



From: Steven Horne <newsletter@treelite.com>

To: <iridology@netzero.net>

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Subject: Creating Cheerful Courage in the Face of Adversity

Steven Horne's Newsletter

Natural News and Herbal Views

Creating Cheerful Courage in the Face of Adversity.

Borago officinalis is a member of the borage family, the same family as [comfrey](#). It has a few similar properties, but quite different uses. Both plants contain mucilage and tannin and are good sources of silica and other minerals. Both have also come into disfavor because they contain small amounts of



pyrrolizidine alkaloids (which are common in this family). These alkaloids are potentially toxic to the liver. As I said in my [comfrey article](#), I think the toxicity of both comfrey and borage is highly exaggerated. Like comfrey, I've personally used it internally.

Unlike comfrey, which is a perennial, borage is an annual. It will readily self-seed if you get it started in a garden and it's a great plant to grow as an ornamental. The blue, or sometimes pink, star-shaped flowers are quite pretty. They also attract bees and help ward off other pests making borage a good companion plant for tomatoes, cabbage, squash, and strawberries. Plus, the flowers and the immature leaves are edible, at least in small quantities.

Structural and Respiratory Herb

The tiny coarse hairs on the leaves and stems are often found in plants in the borage family and indicate the presence of silica, which helps make tissues strong, yet flexible. Silica helps the hair, skin, nails, connective tissue, and



bones to be stronger. When comfrey fell out of favor, my first substitute for comfrey in my herbal minerals formula was borage. Later I started using nettles instead. Like comfrey, because of its potential toxicity, it is best to use borage topically as a poultice to aid in healing skin irritations and wounds.

Borage, like many plants with fuzzy leaves and mucilage, is good for the lungs. It can be helpful for coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, and asthma. It is cooling and moistening, making it helpful for lungs that are dry and irritated.

Adrenal Tonic and Heart Remedy

A more important use for borage, and one in which its use differs radically from that of comfrey, is as a tonic to the adrenal glands. It is helpful to rebuild from cases of burn-out, or adrenal exhaustion. This isn't a condition that has a precise medical definition, but it's basically what happens to people who are run down by long-term stress. Someone who is feeling extremely tired, overwhelmed by their problems, and is feeling unable to cope with what life is bringing them will benefit from borage.

Folklore says that the herb borage is for courage; it helps a person gain the strength and courage to face their problems and start dealing with them. Borage flower essence has similar indications, and you can use it without worrying about toxicity. The flower essence helps a person have "cheerful courage in the face of adversity." The focus of the flower essence is on the heart. It's for someone who has become disheartened or has lost heart. They no longer have the heart to carry on. The courage it provides is the courage to take heart, helping the discouraged to be encouraged.

Flower Essence Experiences



I've used borage for people who are depressed due to overwhelming circumstances, heavy-hearted with deep sadness and pain, and discouraged by excessive adversity. The remedy helps lighten the heart, creating a more hopeful and optimistic outlook.

For instance, I once gave borage flower essence to a woman who had been sick for many years due to parasites she contracted in South America. Her struggles with her health had left her deeply discouraged and she had lost the will to live. Just a few days taking borage flower essence and her desire to live and resolve her health issues returned.

On another occasion, I gave the remedy to a young man suffering from severe depression who no longer wished to live. Shortly after his mood dramatically improved and he began to take better care of himself. He even was able to get off of his antidepressant medications.

Borage Seed Oil

The oil from borage seeds also has this adrenal tonic, heart-encouraging action. Since it contains no pyrrolizidine alkaloids, there are also no concerns over toxicity with using it. Borage seed oil is

very high in gamma-linolic acid (GLA), an important essential fatty acid. GLA is what makes evening primrose oil so popular, but borage oil is much richer in GLA than evening primrose oil. Borage oil is 17-25% GLA, while evening primrose oil is only about 9%. Borage seed oil may be helpful for PMS, joint inflammation, eczema, chronic skin conditions, and various inflammatory conditions.



Even if you aren't planning to use borage medicinally, borage is a beautiful plant. So consider planting it in your garden or even in pot. With everything going on in the world, who knows, it could come in handy one day. After all, everyone needs a shot of courage and hope from time to time.

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