

SOUTHERNWOOD, FIELD



Artemisia campestris

[ar-te-MIZ-ee-uh kam-PES-triss]

Family: Compositae

Names: Abrotano Femmina, Armoise Champetre, Beifuss, Boja, Common Sagewort, Escobilla Parda, Feld Beifuss, Field Mugwort, Field Sagewort, Mugwort, Pacific Wormwood, Rode Bijvoet, Roter Beifuss, Sheeh, Wilde Averuit; Fältmalört, fältbynke; vanlig fältmalört (Swedish); Markmalurt (Norwegian);

Mark-Bynke (Danish); Ketomaruna (Finnish); Feld-Beifuß (German)

Description: This has a long, thick, fibrous root. The stalks are shrubby, upright, and much branched, of a whitish color towards the bottom, and reddish upwards. The leaves are oblong, divided into numerous narrow segments, and their color grayish green. The flowers in thick spikes at the tops of the branches; and they are small and brown.

Cultivation: Easily grown in a well-drained circumneutral or slightly alkaline loamy soil, preferring a sunny position. Established plants are drought tolerant. Plants are longer lived, more hardy and more aromatic when they are grown in a poor dry soil. Members of this genus are rarely if ever troubled by browsing deer. Seed is surface sown from late winter to early summer in a greenhouse. When large enough to handle, prick the seedlings out into individual pots and plant them out in the summer. Division in spring or autumn.

Properties: Abortifacient; Anthelmintic; Antiseptic; Cholagogue; Deobstruent; Emmenagogue; Ophthalmic; Poultice; Stomachic; Tonic.

Medicinal Uses: This species has similar though milder medicinal properties than southernwood. The main use of this herb is as an emmenagogue, it is also a good stimulant tonic and has some nervine principle. The leaves have been chewed in order to treat stomach problems. The plant was used by some native North American Indian tribes as an abortifacient to terminate difficult pregnancies. Externally, the plant has been crushed and applied to rheumatic joints, eczema, bruises

and sores. A poultice of the crushed leaves has been applied to sore eyes. An infusion of the roots has been used, especially on children, as a hair tonic and to treat scalp infections. It has been taken internally to promote urination and bowel movements. It is a powerful diuretic, and is good in hysteric cases. It is a mercurial plant. The manner of preparing it is to cut up fine four oz of the fresh tops of the leaves, beat them in a mortar, with six ounces of the fresh tops of the leaves, beat them in a mortar, with six oz of white sugar, till the whole is like a paste; three times a day take a piece of this about the size of a nutmeg: it is pleasant, and very effectual; and one thing in its favor in particular, it is a composer, and always disposes to sleep

Other Uses: The pulverized roots are aromatic and have been used as a perfume.

References:

Plants for a Future Database

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