

Common Name: **Dandelion**

Genus: *Taraxacum*

Species: *officinale*

Family: Asteraceae

AKA: Priest's Crown, Swine's Snout, Piss-a-Bed, Dent-de-Lion (French), *Dens leonis* (Latin)

Historical Uses:



Medical: “It is of an opening and cleansing quality and therefore very effectual for the obstructions of the liver, gall, and spleen, and the diseases that arise from them. It helpeth also to procure rest and sleep to bodies distempered by the heat of ague-fits.”(1)

“It is cold, but it drieth more, and doth withal clense, and open by reason of the bitterness which it hath ioyned with it: and therefore it is good for those things for which Succory is. Boiled, it strengthens the weake stomacke, and eaten raw it stops the bellie, and helps the dysentery, especially being boyled in lentils; the juice drunke is good against the involuntary effusion of seed; boyled in vinegar, it is good against the paine that troubles some in making water; A decoction made of the whole plant helps the yellow jaundice.”(2)

Culinary: Used as a pot-herb

Folklore/Astrology: Under the domain of Jupiter.



Contemporary Uses:

Parts Used: Whole plant, leaves, roots, flowers. Plants are cut in early summer and dried for decoctions. Leaves are picked in late spring. Roots are dug in autumn.

Medicinal: “Potent diuretic.” “Used internally for gall bladder and urinary disorders, gallstones, jaundice, cirrhosis, dyspepsia, with constipation, edema associated with high blood pressure and heart weakness, chronic joint and skin complaints, gout, eczema, psoriasis, and acne.”(3)

Culinary: “Fresh leaves, usually blanched, are eaten in salads or cooked as a vegetable. Flowers are made into wine and jelly. Roots are roasted and made into a coffee substitute.”(4)

Dried leaves used to make herbal beers and herbal drinks. Flowers used to make Dandelion Wine.(5)

Area of Origin: Temperate regions

Physical description: Variable perennial with thick tap root and pinnately lobed or saw-toothed leaves

Plant type: Perennial

Height: To 12”

Flower color: Bright yellow

Flowering period: Late spring to summer

Soil type/requirements: Moist to dry, neutral to alkaline

Hardiness zone: USDA 3-10

Sun requirements: Full sun

Propagation: By seed in spring

Sources

1. Culpeper, p. 50
2. Gerard, p. 290-291
3. Bown, p. p 382-383
4. Ibid
5. Grieve, p. 249-254

Illustrations/Images:

1. Fuch's Herbal 1542