

299. *RUMEX CRISPUS* L. (POLYGONACEAE) — Yellow Dock

Amerindians cooked the seeds in a gruel. Young leaves are cooked and eaten by various ethnic groups. The plant is sold for "herb tea" in the U.S. Herbal extracts may inhibit *Escherichia*, *Salmonella*, and *Staphylococcus*.³ Rumicin ($C_{14}H_{10}O_4$) is discutient, ectoparasiticidal, and rubefacient.

Used by Paiutes and Shoshones for bruises, burns, swelling, and venereal disease; by Navajo for cutaneous and oral sores; by Tarahumara for skin lesions, especially sores on legs and feet.²⁸¹ Africans treat anthrax with a decoction of *Rumex* and *Teucrium*. Used as an internal remedy for scrofula, in herpes, the herb may cause nausea. Asian Indians use root juice for toothache, powdered roots for gingivitis and as a dentifrice. The rhizome is used for laryngitis.³ Brazilians apply root decoction externally in adenopathy, internally as an antiscorbutic, depurative, febrifuge, and tonic.⁴² The herb is also used for anemia, anthrax, cancer, diarrhea, eczema, fever, itch, leprosy, malaria, rheumatism, ringworm, syphilis, tuberculosis, urticaria.^{3,32,33} Taiwanese use *Rumex* in vapor baths to relieve the eyes and ulcers.¹⁶ Contradictorily, Chinese employ the rhizome as a laxative, while Australians, Americans, and Europeans use it for diarrhea and as a laxative. The tannins work as astringents; the anthraquinones as laxatives. Could the human body select from the herbal