

Diploma in Animal Sensory Enrichment

**Plant Assignment Five
29th January 2014**

**Rosa Canina
(Rosehip)**

by

Deborah J Benson

Contents

Identification and Background Information

Medicinal Properties Actions and Common Uses

Learning Outcomes

Bibliography

Identification and Background Information

Roses are a group of herbaceous shrubs found in temperate regions throughout both hemispheres and grown in sunny conditions or light shade, thriving best in a well-drained slightly acidic soil.

It is believed they were first cultivated in Persia then brought to Greece, then Rome and now hundreds of species of this beautiful flower have spread throughout the world and occupy a vital place in medicine as well as in cosmetics, perfumes, soaps and foods. (www.permaculture.co.uk).

The Latin ***Rosa Canina*** or Dog Rose was used by the ancient Romans to treat the bites of rabid dogs in the first century A.D. and its leaves have been used as a substitute for tea.

During World War II there was a shortage of citrus fruits in England due to the disruption of normal trade routes so the British Government orchestrated the collection of all English rosehips as an alternative supply of Vitamin C to maintain the health of the general population and to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

Rosehips are the fruits of the Rose or seed receptacles which remain after the flowers have perished and contain sixty times the amount of Vitamin C found in most citrus fruits as well as many other vitamins and beneficial supplements.

In Aryurvedic medicine, roses have long been considered to have a “**cooling**” effect on the body and provide a “**mind tonic**”, whilst the Native American Indians used rosehips for muscle cramps and whilst the Mescalero Apaches used a rosehip infusion to combat gonorrhoea. ([Herbs; Roger Phillips and Nicky Foy; Pan Books Ltd; 1992](#))

“Rosehips can be used for tisanes (herbal infusions/teas), jam, jelly, syrup, rosehip soup, beverages, pies, bread, wine, and marmalade. They can also be eaten raw like a berry, if care is used to avoid the hairs inside the fruit.”(www.en.wikipedia.com).

Dog Rose hips have been eaten for thousands of years and this was confirmed when the stomach contents of a 2000yr old Neolithic female skeleton found in Britain were examined.([Herbs; Roger Phillips and Nicky Foy; Pan Books Ltd; 1992](#))

Dried rosehips are also sold for craft purposes and for use in and pot-pourri, while Rhodomel mead is also made from rosehips. They can also be used to make Palinka an alcoholic beverage popular in Hungary where it originated but also in Romania and other

Austro-Hungarian countries. The main ingredient of Cockta the national fruit drink of Slovenia is also rosehip and nyponsoppa is a popular Swedish rosehip soup. (www.en.wikipedia.com).

Dog Rose or Rosa canina is also known as Wild Briar, Wild Rose, whilst rosehips are referred to as Hip Berry, Rose Haws, Rose Heps and Wild Boar Fruit. (Herbs; Roger Phillips and Nicky Foy; Pan Books Ltd; 1992).

Rosa canina is a deciduous shrub, native to Europe, North Africa and South-west Asia having become naturalised in North America.

It grows throughout the British Isles and Ireland and simple yet beautiful blooms grow singly or in clusters on the Dog Rose and are pink or white in colour.

They briefly adorn our hedgerows as they are fragile and their open petals are easily buffeted and blown off by winds, blooming from late spring to mid-summer. (www.permaculture.co.uk).

Rosa canina is also found growing wild in woodlands, copses and scrub land up to altitudes of 550 metres and where offered support can climb high into trees.

It is also remarkably easy to grow in the garden and quickly makes a decorative hedge but make sure to allow ample room for expansion when planting.

“Rosa canina has a long fibrous root and arching stems and can grow to heights of three metres. Its stems have hooked or curved thorns and numerous branch-lets with oval or elliptical shaped leaves which are normally smooth on both sides.” (Herbs; Roger Phillips and Nicky Foy; Pan Books Ltd; 1992).

The flowers are five-petalled and have five green sepals which take form a protective bud around the petals before they bloom and each flower with numerous stamens, the pollen producing parts of the rose. (www.permaculture.co.uk).

Each flower is approximately 5-6cm in diameter and these produce the familiar fruits known as hips. These in turn ripen to their bright red or orange hue in early to mid-autumn, usually September to October.

These fruits are called Fructus Cynobasti from the Greek kyon=dog and batos= briar by pharmacists. (Weiss's Herbal Medicine; Classic Edition; Rudolf Fritz Weiss MD; Theime; 2001).

Rosehips are part of the apple and crab apple families and as such have a sweet pleasant tartness and are easily harvested.

They should always be removed from the stem of the rose after the first frost when they are at their sweetest, bright orangey red and slightly soft to the touch.

They should be handled gently during the harvesting process as bruising or other mechanical damage reduces Vitamin C content.

DEBORAH J BENSON 2013

They should be prepared immediately after harvest to preserve their nutritional value and although they can be used whole, they contain seeds which have hairy surfaces and can cause irritation, so if the hips are to be used for any purpose other than jam making it is prudent to remove the seeds.

This can be done by trimming the ends of the hips with scissors and then cutting them in half to expose the seeds. Once these have been scooped out, rinse the hips in cold water and drain them thoroughly and then allow them to air dry initially thereby removing all excess moisture. The rosehips can then be used in the fresh state or dried.

To dry the hips space them evenly with ample room between the individual hips and place them in a warm, dark, dry location such as an airing cupboard until they have shrivelled and resemble a raisin in appearance.

The dried rosehips can then be refrigerated or frozen and used to make a variety of recipes including jellies, sauces and seasonings.

Should the recipe in question call for cooking use only stainless steel pans or utensils as other metals deplete the Vitamin C content of the fruit.
(www.naturalnews.com).

The hips of *Rosa canina* contain the highest amounts of Vitamin C of all the *Rosa* varieties (approximately 1700 – 2000mg per 100g) and this increases the further north the plant grows, but this is by no means the only benefit provided by the rosehip.

Medicinal Properties, Actions and Common Uses

The plant constituents of this fruit include lycopene, beta-carotene, bioflavonoids, carotenoids, polyphenols, leucoanthocyanins, catechins, essential fatty acids, magnesium, calcium, niacin, iron, manganese, selenium, potassium, phosphorous, sulphur, zinc, and vitamins A, B1, B2, B3, B5, D, E, K, and P.
(www.herbwisdom.com).

Other constituents include citrates, citric acid, malates, malic acid, organic acids, pectin, sugars, salts, tannin and resin.
(www.globalherbalsupplies.com).

Due to the impressive arsenal of constituents that compose the rosehip they also have a number of beneficial actions.

They are **anti-inflammatory**, (fight inflammation), **anti-oxidant** (inhibits oxidation of other molecules preventing cell damage/death) and **anti-viral** (effective against viral illnesses),(www.herbwisdom.com).

Rosehips are also “**aperient** (a mild stimulant promoting natural bowel movement, a gentle purgative), **astringent** (a binding agent that contracts organic tissue and reduces secretions or discharge of mucus from the body therefore wound healing), **diuretic** (an agent which increases the volume and flow of urine which cleanses the urinary system), **laxative** (an agent promoting evacuation of the bowels, a mild purgative), **pectoral** (remedy for pulmonary or other lung and chest diseases), **nutrient** (providing

DEBORAH J BENSON 2013

nourishment), **refrigerant** (an agent that lowers abnormal body heat, relieves thirst and gives a feeling of coolness) **and a tonic** (an agent that tones, strengthens and invigorates organs or the entire organism giving a feeling of well-being).”
(www.globalherbalsupplies.com).

The combined effects of the plant constituents and the various actions specific to the rosehip means that it can be safely and effectively used to treat a diverse range of conditions in both humans and animals. Because they contain a variety of anti-oxidants including caretonoids, flavinoids, polyphenols, leucoanthocyanins and cathetchins they are considered to be a good cancer preventative as these combined elements stabilize free radicals, the build up of which accelerates the ageing process and raises the risk of developing cancer and cardiovascular disease.

The polyphenols are micro-nutrients which are also preventative against these diseases whilst caretonoids are the colourful plant pigments which can be turned into Vitamin A by the body and used to prevent these and other diseases as Vitamin A is beneficial to the immune system, preventing infections from bacteria and viruses and fighting off infections when they do occur.
(www.herbwisdom.com)

Probably the best known use of rosehips is as an extraordinary source of Vitamin C, which alongside Vitamin A is most beneficial for the treatment of infections such as the common cold, influenza, pneumonia, coughs and chest infections and any complaint associated with the respiratory tract.

It is widely accepted that a daily dose of Vitamin C can prevent such ailments occurring as it is necessary for all the bodies cells and life cannot be sustained without it.

Vitamin C and bioflavinoids are always combined in Nature and for efficacy it is vital that they are used together as this potent duo help strengthen body tissues, build and maintain a healthy vascular system and heal and prevent damage to fragile capillaries
(www.permaculture.co.uk).

Rosehips also contain iron and are therefore used to treat blood disorders including internal haemorrhaging, excessive menstruation, raised blood pressure and as a blood purifier while their anti-inflammatory properties make them effective in the treatment of both osteo-and rheumatoid arthritis.
(www.globalherbalsupplies.com)

The rosehip is both a laxative and a diuretic due to the presence of pectin and fruit acids and is used to treat gastrointestinal conditions such as dysentery and diarrhoea, urinary tract complaints by cleaning the bladder and supporting kidney function, promote the elimination of uric acid, thereby helping with gout and rheumatism and assisting with fluid retention.

Gallbladder dysfunction, general debility and exhaustion are other ailments which can be helped by rosehip ingestion.

The astringent qualities of rosehip oil make it much sought after in cosmetic preparations and its cell regeneration properties mean it can be used in the treatment of scars,acne, burns and general wounds.

DEBORAH J BENSON 2013

It helps to maintain skin elasticity and nourishment and both prevents and minimises existing wrinkles and reduces stretch marks caused by pregnancy.

As stated earlier both wild and domesticated animals can share the benefits of the rosehip in much the same way as humans and is a particular favourite with most equines.

They benefit from its anti-oxidant properties and it acts as a blood tonic, whilst supporting the liver kidneys and circulatory system and cleansing the body of toxins.

Rosehips are one of the best sources of natural iron and Vitamin C combined and provide essential nutrition for optimal skeletal, skin and coat health, whilst the presence of biotin ensures prime hoof condition.

Guinea pigs, chinchillas, rabbits and degus are unable to manufacture Vitamin C, or digest Vitamin C rich foods and so the rosehip offers a safe, readily available and easily absorbed natural source of this essential vitamin for these small creatures.

(www.en.wikipedia.com)

Squirrels, birds and deer and other wildlife also take advantage of this naturally occurring highly nutritious fruit during the lean winter months.

**Honour the Earth.
Give Glory to the Creator.
Cherish that sweet connection with the plants.
And your medicine power will be deep and strong.**

(Nancy & Michael Phillips; The Herbalist's Way; Chelsea Green Publishing Company 2005).

Learning Outcomes

- 1. Identify and harvest local culinary herbs specific to this course.**
- 2. How to use fresh and dry herbs for simple remedies**
- 3. Equipment needed, drying and storage of herbs.**
4. How to create a herb garden.
5. How to use specific culinary Macerated Oils; Nettle, Marigold, Rose-hip, Mint, Catnip, Chickweed, and Seaweed infused oils and cold pressed Linseed Oil.
6. Create delicious, culinary, herbal pet treats specific to this course.
- 7. Make simple animal topical preparations such as insect repellent and cooling gel using plants, herbs, clays and honey.**

DEBORAH J BENSON 2015

8. **Have a clear understanding of what animal self-selection is and how animals can benefit from an enhanced, nutritional, healthy, balanced diet, containing plant material.**
9. Able to work and communicate with pet owners vets and other healthcare professionals.
10. How to keep professional standard records of all animal self-selection sessions undertaken.
11. Be aware of the importance of personal and animal safety as well as the relevant insurance, the law and vet liaison.
12. **Be able to observe and understand why animals self-select culinary macerated oils/herbs/clays/honey specific to this course at animal rescue centres and with private clients.**
13. Be aware of when not to conduct an animal self-selection session.
14. **Be more aware of yourself as an animal healer and consider how and when will use your training and experience from this course.**

Bibliography

(Herbs; Roger Phillips and Nicky Foy; Pan Books Ltd; 1992)

(Nancy & Michael Phillips; The Herbalist's Way; Chelsea Green Publishing Company 2005).

(Weiss's Herbal Medicine; Classic Edition; Rudolf Fritz Weiss MD; Theime; 2001).

(www.globalherbalsupplies.com).

(www.herbwisdom.com).

(www.naturalnews.com).

(www.permaculture.co.uk).

(www.en.wikipedia.com).

DEBORAH J BENSON 2013