

# POTAWATOMI MEDICINES

By Huron H. Smith

## PART II - MEDICINES

[INTRODUCTION](#)  
[HISTORY](#)  
[MATERIAL CULTURE](#)  
[RELIGION](#)  
[MEDICINE LODGE](#)

[PLANT MEDICINES](#)  
[PART I](#)  
[PART II](#)  
[PART III](#)  
[FOOD PLANTS](#)  
[VEGETABLE FIBERS](#)

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**Common Burdock (*Arctium minus* Bernh.)** "asûkitä'boe" [stickers]. The Potawatomi make a "tea" from the Burdock root which is taken as a general tonic and blood purifier. Nickell<sup>95</sup> records the use of the root, leaves and seed as medicine among the white men. The root is alterative, diuretic, and purifies the blood. The leaves have been made into poultices and placed upon tumors, boils and ulcers to hasten ripening or maturity. The seeds have been used to make a tonic which is alterative and diuretic. The Herbalist<sup>96</sup> states that the root has been found valuable in treating rheumatism, gout, and chronic catarrh. It has also been used in skin diseases, syphilis, scrofula and to dissolve urinary deposits. Externally the infusion of the root has been used as a wash to cure eruptions, burns, wounds, hemorrhoids and swellings.

**Wormwood (*Artemisia frigida* Willd.)** "nokwe'sîkûn" [perfume reviver]. This plant was evidently not native to Forest County, but had been planted by the Indians for its medicinal properties. They use it as a fumigator to revive a patient who is in coma. The foliage and flowers are fumed upon a pan of live coals and often a cone of paper is made to direct the smoke into the nostrils of the patient. We have found no record of its use by the whites.

**Forking Aster (*Aster furcatus* Burgess)** "name'ksibag" [trout leaf]. The basal leaves of this aster are the ones used and they are much larger than the stem leaves and more apt to be found than the fertile part of the plant. The leaves are steeped and the solution is rubbed upon the head to cure a severe headache. We have found no record of its use by the whites.

**New England Aster (*Aster novae-angliae* L.)**. The Forest Potawatomi have no name or use for this plant to our knowledge. However it was known to the Prairie Potawatomi as "pukwänä'sîkûn" [reviver], and was used as one of the fumigating agents. We have found no record of its use

by the whites.

**Arrow-leaved Aster (*Aster sagittifolius* Wedemeyer) "skîbwa'-ogîcîns."** Although the Potawatomi had an Indian name for this Aster, they had no medicinal use for it to our knowledge. We have found no record of its use by the whites.

**Short's Aster (*Aster Shortii* Lindl.) "weasawe'nokûk" [yellow top].** The Potawatomi use the flowering tops of this species for a medicinal tea. The National Dispensatory<sup>97</sup> states that the flowers have been used by the whites as a mild carminative, anti-spasmodic and intestinal astringent.

**Umbelled Aster (*Aster umbellatus* Mill.) "bakwanä'sîkûn" [reviver].** The Potawatomi used the flowers of this species as a smudge to drive away the evil spirits working against patient's recovery. Nickell<sup>98</sup> records that the root has been used as a diaphoretic, and a rheumatic, tonic and aromatic.

**Bur Marigold (*Bidens cernua* L.) "asûkîtä'boe" [stickers].** This plant came into the Potawatomi country in historic times. They have not used it to our knowledge, although they give it the common name of "stickers" along with several other plants. Nickell<sup>99</sup> records that it has been used among the whites as an expectorant and an emmenagogue. It has also been used to cure the croup.

**Corn Flower (*Centaurea Cyanus* L.).** This plant is clearly an escape from cultivation and while it is well spread over the country in Forest County, the Potawatomi recognize it as a recent arrival and have no name or use for it to our knowledge. Nickell<sup>100</sup> states that the flowers have been used among the whites as a cordial, a tonic, and a remedy for diseases of the eye.

**Ox-eye Daisy (*Chrysanthemum Leucanthemum* L. var. *pinnatifidum* Lecoq & Lamotte).** This plant has come into the Potawatomi country in historic times and they have no name or use for it to our knowledge. Nickell<sup>101</sup> says it has been used among the whites for its acrid qualities.

**Canada Thistle (*Cirsium arvense* [L.] Scop.) "masanes" [itching or little thistle].** The Potawatomi claim that this plant has come into their country but they do not use it to our knowledge, although they find it troublesome as a farm weed. The Meskwaki<sup>102</sup> made use of the root as a seasoner for other medicines.

**Bull Thistle (*Cirsium lanceolatum* [L.] Hill) "gîtcî'masan" [big thistle].** Fresh centers of the flowers are chewed by the Potawatomi in combination with bitter and unpleasant medicaments, to mask the unpleasant portions. This is the first and only time that we have discovered a masticatory medicine. Among the whites, the root has been used as a tonic, alterative and hepatic while the leaves have been used to allay inflammation, according to Nickell.<sup>103</sup> The National Dispensatory<sup>104</sup> states that the entire plant has been used to make a tea, which is tonic and diuretic.

**Fireweed (*Erechtites hieracifolia* [L.] Raf.) "asûkîtä'boe" [stickers].** The Potawatomi claim that this plant has come into their territory in historic times and they have no name or use for it to our knowledge. Nickell<sup>105</sup> says that it has been used by the whites for its emetic, tonic, astringent, and alterative qualities. It has been used in treating cases of piles. The

Herbalist<sup>106</sup> says that it is used as a tonic and astringent. It has been used in the treatment of fevers, bowel troubles and for curing night sweats. As a gargle, an infusion of the plant has been used to heal ulcerated mouth, throat troubles and spongy and bleeding gums.

**Horseweed (*Erigeron canadensis* L.)** The Potawatomi have no Indian name as far as we have found, for this plant but know it as a medicine for horses. Among the whites, it has been used as an astringent, tonic, diuretic and styptic.<sup>107</sup> The Herbalist<sup>108</sup> records it as a tonic, diuretic and astringent remedy and says that the plant infusion has been used in the treatment of gravel, diabetes, dropsy and kidney diseases, diarrhea and dysentery.

**Joe-Pye Weed (*Eupatorium purpureum* L. var. *maculatum* [L.] Darl.)<sup>109</sup>** "caca'bagsît" [piercing leaf stem]. Fresh leaves of Joe-Pye weed are used by the Potawatomi to make poultices for healing burns. Mrs. Spoon used the root under the name "maskwano'kûk" [red top] as a medicine to clear up after-birth. Among the whites, the root and the herb have both been used for medicines. The root is said to have diuretic, stimulant, astringent and tonic properties, while the plant itself is diuretic and tonic.<sup>110</sup> The Herbalist<sup>111</sup> says that the root has diuretic, astringent and tonic properties and has been used by eclectic practitioners in the treatment of chronic urinary disorders, hematuria, gout and rheumatism.

**Jerusalem Artichoke (*Helianthus tuberosus* L.)** The Potawatomi did not know this plant and had no Indian name for it to our knowledge, but the bulb is well known to the whites for its edibility and food value. It has also been used as a diuretic according to Nickell.<sup>112</sup>

**Rough Hawkweed (*Hieracium scabrum* Michx.)** This plant is considered adventive by the Potawatomi and they have no Indian name or use for it to our knowledge. It is not known to our knowledge to be used by the whites.

**Tall Blue Lettuce (*Lactuca spicata* [Lam.] Hitchc.)** "nona'-gonawûck" [teat weed]. The Potawatomi say that this is used for a medicine but my informant could not tell me in what manner. The fact that this plant has milky juice suggests that they might use it as a lacteal stimulant. There is no record to our knowledge of its use by the whites.

**Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta* L.)** "memakate'nîngweûk" [black eyeballs]. The Potawatomi used the root of the Black-eyed Susan to make a tea for curing colds. The National Dispensatory<sup>113</sup> records the use of the leaves among the whites as a stimulant and diuretic. A decoction of the leaves is freely administered for these purposes.

**Canada Goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis* L. var. *gilvocanescens* Rydb.)** "owesa'wenokûk" [yellow top]. Several of the Goldenrods are used by the Forest Potawatomi for medicine. They usually take the flowering tops to make a "tea" and treat special kinds of fevers with it. The dried flowers have been used as a substitute for tea as a beverage by the whites. The National Dispensatory<sup>114</sup> says that eclectic practitioners have used it as a mild carminative and anti-spasmodic in medicines. It has been used in the form of a tea for an intestinal astringent.

**Fragrant Goldenrod (*Solidago graminifolia* [L.] Salisb.)** "wesawa'nakûk" [yellow top]. The flowering tops of this species have been used by the Forest Potawatomi in infusions to cure some kinds of fevers. Nickell<sup>115</sup>

says that the leaves and oil of the Fragrant Goldenrod have been used for their carminative, stimulant, diuretic, diaphoretic, and astringent properties.

**Broad-leaved Goldenrod (*Solidago latifolia* L.)** "wesawûnû'kitos" [little yellow top]. The Potawatomi use the whole herb of the Broad-leaved Goldenrod to brew a kind of medicine for certain fevers. There is no record to our knowledge of its use by the whites.

**Late Goldenrod (*Solidago serotina* Ait.)** "wesawa'bakwoni'k" [yellow top]. This was known to Mrs. Spoon as "wesawakwe'ak". A medical tea is brewed from the inflorescence and used for various kinds of fevers. The National Dispensatory<sup>116</sup> says that this species has been considered a mild carminative, anti-spasmodic and intestinal astringent by the whites. According to the Dispensatory, the flowers of this species are one of the principal ingredients of the proprietary medicine known as Blue Mountain Tea.

**Bog Goldenrod (*Solidago uliginosa* Nutt.)** "wesawano'kûk" [yellow plant]. The Potawatomi call attention to the fact that this plant has a root like a turnip, but very much harder and say that they use it to make a poultice to bring a boil to a head. The National Dispensatory<sup>117</sup> says that it has been used among eclectic practitioners as a mild carminative and a spasmodic and intestinal astringent.

**Field Sow Thistle (*Sonchus arvensis* L.)** "a'wesawano'kûk" [yellow plant]. The fresh leaves of this are gathered by the Potawatomi to make a tea for the treatment of caked breasts. The writer noticed the tendency to use plants with milky juice to treat lacteal troubles, which suggests an affinity with the old idea of the doctrine of signatures. Nickell<sup>118</sup> states that the juice of this plant has been used by the whites as a bitter and a diuretic.

**Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* Weber)**<sup>119</sup> "asawa'bagwûnik" [yellow flower]. The Prairie Potawatomi call this "wasakûtcä'pûk" [strong root]. The Forest Potawatomi use the roots as a bitter tonic. According to Nickell<sup>120</sup> the root has been used by the whites as a stomachic, tonic, diuretic, aperient, blood purifier, and liver remedy. The Herbalist<sup>121</sup> states that the fresh root has been used as a stomachic, tonic, slight diuretic and aperient while the dried root has been used in treating diseases of the liver and spleen. It has been used in the treatment of dropsy, but is much over-rated as a medicine.

## **CORNACEAE (DOGWOOD FAMILY)**

**Alternate-leaved Dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia* L. f.)**<sup>122</sup> "mowo'-samic" [moose wood]. The Forest Potawatomi use the bark of the Alternate leaved Dogwood to make an infusion which is used as an eye-wash. This is supposed to cure granulation of the eyelids. Nickell<sup>123</sup> says that the bark has been used among the whites as a diaphoretic, astringent, and febrifuge.

**Bunchberry (*Cornus canadensis* L.)** "kakawi'sak" [popcorn weed]. The Bunchberry was not considered medicine by the Forest Potawatomi, but the bark of the plant was used by the whites as an astringent, a tonic, diaphoretic, and febrifuge according to Nickell.<sup>124</sup>

**Red Osier Dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera* Michx.)** "mêmskwa'kwûk" [red stemmed bush]. The Potawatomi say that the root bark is the most efficacious remedy they have for treating diarrhea and flux. The National Dispensatory<sup>125</sup> says that the bark of the Red Osier Dogwood has been used by the white man as a mild astringent, an aromatic bitter and stomachic. Large doses have proved emetic.

#### **CRUCIFERAE (MUSTARD FAMILY)**

**Shepherd's Purse (*Capsella Bursa-pastoris* [L.] Medic.)**. The Forest Potawatomi consider this plant adventive to their territory and they have no Indian name or use for it to our knowledge. Among the whites, however, eclectic practitioners have used the whole plant, according to the National Dispensatory,<sup>126</sup> for its diuretic, emetic and anti-rheumatic properties. It states that it has been used to heal unhealthy sores. The Herbalist<sup>127</sup> says that it has been used by the whites in infusions to cure hemorrhages, fluxes, and intermittent fevers.

**Wild Peppergrass (*Lepidium virginicum* L.)** The Potawatomi consider this an adventive plant to their territory and they have no Indian name or use for it to our knowledge. The National Dispensatory<sup>128</sup> states that the leaves have been used in infusions to cure scurvy. Eclectic practitioners have substituted it for *Capsella* for its diuretic, emetic, and antirheumatic properties.

**Tumble Mustard (*Sisymbrium altissimum* L.)** This plant is considered adventive to the region by the Forest Potawatomi. Consequently they have no Indian name or use assigned to it to our knowledge. Nor have we any record of its use by the whites.

#### **EQUISETACEAE (HORSETAIL FAMILY)**

**Field Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense* L.)** "cîngwako'ns" [little pine]. The whole plant of the Field Horsetail was used by the Forest Potawatomi to make a tea for the treatment of kidney and bladder trouble. They claim that it is very good to cure lumbago. Other informants called this "cîngwako'sawûnk" [like a little pine] and "kîsi'banûsk" [squeaky noise weed]. This last name arose as the result of an experience of Mana'bozo. One time he heard the squeaky noise, as he walked along a forest path. On putting his ear close to the ground to find out the cause of the noise, the Horsetail seemed to say "They always eat me. They always eat me". So he agreed and ate a piece of the stem. As he proceeded along, he was startled by a sudden explosive noise behind him, like "poh". Facing about suddenly he was unable to discover the cause. This happened several times, until it became continuous with every step he took. He had to come to the conclusion that he himself was the cause of these peculiar noises, which were the outcome of eating the Field Horsetail. Among the whites,<sup>129</sup> the whole plant has been used as a diuretic and astringent. The Herbalist<sup>130</sup> says that the whites have used the entire plant in kidney and bladder trouble for the treatment of gravel and difficult and bloody urine. The infusion of the plant has been used as a wash for putrid wounds and ulcers.

## **ERICACEAE (HEATH FAMILY)**

**Leather-leaf (*Chamaedaphne calyculata* [L.] Moench)** "mûcki'gobag" [swamp leaf]. The Potawatomi gather the leaves of the Leather-leaf to make an infusion to be used in the treatment of fevers. The leaves themselves as a poultice are used to treat inflammations. We have no record of its use by the whites.

**Wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens* L.)** "wînîsi'bag" [evergreen plant]. The Potawatomi make a tea from the leaves of the wintergreen to break a fever. They also claim that the tea cures rheumatism and lumbago. Carver<sup>131</sup> found the Potawatomi Indians eating the berries, esteeming them as balsamic and invigorating to the stomach. It has long been known to the whites as a source of methyl salicylate which is an active ingredient in aspirin. According to the National Dispensatory,<sup>132</sup> the leaves have antiseptic, analgesic and carminative properties. It has been used in muscular rheumatism, sciatica and similar ailments. Overdoses of methyl salicylate are known to cause drowsiness, congestion, and finally delirium.

**Labrador Tea (*Ledum groenlandicum* Oeder)** "wesawa'bakûk" [yellow leaf]; "wesawa'bagûk" [yellow leaf]; "mamîji'bagûk" [hairy leaf]; and "mamîzhi'bagûk" [woolly leaf].<sup>133</sup> It may be noticed that there are slightly different pronunciations for the name of this plant in the Potawatomi, according to different informants. Mrs. Spoon used the leaves in one of her medicinal combinations, but did not say what ailment it was intended to correct. Among the whites,<sup>134</sup> the leaves have been used as a pectoral, a tonic and an astringent. The National Dispensatory<sup>135</sup> records that the leaves in full doses cause headache, vertigo, restlessness and a peculiar delirium. The infusion of the leaves augments a secretion of saliva, of perspiration, urine, and dilates the pupil of the eye. It is a remedy rarely employed now except in cases of chronic bronchitis. A decoction of the leaves has been used as a vermin exterminator, while fresh twigs have been placed among woollen clothes to keep moths away from them.

**Indian Pipe (*Monotropa uniflora* L.)** "weakosî'nk" [in a bunch]. According to Mrs. Spoon the proper name of this is "mena'mabag weabskû'nakûk" [white flower smells good]. The Potawatomi medicine woman, Mrs. Spoon, used the roots of this plant to make a tea for female troubles. Among the whites,<sup>136</sup> the root is said to have tonic, sedative, nervine and anti-spasmodic properties. There is a record<sup>137</sup> of the use of the root as a sedative in place of opium and of its use in fevers in the place of quinine.

**Velvet-leaf Blueberry (*Vaccinium canadense* Kalm)** "mînaga'wûck" [blueberry vine]. The root bark of this blueberry has been used by the Forest Potawatomi for a medicine, but we were not able to discover for what ailment. Among the whites<sup>138</sup> the fruit has been esteemed chiefly as a food, but one which would prevent scurvy and would act as a diuretic.

**Small Cranberry (*Vaccinium Oxycoccus* L. var. *ovalifolium* Michx.)**<sup>139</sup> "boki'mînäsûn" [cranberry]. The Forest Potawatomi do not use the cranberry as a medicine, except insofar as they claim that all of their native foods are also at the same time medicines and will maintain the health. One might add that only since they have adopted the foods of the white man, their teeth have become bad and their general health impaired, as indeed some of the old medicine men among the tribe assert. Among the whites,<sup>140</sup> the leaves have been used as a diuretic while the fruit is

esteemed for its acid, refrigerant, condiment and antiscorbutic properties.

### **FAGACEAE (BEECH FAMILY)**

Beech (*Fagus grandifolia* Ehrh.) "ajawe'mîc" [beech tree], "ajawe'mîn'mîttig" [beech woods]. In Carver's Travels<sup>141</sup> he tells of the manner of use of the leaves for medicine by the Forest Potawatomi. "The leaves, which are white, continue on the trees during the whole winter. A decoction made of them is a certain and expeditious cure for wounds which arise from burning or scalding, as well as a restorative for those members that are nipped by the frost." The bark of the beech tree is the part that has been considered medicinal by the whites.<sup>142</sup> It has been used for its astringent, tonic and antiseptic properties.

**Red Oak (*Quercus rubra* L.)** "mêtîgo'-mîc" [wood tree]. The Potawatomi use the inner bark of the Red Oak as an astringent medicine to cure the flux. The bark has been used as an astringent by the whites.<sup>143</sup> It has also been used as an external poultice to treat cancers, indolent ulcers and so forth.<sup>144</sup>

### **GENTIANACEAE (GENTIAN FAMILY)**

**Yellowish Gentian (*Gentiana flavida* Gray)** "bemîte'obagûk" [greasy weed]. The root of the Yellowish Gentian is collected by the Forest Potawatomi to make a tea that is alterative. By this, they mean that it acts as a remedy to change the condition of the body without causing perceptible evacuations. The root and plant have both been used by the whites<sup>145</sup> in the preparation of so-called stock foods. They have also been used as stomachics and material for bitter tonics.

**GRAMINEAE (GRASS FAMILY) Quack Grass (*Agropyron repens* [L.] Beauv.)**. This is considered an adventive plant by the Forest Potawatomi and they have no name or use for it to our knowledge. Among the whites,<sup>146</sup> however, the root has been used for its diuretic and aperient properties. It has been employed in the treatment of dropsy. The Herbalist<sup>147</sup> says that the root has diuretic, aperient, demulcent and vulnerary properties. Decoctions of the root have been used in treating cystitis, irritable bladder, gravel, jaundice, bronchitis, skin diseases and gout. It is said to relieve thirst, allay fever and promote urination. It has also been used as a blood purifier.

**Squirrel-tail Grass (*Hordeum jubatum* L.)** "mêmîcona'weak" [bushy-tail weed] and "mêmîcika'teak" [bushy-tail weed] according to Mrs. Spoon. She said that she employed the roots of this plant for medicine, but did not specify the particular kind of ailment. We have no record of its use by the whites.

### **HAMAMELIDACEAE (WITCH-HAZEL FAMILY)**

**Witch-hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana* L.)**<sup>148</sup> "bwaote'ît" [no heart wood, all white], "Paga'nîmîg" [witch-hazel], according to Simon Pokagon.<sup>149</sup> This

was one of the remedies that the Forest Potawatomi use in their sweat baths. They place the twigs in water and with hot rocks create steam which bathes sore muscles. A quarter century ago, Witch-hazel was highly esteemed by the whites and the bark and leaves were accounted astringent, tonic, anti-phlogistic and of value in the treatment of female complaints.<sup>150</sup> The Herbalist<sup>151</sup> says that the bark and leaves have tonic, astringent and sedative properties. Decoctions of the bark were used in the treatment of hemorrhages, as a diaphoretic, for dysentery and excessive mucous discharges. It has been used in the first stages of tuberculosis. The crushed bark has been used as an external poultice. A bark tea has been used in the treatment of sore mouth and for the treatment of piles.

#### **HYPERICACEAE (ST. JOHN'S WORT FAMILY)**

**Marsh St. John's Wort (*Hypericum virginicum* L.)** "wisa'gabag" [sweet leaf?]. The Forest Potawatomi claim that this plant contains three different kinds of medicine. In one of these the leaves are used to make a tea to cure fevers. Among the white people, this plant is considered to have aromatic astringent, resolvent and nervine properties.<sup>152</sup> According to the Herbalist<sup>153</sup> the top and flowers of the Marsh St. John's Wort are considered astringent, sedative and diuretic. The tea of the flowers suppresses urine, and is effective in chronic urinary affections, diarrhea, dysentery, jaundice, menorrhagia, hysteria, nervous affections, hemoptysis and other hemorrhages. Externally it has been used in a fomentation or used as an ointment to dispel hard tumors, caked breasts, bruises, etc.

#### **IRIDACEAE (IRIS FAMILY)**

**Blue Flag (*Iris versicolor* L.)**<sup>154</sup> "pakwiasko'ns" [waterweed]. The Prairie Potawatomi call this "sênipa'sowûn". The Forest Potawatomi use the root of the Blue Flag to make poultices to allay inflammation. The root of Blue Flag was also used among the whites<sup>155</sup> for its alterative, resolvent, sialogogic, laxative, diuretic, and vermifuge properties. According to the Herbalist<sup>156</sup> the rhizome is accredited with alterative, cathartic, vermifuge and diuretic properties. In scrofula and syphilis it acts as a powerful and efficient agent and it has been employed in chronic liver, renal and splenic affections. It is said to be best when combined with mandrakes, pokeberry, and black cohosh root.

#### **JUGLANDACEAE (WALNUT FAMILY)**

**Butternut (*Juglans cinerea* L.)**<sup>157</sup> "**baganak**". The Potawatomi use this bark as a physic and drink infusions of the inner bark for its tonic effects. The Butternut is found commonly through the north while the Black Walnut only reaches the central part of Wisconsin. The Black Walnut has not been known to Wisconsin Indians for medicine. Among the whites, the bark has been used for its cathartic, alterative, tonic, anthelmintic, astringent, and cholagogue properties. <sup>158</sup> The Herbalist,<sup>159</sup> states that the inner bark of the root and the leaves have been used by the whites to cure habitual constipation and intestinal diseases. Decoctions of the root bark have been used in fevers and also to cure murrain in cattle.

## **LABIATAE (MINT FAMILY)**

**Common Hemp Nettle (*Galeopsis Tetrahit* L.)** "mena'kwûskûk" [plant smells good], or [mint plant]. Mrs. Spoon uses the whole plant to make a tea for the treatment of pulmonary troubles. Among the whites<sup>160</sup> the whole plant has been used as an anti-spasmodic resolvent, and a detergent. The National Dispensatory<sup>161</sup> says that this species is the principal ingredient of "Lieber's Consumption Herbs".

**Bugle Weed (*Lycopus uniflorus* Michx.)**. The Forest Potawatomi consider this an adventive weed to their territory and therefore have no name or use for it to our knowledge. We have no record of its use by the whites.

### **Wild Mint (*Mentha arvensis* L. var. *canadensis* [L.] Briquet)**

"name'wîskons" [little sturgeon weed]. The Potawatomi use the leaves or the top of this plant for treating fevers and also make a stimulating tea for the curing of pleurisy. Among the whites<sup>162</sup> the whole plant is used for its bitter, pungent, anti-spasmodic, and anti-rheumatic properties.

**Wild Bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa* L.)**.<sup>163</sup> Strangely enough the Forest Potawatomi have no name or use for this plant to our knowledge. This is rather surprising because the neighboring tribes all make use of it. It is used by the Menomini for the treatment of catarrh, by the Meskwaki for the treatment of colds and by the Ojibwe for the treatment of catarrh and bronchial affections. The National Dispensatory<sup>164</sup> ascribes to the plant aromatic, stimulant, diaphoretic, and carminative properties. It has been used by eclectic practitioners in the treatment of flatulent colic, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea that has been caused from a cold.

**Mad-dog Skullcap (*Scutellaria lateriflora* L.)**<sup>165</sup> The Forest Potawatomi did not know this plant and had no name or use for it to our knowledge. Among the whites<sup>166</sup> it has been assigned nervine, tonic, diuretic and anti-spasmodic properties. The Herbalist<sup>167</sup> says that the plant has nervine, tonic, and anti-spasmodic properties. It has been used by eclectic practitioners for chorea, convulsions, fits, delirium tremens and all nervous affections, supporting the nerves and quieting the system.

**Hedge Nettle (*Stachys palustris* L.)**. The Forest Potawatomi have no name or use for this plant to our knowledge. Among the whites<sup>168</sup> the whole plant is nauseant, expectorant, emmenagogue, anti-hysterical, and vulnerary. The National Dispensatory<sup>169</sup> considers it the most important medicine of two hundred species of Stachys.

## **LEGUMINOSAE (BEAN FAMILY)**

**Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense* L.)** "wa'waskwonemi'cûk" [flower hay]. The Forest Potawatomi did not consider this a medicine but it has been used among the whites<sup>170</sup> for its detergent and depurative properties. The flowers are the parts used and the extract of their principles have been used in ointment.

## LILIACEAE (LILY FAMILY)

**Northern Clintonia (*Clintonia borealis* [Ait.] Raf.)**<sup>171</sup> "Kockanda'-mînokwi". This Forest Potawatomi name sounds as though it should be a plant used in midwifery and our informant told us that it was employed as a medicine but did not explain its exact use. There is no record of its use by the whites to our knowledge.

**Canada Mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense* Desf.)**<sup>172</sup> "sûksi'-mînaga'wîc" [deer weed]. The Forest Potawatomi use the root of this plant to make a medicine in curing sore throat. Among the whites<sup>173</sup> the root has been used for its stimulant properties for diseases of the head, to produce sneezing, as an expectorant and for its mucilaginous properties.

**Indian Spikenard (*Smilacina racemosa* [L.] Desf.)** "agoñgosi'-mînaga'wîc" [chipmunk berries—little weed]. According to Mrs. Spoon the right name for this was "cûkci'mînaga'ons" [deer berries—little weed]. The Prairie Potawatomi name for the same plant was "psûksi'-mîn" [deer berries]. The Prairie Potawatomi stated that they sometimes ate the berries as a food but the Forest Potawatomi knew nothing about this practice. The smoke or smudge from the burning root, placed upon a pan of live coals, was used to revive a patient who had sunk into a coma. It was fanned toward the nostrils and a paper cone was placed over the nose to make sure that the fumes reached them. Among the whites<sup>174</sup> the root has been used as an astringent, a tonic, a demulcent and an expectorant.

**Twisted Stalk (*Streptopus roseus* Michx.)** <sup>175</sup> "nâwä'kîtäg" [leaning weed]. According to Mrs. Spoon, the proper name in Forest Potawatomi is "newe'ak". She used the root of the Twisted Stalk to make a cough syrup or tea. The Ojibwe likewise used the root of the Twisted Stalk, but we have no record of its use among the white.

**Large-flowered White Trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum* [Michx.] Salisb.)**<sup>176</sup> "kesana'kwions" [bell flower]. Another name applied to this plant by the Forest Potawatomi is "macaka'ndib" [Indian turnip]. An infusion of the root is used for treating sore nipples. The infusion is drunk by the patient and the medicine man further hastens the action of the medicine by piercing the teats with a dog whisker. Under the name "birth wort" the whites<sup>177</sup> have used the root as a parturient, a local stimulant, and a stimulant expectorant. Other authorities<sup>178</sup> assigned to it astringent, tonic and antiseptic qualities. It has been used to treat bleeding lungs, diseases of the kidney and womb, and coughs and asthma. The root when boiled in milk, has been used as a diaphoretic and a cure for dysentery. The raw root has been pounded into a poultice to cure tumors, ulcers, and insect stings.

**Large-flowered Bellwort (*Uvularia grandiflora* Smith)**<sup>179</sup> "nâwä'-kîtäg" [leaning weed]. The Forest Potawatomi use the root of this plant for two purposes. In an infusion, it is used to cure a backache. When it is boiled down and added to lard it is used as a salve to massage sore muscles and tendons. Among the whites,<sup>180</sup> the entire plant is used as a tonic, demulcent, nervine and hepatic. It has also been used to prevent the bad effects of poison inwardly.

## LYCOPERDACEAE (PUFFBALL FUNGI)

**Pinkish Puff ball (*Lycoperdon subincarnatum* Pk.)** "teokwe'-mînûn"

[headache berry]. The P̄otawatomi use the spores of this puff-ball for a headache powder but just how the dose is administered we were unable to discover. These spores are also used to sooth any chafing between the legs and under the armpits of an infant. It appears that this is the only member of the fungi family that the Forest Potawatomi use and that they consider all other species of fungi poisonous.

**LYCOPODIACEAE (CLUB MOSS FAMILY) Common Club Moss**  
**(*Lycopodium clavatum* L. var. *monostachyon* Grev. & Hook.)**

"bebamabi'k" [running vine]. While the Forest Potawatomi gather this in large quantities to sell to the florists, they also use the spores of the fruiting spikes as a medicine, for their styptic and coagulant properties. Among the whites,<sup>181</sup> the pollen or spores of the Club Moss are used in treating excoriations and as a dusting powder for infants. Another authority<sup>182</sup> records the use of both the spores and the moss. The moss is used as a diuretic and antispasmodic and for rheumatism and epilepsy, dysentery and renal disorders. The spores have been used to protect raw surfaces, such as originate in cases of erysipelas, eczema, herpes, and ulcers.

**Tree Club Moss (*Lycopodium obscurum* var. *dendroideum* [Michx.] D. C. Eaton)** "s̄igona'kwan" [evergreens], This is the name that was given by 'Snabe Jim and Indian George, whereas others called it "c̄ingwa'koc̄ik̄äs̄iḡik̄" [pine-shape of]. The Forest Potawatomi also gather this species to sell to the whites and use the spores as a medicine in the same manner as the preceding species.

**MYRICACEAE (SWEET GALE FAMILY) Sweet Fern (*Myrica asplenifolia* L.)** "c̄ingwako's̄inḡä'c̄ik̄ûk" [pine shape]. The Forest Potawatomi make a tea from the leaves of the Sweet Fern to cure the itch. Among the whites,<sup>183</sup> the whole plant has been used for its tonic, astringent and diaphoretic properties. It has been used in the treatment of fevers. Another authority<sup>184</sup> states that the whole plant has been used for its stimulant and astringent properties to relieve colic and as a diaphoretic. It has also been used as a fomentation in the treatment of rheumatism.

**Sweet Gale (*Myrica Gale* L.)** The Forest Potawatomi have no medicinal use for this plant to our knowledge. Among the whites,<sup>185</sup> the leaves and buds have been used for their tonic, alterative, blood purifying and vulnerary properties.

**NYMPHAEACEAE (WATER LILY FAMILY)**

**Sweet-scented Water Lily (*Nymphaea odorata* [Ait.] Woodville & Wood)** "nabagûck" [water lily] and "wabi'nabagack" [white water lily]. According to Pokagon,<sup>186</sup> the root of the Sweet-scented Water Lily was used as a poulticing material when it had been pounded, but our informant did not tell us what ailments it was supposed to cure.

**Yellow Pond Lily (*Nuphar lutea ssp. advena* Ait.)** "kîtewi" [pine snake]. The Forest Potawatomi gather large quantities of the root of the Yellow Pond Lily and give it the name of pine snake, because of the appearance of the roots where the water has dried away exposing them. The writer made a trip with Mrs. Spoon to obtain a supply of this root and gathered perhaps a two-bushel sack of it. The roots were cut into quarters in order to dry better. The root is pounded into a pulp, either fresh or dried to use as a poulticing material for many inflammatory diseases. Among the whites,<sup>187</sup> the roots are esteemed for their astringent, emollient, discutient, and demulcent properties, being esteemed in treating various female complaints. Another authority,<sup>188</sup> states that the roots have been used among eclectic practitioners as a remedy for diarrhea, dysentery and leucorrhea.

## **OLEACEAE (OLIVE FAMILY)**

**Red Ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica* Marsh.)** "êmkwansûk" [spoon wood]. While we found no record of the use of ash for medicine among the Forest Potawatomi, the ancient medical texts are full of reference to the potency of Ash to charm and keep away serpents. Infants were fed the sap of the Ash tree to ward off attacks of serpents and the wooden rockers of the cradle were made from Ash wood for the same reason. Modern eclectic practitioners<sup>189</sup> used a wine made from White Ash bark as a bitter tonic, astringent and anti-periodic. It has been used by them in the treatment of intermittent fevers.

## **ONAGRACEAE (EVENING PRIMROSE FAMILY)**

**Lesser Enchanters Nightshade (*Circaea alpina* L.)** The Forest Potawatomi considered this plant adventive to their territory and have no name or use for it to our knowledge. Among the whites,<sup>190</sup> the whole plant has been considered of value in dispelling or resolving tumors and healing fresh cuts or wounds.

**Northern Willow-herb (*Epilobium adenocaulon* Haussk.)** "wîsîgi'-bag" [bitter weed]. The Prairie Potawatomi use the root of this plant to make a tea to check diarrhea. We have no record of its use by the whites.

**Fireweed (*Epilobium angustifolium* L.)** "kêgi'nano'kûk" [sharp pointed weed]. While the Forest Potawatomi use this for medicine, its use was not explained. Among the whites,<sup>191</sup> the leaves and the root have both been used for their tonic, astringent, demulcent and emollient properties.

**Common Evening Primrose (*Oenothera biennis* L.)** "owesa'wanakûk" [yellow top]. The tiny seeds of the Evening Primrose are used for medicine among the Forest Potawatomi. Mrs. Spoon said that they were a valuable medicine but did not say for what particular ailment. Among the whites,<sup>192</sup> the whole plant has been used for its mucilaginous properties, as an acrid

agent for its value in eruptions or skin diseases and as an ornamental. Another authority<sup>193</sup> states the whole plant has been used to make a tea to cure coughs and asthma. An ointment has been made from the extract of the plant to use in the treatment of skin diseases.

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Footnotes:

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|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 95 Nickell, p. 20.           | 128 Nat'l. Disp., p. 649.    | 161 Nat'l. Disp., p. 895.    |
| 96 Herbalist, p. 42.         | 129 Nickell, p. 57.          | 162 Nickell, p. 88.          |
| 97 Nat'l. Disp., p. 513.     | 130 Herbalist, p. 212.       | 163 Present, V4, P1, fig. 3. |
| 98 Nickell, p. 24.           | 131 Carver, p. 339.          | 164 Nat'l. Disp., p. 894.    |
| 99 Nickell, p. 28.           | 132 Nat'l. Disp., p. 739.    | 166 Nickell, p. 123.         |
| 100 Nickell, p. 37.          | 133 Present, V4, P3, fig. 2. | 167 Herbalist, p. 224.       |
| 101 Nickell, p. 80.          | 134 Nickell, p. 80.          | 168 Nickell, p. 130.         |
| 102 Present, V4, P2, P. 213. | 135 Nat'l. Disp., p. 621.    | 169 Nat'l. Dis., p. 895.     |
| 103 Nickell, p. 43.          | 136 Nickell, p. 91.          | 170 Nickell, p. 136.         |
| 104 Nat'l. Disp., p. 408.    | 137 Herbalist, p. 78.        | 171 Present, V4, P1, fig. 3. |
| 105 Nickell, p. 59.          | 138 Nickell, p. 139.         | 172 Present, V4, P3, fig. 1. |
| 106 Herbalist, p. 76.        | 139 Present, V4, P3, fig. 2. | 173 Nickell, p. 45.          |
| 107 Nickell, p. 57.          | 140 Nickell, p. 139.         | 174 Nickell, p. 45.          |
| 108 Herbalist, p. 174.       | 141 Carver, p. 333.          | 175 Present, V4, P3, fig. 1. |
| 109 Present, V4, P1, fig.3.  | 142 Nickell, p. 61.          | 176 Present, V4, P1,fig.2.   |
| 110 Nickell, p. 60.          | 143 Nickell, p. 112.         | 177 Nat'l. Disp., p. 1686.   |
| 111 Herbalist, p. 179.       | 144 Herbalist, p. 169.       | 178 Herbalist, p. 50.        |
| 112 Nickell, p. 69.          | 145 Pammel, p. 690.          | 179 Present, V4, P1, fig.1.  |
| 113 Nat'l. Disp., p. 513.    | 146 Nickell, p. 137.         | 180 Nickell, p. 138.         |
| 114 Nat'l. Disp., p. 513.    | 147 Herbalist, p. 262.       | 181 Nickell, p. 84.          |
| 115 Nickell, p. 128.         | 148 Present, V4, P1, fig. 2. | 182 Herbalist, p. 132.       |
| 116 Nat'l. Disp., p. 513.    | 149 Pokagon, p. 165.         | 183 Herbalist, p. 45.        |
| 117 Nat'l. Disp., p. 613.    | 150 Nickell, p. 69.          | 184 Nat'l. Disp., p. 430.    |
| 118 Nickell, p. 129.         | 151 Herbalist, p. 264.       | 185 Nickell, p. 92.          |
| 119 Present, V4, P1, fig. 1. | 152 Nickell, p. 73.          | 186 Pokagon, pp.157/164.     |
| 120 Nickell, p. 133.         | 153 Herbalist, p. 217.       | 187 Nickell, p. 94.          |
| 121 Herbalist, p. 67.        | 154 Present, V4, P2, fig. 2. | 188 Nat'l. Disp., p. 1056.   |
| 122 Present, V4, P1, fig. 1. | 155 Nickell, p. 75.          | 189 Nat'l. Disp., p. 728.    |
| 123 Nickell, p. 47.          | 156 Herbalist, p. 36.        | 190 Nickell, p. 42.          |
| 124 Nickell p. 47.           | 157 Present, V4, P1, fig. 4. | 191 Nickell, p. 56.          |
| 125 Nat'l. Disp., p. 47.     | 158 Nickell, p. 76.          | 192 Nickell, p. 95.          |
| 126 Nat'l. Disp., p. 648.    | 159 Herbalist, p. 243.       | 193 Herbalist, p. 253.       |
| 127 Herbalist, p. 206.       | 160 Nickell, p. 63.          |                              |

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**PLANT MEDICINES**

[INTRODUCTION](#)

[HISTORY](#)

[MATERIAL CULTURE](#)

[RELIGION](#)

[MEDICINE LODGE](#)

[PART I](#)

[PART II](#)

[PART III](#)

[FOOD PLANTS](#)

[VEGETABLE FIBERS](#)

[EMAIL](#)

[HOME](#)

[INDEX](#)

[TRADING POST](#)