



YARROW

Yarrow is the third of Dorothy Hall's Big 3 herbs. Notes from talk by member Janet Fairlie-Cuninghame on 17th August 2013.

YARROW (*ACHILLIA MILLEFOLIUM*)

Yarrow is a perennial ground cover, with runners that are useful to prevent erosion. In the warmer months it puts up a spike of small pink or white daisy like flowers, being a member of the Asteraceae family.

This was a Druidic herb, also used by the Norse, North American Indians and Chinese. It is native to temperate regions in Europe, East Asia and North America.

Its botanical name relates to its life saving ability. In the Greek myth of the beloved god, Achilles, the only place where he could be hurt was on his Achilles tendon. Achilles died of an arrow in his heel.

Everyone has a weak spot, where we are most vulnerable. Yarrow was known as the most powerful astringent. It was the 'soldier's herb'; their 'wound wort'. Yarrow has an anti-shock effect, through its achillic acid. It has tannins which tighten and hold, and resins which re-arrange body fluids.

Herbalists use it for psychological wounds to the heart; wounds that can prove fatal; eg. died from a broken heart; or when we feel 'cut to the quick', 'cut to the bone', for wounds from the mouth or the pen.

All this ventures into the spiritual, as yarrow strengthens the spirit as well as the 'person' and their physical body. It has the effect of 'lashing a spear to the side' as was done to support wounded soldiers on the battle-field to keep the body upright: to support the person off the field of battle.

The aura of yarrow is the shape of a gothic window. It is a bright golden yellow.

Yarrow heals physical cuts and wounds from sharp instruments. For example DH related that one time she cut her finger badly in the kitchen, it needed stitches but she used yarrow as a 'self-suture'. Yarrow can heal nicely without a scar as it can close a cut overnight. I have found the same to be true with my own cuts.

As a styptic yarrow can be useful for haemorrhoids.

The tonic effect of yarrow is powerful. Everyone has days when they just have to 'soldier on'. This is an occasion to chew a few yarrow leaves or have cup of yarrow tea. Yarrow tea should be an occasional beverage, not everyday but maybe for a few weeks to get you over the hump.

In conclusion, I hope some of the uses I have briefly touched on will encourage you to regard Parsley, Sage and Yarrow with new interest and usage.



Note: The yarrow plants in the garden are to be found down in the Food Forest near the Horehound. Recently, I discovered and uncovered the yarrow, as for the second time it had been deeply buried by a load of woodchips. Earlier in the year our rabbit army found it very much to their liking. The poor yarrow is trying very hard to recover. May its prayers be answered!

Notes prep. by Janet Fairlie-Cuninghame