

WORMWOOD, BLACK



Artemisia genipi
[ar-te-MIZ-ee-uh]
(*A. spicata*)

Family: Compositae

Names: Schwarze Edelraute (German); génipi (French); genepi nero (Italian)

Description: Black wormwood is found exclusively in alpine regions, growing in siliceous rocky regions at over 10,000 feet. It is a small shrub, not much more than 4 inches high, and completely covered in down, which gives it a silky white appearance. Compound, three-lobed, deeply divided leaves sprout from the base of the creeping, unbranched stems. The small heads of yellowish flowers are covered by dark bracts forming spikes. Considered partially endangered

Cultivation: Propagate by seed in spring and clump division in fall. Crop yield ranged from 0.4 to 0.6 t/ha of flower heads Harvesting the flower heads only can be started in the second year.

Constituents: Volatile oil, bitter principle.

Properties: tonic, digestive, expectorant, balsamic

Medicinal Uses: Action is similar to that of wormwood only slightly less bitter and a little less efficacious. It stimulates gastric secretion. In medicine it may be replaced by wormwood, which is better for sluggish digestion and stomach disturbances. Not often used because of scarcity.

Other Uses: The whole plant contains bitter aromatic principles used in the manufacture of herbal liquors.

References:

Medicinal Plants, Hans Fluck, W Foulsham & Co., 1988; IBN 0-572-00996-8

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