

Common Name: **Horehound**

Genus: *Marrubium*

Species: *vulgare*

Family: Labiatae

AKA: Common Horehound, Hoarhound, Marrubium, Marvel, White Horehound, Seed of Horus, Bull's Blood, Eye of the Star

## Historical Uses:



**Medical:** “Horehound has high mucilage content, which soothes the throat and respiratory system. It was also used as drops and syrups. The syrup was made from mixing honey with a decoction system. Or Horehound was taken as an extract from the boiled fresh or dried plant, which served as a remedy for colds and chest infections. Hippocrates also believed Horehound worked on infertility in women.” (1)

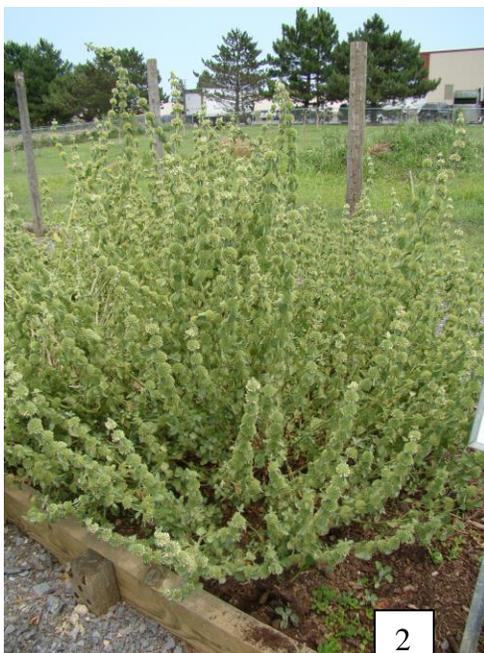
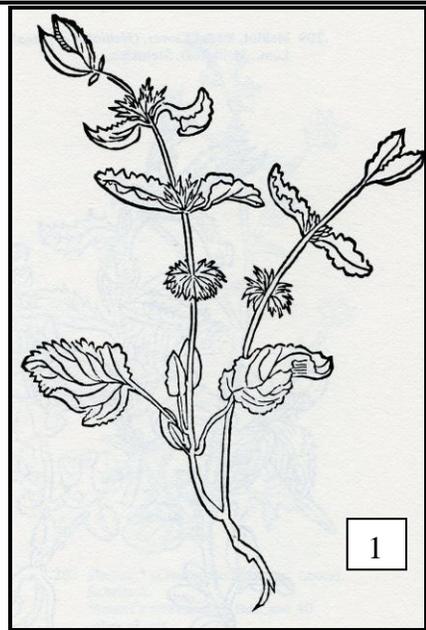
“It had the power to avert witchcraft and was considered an antidote to poison and cankerworm in trees.” (2)

“It is given to women to bring down their courses, expelleth the afterbirth, and to them that have sore and long travails; as also to those that have taken poison, or are stung or bitten by venomous serpents. The leaves

used with honey, purge foul ulcers, stay running or creeping sores, and the growing of the flesh over the nails.” (3)

“Common horehound boyled in water and drunke, openeth the liver and spleene, cleaneth the brest and lungs, and prevailes greatly against the old cough, the paine of the side, spitting of bloud, the ptysicke, and ulcerations of the lungs. The same boyled in wine and drunke, bringeth down the termes, expelleth the secondine, afterbirth, or dead childe, and also easeth those that have sore and hard labour in childe-bearing.” (4)

**Culinary:** Horehound flowers were candied and eaten as sweet treats. (5) Horehound was also used in herbal beer and in flavoring liquors. (6)





Horehound ale was considered appetizing and healthful (7).

**Household:** Thought to act as a fly killer when placed in milk (8).

**Folklore/Astrology:** “Warm and dry in the third degree, it is under the domain of Mercury. The ancient Egyptians knew it as the Seed of Horus, Bulls Blood (in relation

to the sacred Apis Bull) and the Eye of the Star (the protective eye of Horus. These names were noted by Dioscorides.” (9)

**Additional Historical Facts:** Horehound was a religious herb of Egypt and a major religious herb of the Hebrew people. It was believed to purge the person of the factors inhibiting creativity and inspiration. (10)

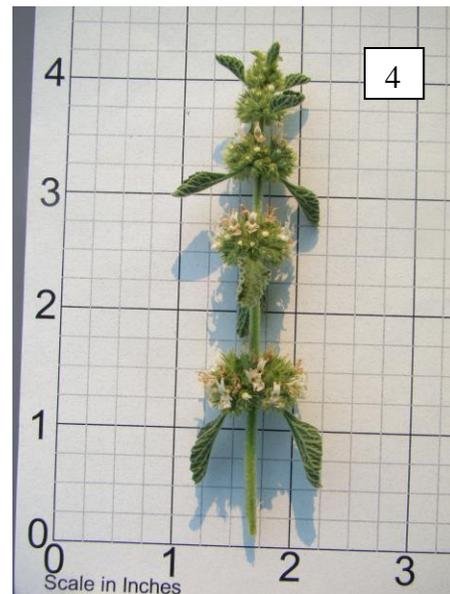
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### Contemporary Uses:

**Parts Used:** Whole plant

**Medicinal:** “Horehound is considered an expectorant, and used most widely for coughs and congestions of the lung. Taken in strong doses as a daily tonic quickly relieves the cough.” (11)

“A bitter, aromatic herb that is antiseptic and expectorant, reduces inflammation and relieves spasms. Used internally for bronchitis, asthma, mucus, chest colds, whooping cough,



liver and gall disorders, typhoid fever and palpitations. Horehound also increases perspiration rate, stimulates bite flow, and has a sedative effect on the heart.” (12)



**Culinary:** Horehound is used in candy flavoring and leaves are used in making an herbal bear (horehound ale) and also in flavoring liqueurs. (13)

**Cautions:** Prolonged use may cause high blood pressure. (14)

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**Area of Origin:** Britain , or Eurasia and N. Africa .

**Physical description:** Bushy plant with numerous annual stems reaching up to one foot. Small white

flowers. Leaves are much wrinkled, opposite and about an inch long.

**Plant type:** Hardy perennial, woody with downy stems

**Form:** Erect, herbaceous

**Height:** 3 feet

**Flower color:** White

**Flowering period:** June-September

**Soil requirements:** Well-drained to dry, neutral to alkaline, poor soil in in sun (15).

**Hardiness zone:** USDA 4-8

**Sun requirements:** Full Sun

**Propagation:** Horehound seeds in spring and should be planted about 9 inches apart. It can also be propagated by cuttings or division, which is the most common form of propagation. Softwood cuttings should be taken in spring.

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### **Bibliography**

1. Readers Digest, pg. 74
2. Anderson, pg. 189
3. Culpeper, pg. 75
4. Gerard, p. 692-694
5. Readers Digest, pg. 74
6. Bown, pg. 271-272
7. Grieve, pg. 415
8. Anderson, pg. 189
9. Ibid
10. Beyerl, pg. 118
11. Readers Digest, pg.74
12. Bown, pg.271-272
13. Ibid
14. Ibid
15. Ibid

### **Illustrations:**

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| 1. Schoffer Herbal | 1485 |
| 2. PSUMG           | 2012 |
| 3. PSUMG           | 2012 |
| 4. PSUMG           | 2012 |
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