

ROSE, DOG



Rosa canina

[RO-zuh kay-NEE-nuh]

Family: Rosaceae

Names: Dog Brier, Wild Briar, Briar rose; Eglantier, cynosbato, Eglantier Rose Sauvage, Escaramujo, Gul Mohammed, Kusburnu, Oleum Roseum, Rosal Silvestre, Ward Barry; Stenros, nyponros, törnros, vildros; kal stenros (Swedish); Steinnype (Norwegian); Glat Hunde-Rose (Danish); Koiranruusu (Finnish); Hecken-Rose, Hagedorn (German); Roza Polna, roza dzika (Polish)

Description: Climbing rose with very prickly stems that grows to 10 feet. Its long branches and twigs arch upwards and sideways and like its main stem, bear backward bent spines, wrongly called thorns). The bright green leaves are oval, finely serrated and taper to a point. The delicate, sweet-scented flowers are borne singly or several in a corymb on ½ inch long petioles at the base of which there is a bract. The sepals bend backwards after flowering. The cordate petals are usually light pink, occasionally white. The receptacle of the flower develops into the well-known hip, a

scarlet-red false fruit or berry which has many small hared fruits inside, hidden among hairs that can cause itching.

Cultivation: Succeeds in most soils. Grows well in heavy clay soils. Prefers a circumneutral soil and a sunny position with its roots in the shade. When grown in deep shade it usually fails to flower and fruit. Succeeds in wet soils but dislikes water-logged soils or very dry sites. Tolerates maritime exposure. Grows well with alliums, parsley, mignonette and lupins. Garlic planted nearby can help protect the plant from disease and insect predation. Grows badly with boxwood. Plants in this genus are notably susceptible to honey fungus. Rose seed often takes two years to germinate. This is because it may need a warm spell of weather after a cold spell in order to mature the embryo and reduce the seedcoat. One possible way to reduce this time is to scarify the seed and then place it for 2 - 3 weeks in damp peat at a temperature of 81 - 90°F (by which time the seed should have imbibed). It is then kept at 37°F for the next 4 months by which time it should be starting to germinate. Alternatively, it is possible that seed harvested 'green' (when it is fully developed but before it has dried on the plant) and sown immediately will germinate in the late winter. Seed sown as soon as it is ripe in a cold frame sometimes germinates in spring though it may take 18 months. Stored seed can be sown as early in the year as possible and stratified for 6 weeks at 41°F. It may take 2 years to germinate. Prick out the seedlings into individual pots when they are large enough to handle. Plant out in the summer if the plants are more than 25cm tall, otherwise grow on in a cold frame for the winter and plant out in late spring. Cuttings of half-ripe wood with a heel, July in a shaded frame. Overwinter the plants in the frame and plant

out in late spring. Cuttings of mature wood of the current seasons growth. Select pencil thick shoots in early autumn that are about 20 - 25cm long and plant them in a sheltered position outdoors or in a cold frame. The cuttings can take 12 months to establish but a high percentage of them normally succeed. Division of suckers in the dormant season. Plant them out direct into their permanent positions. Layering Takes 12 months. Rose hips are harvested as they start to ripen when they are still firm and have a deep red color. The stems and remains of the calyces are cut off. The drug is pre-dried at 107-112F for 30 minutes, then dried at 72-77F. It is almost odorless. Rose hips are harvested mainly from wild growing plants. The flesh of the fruit has a sweet-sour astringent.

History: Wild white roses were once very common in England and the wild rose is the country's national flower. In Latin *alba* means white and Pliny apparently thought that England's old name, Albion or Alban, reflected the abundance of wild roses. The plant's common and botanical names either allude to a medieval belief that the plant would cure rabid dog bites, or the prefix dog may be a corruption of dag or dagger—a reference to the plant's sharp prickles. The ancient Greeks may have just been implying that Dog Rose was of "little worth" in the garden, 'dog' being a derogatory term. Rose leaves were once drunk as a tea substitute and they have a mild laxative effect. Culpeper recommended the fresh hips for consumption and chest infections, and the dried hips for urinary stones. Remains of Dog Rose hips have been found at prehistoric dwelling sites, which suggests that the plant has long been associated with man. In Poland, the country folk used it according to the Doctrine of Signatures. For any redness or flushing of the face, the flower was soaked in water and applied with a cloth. Sometimes the flowers were fried in butter and also applied to the face.

Constituents: Vitamins C, A, B1, B2, B3 and K, flavonoids, tannin, pectin, carotene, fruit

acids, fatty oil, invert sugar, polyphenols, carotenoids, volatile oil, vanillin

Properties: Nutrient, mild laxative, mild diuretic, mild astringent, Carminative; Ophthalmic; Tonic; Vermifuge.

Medicinal Uses: The hips yield ascorbic acid and are of the greatest value when given to young children. Rosehip tea has a mild diuretic and tonic effect, and the fresh petals can be made into a delicate jam. Rose hips are rich in Vitamin C and are traditionally made into preserves and purées. They were collected from the wild during World War II when citrus fruit was scarce. They will help the body's defenses against infections and especially the development of colds. They make an excellent spring tonic and aid in general debility and exhaustion. They will help in cases of constipation and mild gall-bladder problems as well as conditions of the kidney and bladder. One of the best tonics for old dogs. Dog rose hips reduce thirst and alleviate gastric inflammation. The hips are taken internally in the treatment of colds, influenza, minor infectious diseases, scurvy, diarrhea and gastritis. A syrup made from the hips is used as a pleasant flavoring in medicines and is added to cough mixtures. A distilled water made from the plant is slightly astringent and is used as a lotion for delicate skins. The seeds have been used as a vermifuge. The fruit of many members of this genus is a very rich source of vitamins and minerals, especially in vitamins A, C and E, flavanoids and other bioactive compounds. It is also a fairly good source of essential fatty acids, which is fairly unusual for a fruit. It is being investigated as a food that is capable of reducing the incidence of cancer and also as a means of halting or reversing the growth of cancers.

Dosage:

Decoction: put 2 ½ tsp of the cut hips in a cup of water. Bring to the boil and simmer gently for 10 minutes

Tincture: take 2-4ml 3 times a day

Flower Essences: For those with resignation, lack of hope, giving up on life, lingering illness. Wild Rose restores the vital forces of the soul, particularly its connection to the physical body and to the physical world, helping the individual regain an interest in earthly life. This essence teaches that life is a sacred and precious opportunity which the soul must make every effort to embrace, if it is to find the true meaning of love and physical incarnation.

Culinary Uses: Fruit is eaten raw or cooked. It can be used in making delicious jams, syrups etc. The syrup is used as a nutritional supplement, especially for babies. The fruit can also be dried and used as a tea. Frost softens and sweetens the flesh. The fruit is up to 30mm in diameter, but there is only a thin layer of flesh surrounding the many seeds. Some care has to be taken when eating this fruit, see the notes above on known hazards. The seed is a good source of vitamin E, it can be ground and mixed with flour or added to other foods as a supplement. Be sure to remove the seed hairs. The dried leaves are used as a tea substitute. Petals can be eaten raw or cooked. The base of the petal may be bitter so is best removed. Eaten as a vegetable in China. The petals are also used to make an unusual scented jam.

Rose Petal Conserve

½ pint water
12 oz sugar
½ pint measure of rose petals
1 tsp lemon juice

Put sugar and water in a pan and boil together until the mixture starts to thicken. Discard the white parts of the rose petals and add rest to the syrup with the lemon juice. Simmer together gently for about an hour, stirring often. Pour into small sterile jars, cool and cover in the usual way. (Food from the Countryside)

Petal Ice Cream

1 cup rose petals
4 Tbsp rosé wine
1 ½ Tbsp caster sugar

vanilla ice cream

Discard the white parts of the petals and blend the rest thoroughly with the wine and sugar. Take enough vanilla ice cream for four people, slightly soften it and thoroughly blend in the petal and wine mixture. Refreeze and serve. (Food from the Countryside)

References:

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