ELDER

Sambucus nigra / canadensis





History & Folklore

- Elder is truly an ancient herb, with archeological evidence elder was consumed thousands of years ago
- Long a staple of folk medicine, called the "people's medicine chest", and it has copious folklore surrounding it from Europe and the UK.
- Many folktales associate Elder with the otherworld and it was highly respected

warnings not to fall asleep under an elder tree

- * Never burn or use its wood without asking permission from the 'Elder Mother'
- In Harry Potter, the most powerful and revered wand was made of Elder!

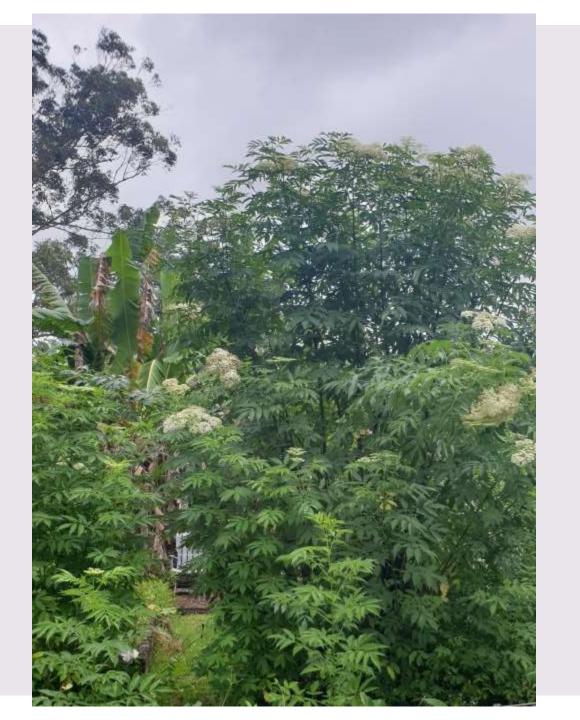




Growing and harvesting

- Elder grows in most places across the world, often forming clumps and hedgerows
- ° In cool climates Elder are deciduous.
- The trees grow easily on the Sunshine Coast and only partially die back over winter.
- We are often lucky enough to get several flushes of both the flowers and berries every year.
- Elder easily strikes from a cutting and can be invasive, so caution is advised regarding where it is planted.





Harvesting

- Harvest flowers when most of the blooms are open.
- ° Shake out tiny white spiders and bugs!

- Harvest berries when dark purple/ black.
- Separate from stems and discard any unripe fruit.



Medicinal Actions

- Elderberries are most famous for their ability to shorten duration and symptoms of the flu – both traditional use and backed by modern science as well as being used as a cough syrup.
- Elderflowers can also be used for their immunomodulating and antiviral properties, although are most often used to relieve a fever through inducing sweating, as made infamous in the YEP (yarrow, elderflower and peppermint) formula.

Berries

antiviral, immunomodulating, antioxidant rich, anti-inflammatory, diaphoretic, diuretic, aperient, expectorant, laxative



- Traditionally used to make tasty cough syrup
 - Anthocyanins in the berries can attach to (and render ineffective) viral glycoproteins that enable viruses to enter host cells, thereby potentially having an inhibitory effect on viral infection.



Cautions and Safety

° Raw elderberries are toxic in large doses.

 They can cause vomiting, nausea or diarrhea due to presence of cyanidin glycoside in seeds, but cooking neutralizes this toxin and makes it safe to consume the berries.

Flowers



Actions:

- o antiviral, nervine,
- o diaphoretic, diuretic,
- \circ antioxidant rich,
- \circ alterative
- o anti-catarrhal, astringent
- o emollient, demulcent,
- Traditionally used to make tea for fevers, colds, hayfever.
- Can be used fresh or dried.

Recipes and ways to use Elder in daily life

Elderberries are a food-like herb and can be consumed in larger amounts (when cooked) and both flowers and berries can be used for both culinary and medicinal purposes.

 Berries: Syrup, oxymel, decoction, tincture, elixir, wine, jelly, scones, pies, cakes, muffins, jellies, jams, vinegars,



 Flowers: fritters, sorbet, cordial & fermented champagne/sparkling wine (due to natural yeasts)





