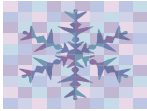


# Greenwood Herbals

## January 2007

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

- **Teaching**
- **Making products**
- **Organizing**



People ask me all the time why herbs? What made you so interested in herbs that you would completely step off your life path to do this work with plants. Comfrey always comes to mind. This plant grew in my garden and I never knew what it was or how it might be used. It had huge leaves and grew to be taller than 5 feet and it had the most delicate pink flowers that the bees, butterflies and hummingbirds loved. I would come home from work and immediately head to the garden to weed or stroll through it just to relieve my stress. Sometimes I didn't even make it into the house to change out of my office clothes. I would get out of the car and the garden would immediately draw me in. I was always drawn to the comfrey plant where I would stand and pet it or kneel and weed around it. It took me awhile to find out what that plant was, but once I did, I started reading more and more about comfrey, as well as other herbs. One thing lead to another and here I am. Years ago when I decided to find Greenwood Herbals and moved to Limerick, that plant came with me and is now still in my garden. I have divided it several times for others, but the Mother plant remains with me to this day. I use her in my medicine, my compost, and even as a fertilizer tea for the other plants. I love this plant, as I always think of her as the one who introduced me to world of plants, by opening that door that I so willingly stepped through. This plant changed my life and I've never been happier.

### Comfrey — *Symphytum officinale*

A perennial that grows to 4 feet tall at a fast rate. It is hardy to zone 5 and is not frost tender. It is in flower from May to June, and the seeds ripen from June to July. The plant will grow in all soil types, and will grow in semi-shade to full sun. It will spread rapidly through your garden if the roots are disturbed so you want to make sure you plant it where you want it. If you decide to move it later, you are sure to have two plants in two locations.

This plant contains small quantities of a toxic alkaloid which can have a cumulative effect upon the liver. Largest concentrations are found in the roots, and the leaves contain higher quantities of the alkaloid as they grow older and young leaves (5 inches in length or less) contain almost none. Most people would have to consume very large quantities of the plant in order to do any harm, though anyone with liver problems should avoid this plant. The Plants for a Future web-site states that *"In general, the health-promoting properties of the plant probably far outweigh any possible dis-benefits, especially if only the younger leaves are used."* The leaves are harvested in early summer before the plant flowers, the roots are harvested in the autumn. Both are dried for later use.



**Edible Uses:** *Leaves; Tea.*

Young shoots can be blanched and used as an asparagus substitute.. A tea is made from the dried leaves and roots and if roasted can be used with dandelion and chicory roots to make coffee.

**Medicinal Uses:** *Astringent; Demulcent; Emollient; Expectorant; Refrigerant; Vulnerary.*

Comfrey contains a substance called 'allantoin', a cell proliferant that speeds up the healing process. This substance is now synthesized in the pharmaceutical industry and used in healing creams. I have read different reports that the leaf and root are safe for internal application and that the tablets and capsules have to many drawbacks to

be safe for use. Again, if there is any question of liver problems, this plant should be avoided. Comfrey has a long and effective use for many common ailments. It is especially useful in the external treatment of cuts, bruises, sprains, sores, eczema, varicose veins, and broken bones. Whenever there is tissue that needs repair, wounds that need to be healed, or mucilage is required, this plant is great for speed healing and a guard against scars. Greenwood Herbals uses comfrey in it's burn ointment as well as in a salve.

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**Web-sites:** For those of you who love and buy **Bramble and Rose Soaps** in the shop can now do so directly from this web-site. [www.junebugsoap.com](http://www.junebugsoap.com)

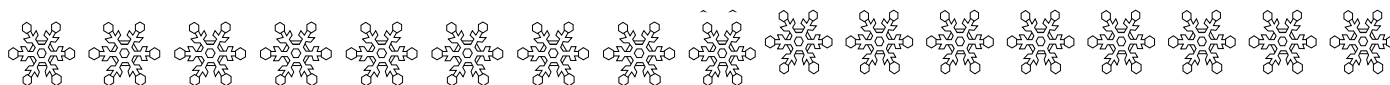
I recently heard from Joanna Pinney Buell who trained me in my Reiki I and II levels. Joanna has a wonderful retreat in Sullivan, Maine called **Light Heart Retreat**. I have added her link to our favorite links on the web-site. You can check out her site by going to [www.lighthouseheartretreat.com](http://www.lighthouseheartretreat.com)

I have been invited to teach classes at the **Garden of Atlantis Healing Arts Center** in Dayton, Me. There is a lot going on at this center. You can check our their web-site by visiting [www.gardensofatlantis.org](http://www.gardensofatlantis.org)

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Our Winter hours are now in effect: We are now open **Friday through Sunday from 10—5 pm.**

**The Labyrinth will be closed until April. We have decided to close it early to perform maintenance before the snowfall.**



**Announcements:**



- **January 5—Greenwood Herbals** is open
- **January 13 - 1 - 3:00 pm** Debbie Mercier, Greenwood Herbals master herbalist, will be teaching at the [Gardens of Atlantis](http://www.gardensofatlantis.com) in Dayton, Maine "Stress, Anxiety and using herbs". Call 207-929-5088 to reserve your seat. **Cost: \$35**
- **February 18** - Reiki Clinic - free of charge, please call the office to reserve your space and time.
- **February 25** - Sharon Degiovanni will be teaching Reiki III practitioner level here at Greenwood Herbals. If you wish to attend, please call the office 207-793-3553



The dates for the **2007 Apprenticeship Program** have been posted. See the web-site or call the office if you would like an application sent to you.



**Compost Tea for your plants**



- Use equal parts of comfrey and nettles
- Fill a 5 gallon container about 1/4 full with the equal parts of fresh plants
- Cover with water.
- Cover the container and let sit for about one week.
- Water your plants just like you would with any fertilizer at the base of the plant.



**Happy New Year to all and may you have a wonderful and prosperous new year in 2007!**

