

24. *ALOYSIA TRIPHYLLA* Britton (VERBENACEAE) — Lemon Verbena

Fresh leaves are used as a condiment in home cookery, and as a tea, especially in Latin America. Dried leaves make a delicious hot tea, greenish and with a lemon-lime aroma and flavor. The essential oil was once employed in perfumery, especially for colognes. It is still used in flavoring liqueurs.⁴² The essential oil is acaricidal¹ and bactericidal. An alcoholic leaf extract is antibiotic against *Escherichia coli*, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, and *Staphylococcus aureus* (antimalarial tests were negative).³ A 2% emulsion of the essential oil kills 90% of the mite, *Tetranychus telarius*, and the aphid, *Aphis gossypii*.

Reported to be antispasmodic, carminative, digestive, expectorant, nervine, pectoral, sedative, stimulant, stomachic, and tranquilizer, the lemon verbena is a folk remedy for fever, rabies, and spasm. Latin Americans take the tea for asthma, cold, colic, diarrhea, dyspepsia, and fever.^{32,33,57} North Africans also take the tea for colds, fever, and spasms.⁸⁴

On steam distillation, the leaves yield 0.42 to 0.65%, the stems 0.34% essential oil, rich in citral (35%), borneol, cineol, dipentene, geraniol, limonene, linalool, nerol,⁴² citronal, verbesone, acetic acid,⁵⁷ alpha- and beta-caryophyllene, myrcenene, pyrrollic- and isovalerianic-acid.³³