Women's Herbal Conference.** Oct. 7-10, 2021. Mentone, AL. This women's gathering will be an immersive experience of learning about herbs with other nature lovers and the wise woman community. Activities will include making fire cider, a forage feast, and workshops about herbal medicine. See: <https://www.midsouthwomensherbalconference.com/>

**American Herbalist's Guild Annual Symposium.** Oct. 15-17, 2021. **Online.** The 32nd Annual AHG Symposium is a virtual event featuring classes, panel discussions, world-class keynote speakers, and a vendor fair, all geared to the herbal community. The theme of this year's Symposium, Recovery, Resistance and Resilience: Trauma-Informed Herbalism. Visit: <https://www.americanherbalistsguild.com/symposium/join-us-our-32nd-annual-symposium>

### WV Public Broadcasting shows

<https://www.wvpublic.org/edible-mountain> **Edible Mountain** showcases some of Appalachia's overlooked and underappreciated products of the forest while highlighting their mostly forgotten uses. The series features experts, from botanists to conservationists, who provide insight on how to sustainably forage these delicacies.

<https://www.wvpublic.org/edible-mountain> **Inside Appalachia** tells the stories of our people, and how they live today. Hosts Caitlin Tan and Mason Adams lead us on an audio tour of our rich history, our food, our music and our West Virginia culture.