

ANOTHER
HERB HERBERT FAVOURITE HERBS
FACT SHEET

Wormwood

Wormwood: *Artemisia absinthium*

Tree Wormwood: *Artemisia aborescens*

There are 300 species of annuals, biennials, perennials and sub-shrubs belonging to this genus. In ancient Greece, Artemis the goddess of nature, after which this genus was named, is said to be present in these plants and festivals were carried out featuring many of the species.

For some time Wormwood was a principle ingredient in the drink, Absinthe. However, this turned out to have an adverse effect on the brain which resulted in serious mental disturbances and seizures. Eventually the drink became illegal in all countries.

DESCRIPTION

Artemisia absinthium, Wormwood, is a hardy, sprawling perennial with deeply divided grey-green leaves covered with silky hairs. It has a distinct acid odour.

Artemisia arborescens, or Tree Wormwood as it is known, is a hardy sub-shrub with upright stems of deeply divided leaves. The leaves are covered with fine silky hairs that give the plant an overall silver appearance.

PARTS USED

Whole plant, leaves.

PROPERTIES

An aromatic herb with anti-inflammatory effects.

USES OF THE HERB

Culinary

Too bitter to have any culinary uses

Medicinal

Although widely used in earlier times as in internal remedy for menstrual problems and expelling intestinal parasites, it is today regarded as unsafe because of the active constituent Thujone. A compress can be safely used externally for sprains and bruises.



* Tree Wormwood

Insect Repellant

Wormwood can be put in sachets to help keep moths out of cupboards. Burn dry leaves in the garden or BBQ and use the dust to repel insects. Make an infusion to use as a garden spray. Said to be once used to repel mice and snakes from farms. One should not get disillusioned when using plants as a natural approach to insect eradication. A couple of simple rules will guide you to reduced insect problems. Firstly, what repels insects from a herb is the oil within its leaves which need to be released to be effective. To release the sap or oil the herb must be cut or bruised. Bunches can be cut and hung by any door or BBQ or planted near a walkway where the plant will be brushed by passers by. When doing your yearly prune, these herbs can also be dried for sachets to repel insects inside your house.

Ornamental

Tree Wormwood makes a quick growing silver hedge. Use sprigs in flower arranging or in 'tussie mussies'.

CULTIVATION

Light well-drained soil in full sun. Will tolerate periods of dryness. Cut back hard to stimulate fresh new growth.

HARVEST

Collect leaves as they are needed. Dry for use in making insect sprays or dusts or to add to repellent sachets.

Height 1-1.2m (3-4ft) x
Spread 1-1.2m (3-4ft)



* Wormwood



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