

# Greenwood Herbals

## October 2005

### What's blooming At Greenwood Herbals in October:

Apple Mint  
Cosmos  
Echinacea  
Garden Phlox  
Rubeckia  
Wall Flower

### What's happening at Greenwood Herbals in October:

- Harvesting roots
- Collecting seeds
- Putting the garden to bed.
- Processing dried herb
- Making cold and flu remedies

There is now a coolness in the air that tells us that winter is not too far away. Gone are the days of summer. The leaves are changing color. The chipmunks are busy hoarding their food supplies, stuffing their cheeks with more food than seems possible to carry and busily scurrying back and forth from the trees to the hole in the ground where they will live, eat, and sleep this winter. I'm still harvesting. (But now that the flowering has stopped, all the energy has returned to the root, so I can begin to dig the roots and dry them for medicine.) I am also collecting seeds to start more plants in the spring, dividing perennials and it is also time to think about putting the garden to bed. I always hesitate doing this and find myself rushing by the end of the month. It's as if I can delay the coming of winter by putting off this one thing. Of course, Mother Nature waits for no one. In a way, I'm so tired by October that I am ready to rest too. But these remaining tasks need to be done. So on I go knowing that November is not too far away and I, as well as the garden, can rest for a few months, though as all gardeners know we will be ready to get our hands dirty well ahead of the sleeping garden.

The first thing to do is to remove all the debris from the vegetable garden. Our ancestors use to leave their rotting vegetables for the animals to clean up and then in turn they would eat them. This doesn't work anymore, so it is important to clean up all rotting vegetables in the garden. Once the vegetable garden is clear, I spread oats as a cover crop. It will add organic matter to the soil, reduce the weeds next year, and prevent erosion. I can then till it under in the spring.

If I can find the energy, I will attempt to do one last weeding in the herb garden and then will rake all the leaves into the garden and thickly pile them around the peonies, roses, and lavender. These will need the extra protection. I will leave some of the perennials and herbs uncut to provide food and shelter for the wildlife. I will then move all the tools and garden furniture into the potting shed where they will be cleaned, repaired and stored. And before I put that pitchfork away, I will turn the compost pile one last time and get the space for the new compost pile ready. These tasks will most likely continue into November.

### Greater Burdock — *Arctium lappa*



Burdock can be found in meadows, woodlands, cultivated beds, and along sunny edges of gardens. It is a branched biennial growing 3 to 4 feet. It is pale green with large, wavy leaves and round purplish-pink flowers, which are in bloom from July to September. The seeds ripen from September to October. (Take care when harvesting the seed, tiny hairs from the seeds can be inhaled and are toxic.) The plant is pollinated by bees, moths, and butterflies and is self-fertile.

The plant will grow in all soils, but prefers a moist, neutral to alkaline soil. The leaves, root, seed and stem are edible. Young leaves can be eaten raw or steamed, the stalks used like asparagus, but the rind should be removed first. The pith of the flowering stem can be eaten raw in salads, or boiled. And the seeds can be sprouted and used like bean-sprouts. The root can be eaten if it is young, but older roots must be cooked. It is recommended that the first year's root be harvested for food and medicine.

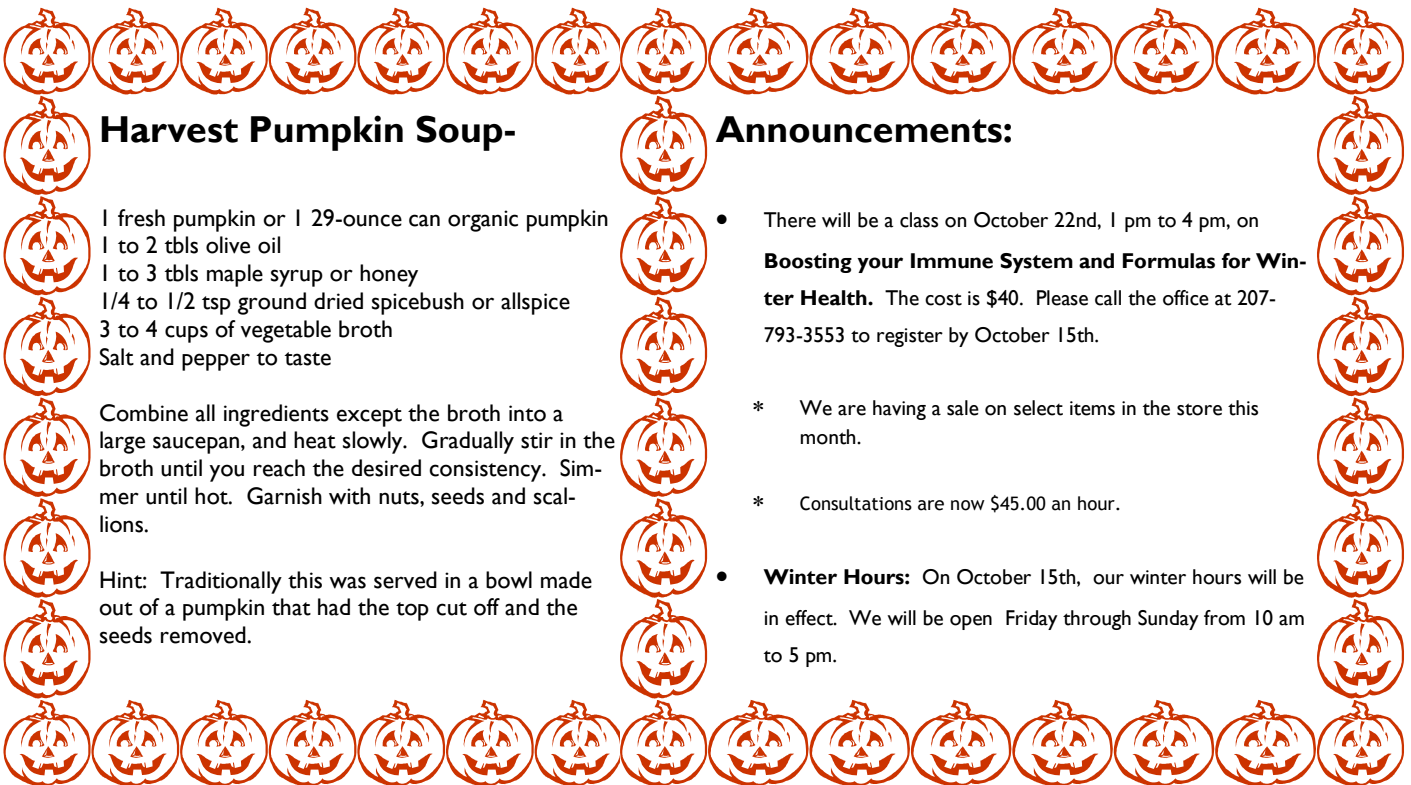
Medicinally, it is an alterative, bitter, diuretic and blood purifier. It is a remedy in all skin diseases, such as eczema, acne, boils, and rashes. It is one of the most detoxifying herbs in Chinese and Western herbal medicine. (Greenwood Herbals uses it in its Liver Cleanse and Tonic tea.) The root is considered to be good at helping eliminate heavy metals from the body as well as any other toxins. It is also used in the formula of es-siac which is a popular treatment for cancer.

Folklore states that the juice of the plant, when used as a friction, will have a stimulating action against baldness.

I would like to thank Pat Trotter, who made our new sign to hang at the end of the driveway. It is beautiful and she put so much hard work into its construction. I send my thanks and support to Pat who is on a new adventure. She is in search of property up in Vermont near St. Johnsbury, where she will be settling with her husband and son. She does promise to come back and teach some classes at Greenwood Herbals in the future.

I would also like to thank Janet and Allan Litvinchuk from North Berwick for the help in widening our driveway. A lot of trees were taken down to make our driveway passable this winter.

September was pretty quiet at Greenwood Herbals. I did a few plant identification walks for people to identify the plants growing on their property. But the month was basically devoted to harvesting, processing and making products with the last of this years herbs. Needless to say I am still at it.



**Harvest Pumpkin Soup-**

1 fresh pumpkin or 1 29-ounce can organic pumpkin  
1 to 2 tbs olive oil  
1 to 3 tbs maple syrup or honey  
1/4 to 1/2 tsp ground dried spicebush or allspice  
3 to 4 cups of vegetable broth  
Salt and pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients except the broth into a large saucepan, and heat slowly. Gradually stir in the broth until you reach the desired consistency. Simmer until hot. Garnish with nuts, seeds and scalions.

Hint: Traditionally this was served in a bowl made out of a pumpkin that had the top cut off and the seeds removed.

**Announcements:**

- There will be a class on October 22nd, 1 pm to 4 pm, on **Boosting your Immune System and Formulas for Winter Health.** The cost is \$40. Please call the office at 207-793-3553 to register by October 15th.
- \* We are having a sale on select items in the store this month.
- \* Consultations are now \$45.00 an hour.
- **Winter Hours:** On October 15th, our winter hours will be in effect. We will be open Friday through Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm.