

49. *ARTEMISIA ABSINTHIUM* L. (ABSTERACEAE) — Wormwood, Ajenjo, Absinthium

Wormwood is grown for the leaves, stems, and flower-heads, which are used as a vermouth ingredient. Formerly the principal ingredient in the liqueur absinth. Brewers once added the fruits to hops to make beer more heady.⁴⁵ Oil is a fragrance component in creams, detergents, lotions, perfumes, and soap. Crushed in vinegar and applied to the body, it repels fleas and flies.⁴⁵ Twigs serve as a moth repellent. Once used in granaries to ward off weevils, and as a strewing herb to repel fleas, wormwood does contain a repellent essential oil. Mice are said not to eat books written with ink in which wormwood was boiled.⁴⁵ The filaricidal herb has been suggested as an additive to sheep diet. Fresh branches are placed to repel mosquitos.⁴² The essential oil kills house flies.⁹⁶ Stuffed into pillows for cats and dogs it repels fleas.⁴⁷ The tea is said to prevent seasickness.⁴⁵

The herbage or its juices are used for various types of cancers and indurations of the breast, foot, larynx, liver, sinax, spleen, stomach, testicles, tongue, and uterus. The essential oil of absinth is used in medical and veterinary liniments. *Poison*, it is said to be abortifacient, antiseptic, and narcotic. Taken internally, absinthe is considered anthelmintic, deobstruent, depurative, digestive, diuretic, discutient, emmenagogue, febrifugal, lactagogue, stomachic, sudorific, tonic, and vermifuge. It expels worms in people and animals, but is considered dangerous. It has shown up in folk remedies for arthritis, bruises, diarrhea, dropsy, dysmenorrhea, dyspepsia, gout, gravel, hepatitis, inappetence, itch, jaundice, malaria, neuralgia, orchitis, rheumatism, splenosis and sprains.^{45,47}