

These folios are intended to offer brief and concise information about the preparation and uses of North American botanicals...to encourage the viewing of our herbs as LIVING PLANTS, not merely abstract roughage purchased in commerce, derived from sources mysterious



Ceanothus Red Root

Prepared by Michael Moore



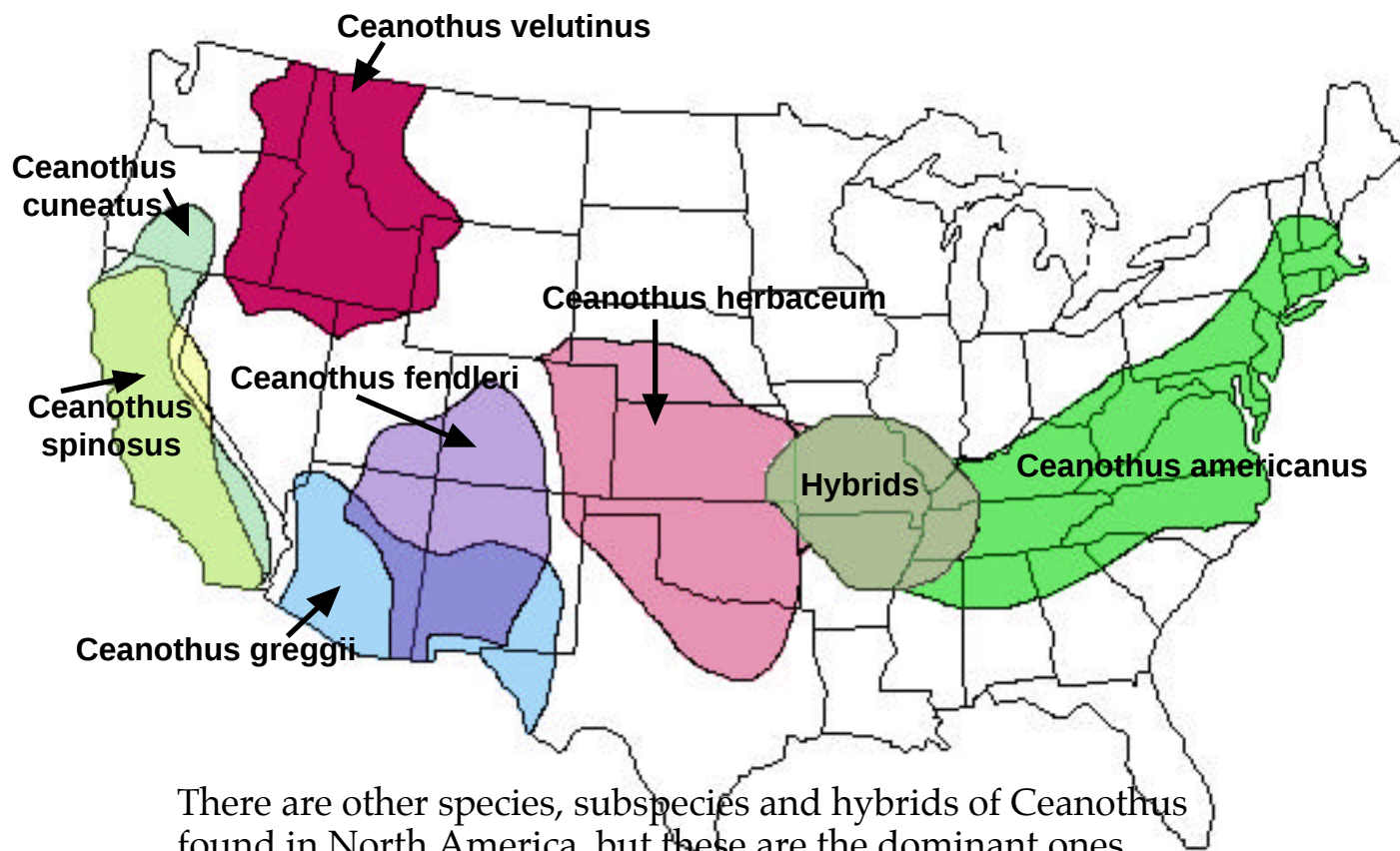
*Ceanothus
americanus*
New Jersey Tea,
Red Root
Branches in flower
Arkansas

PHOTO BY
ELAINE STEVENS

*Ceanothus
fendleri*
Red Root,
Deer Brush
Flowering branches
Arizona

PHOTO BY ELAINE
STEVENS





Ceanothus velutinus
Snowbrush, Red Root



Flowering Stand - Idaho
PHOTO BY MICHAEL MOORE



Flowering branches
Montana
PHOTO BY MIMI KAMP

About Red Root...

These are widespread plants in North America, taking the shape of spiny ground-covers, forlorn shrubs, robust bushes, and even rather substantial trees (California Lilac, not used medicinally, can be quite large). The useful species share several common characteristics; the roots bear nitrogen-fixing fungi, they range in color from that of Caucasian skin to claret wine, and those plants that are most environmentally stressed, and more reliant on their peculiar fungi, are the strongest medicines.

Whether a pugnacious mat or a large bush, these *Ceanothus* are, at heart, a hardwood tree, and the taproots can be massive and VERY tough. *C. herbaceum* and its *C. americanus* hybrids have been referred to as Grub Roots in the midwest, where they often formed masses of plow-breaking roots, twining tortuously just below the surface of the soil.

Many species and local strains have a noticeable wintergreen scent, and in general they should not be used concurrent with anti-coagulant medication. Otherwise, Red Root is one of our great, unsung plant medicines. With its “blood-thinning” effects, and the current North American diet so heavily larded with fats, perhaps it is more useful now than in our herbal past.



*Ceanothus
greggii*

**Red Root,
Desert Ceanothus**

Flowering branches - Arizona
PHOTO BY ELAINE STEVENS

Flower Detail - New Mexico
PHOTO BY JOHN EGBERT



CEANOTHUS (Red Root, New Jersey Tea)

Preparation and uses

Part Used: The whole roots, cut while fresh, and either tinctured fresh or dried for tea. The dry root pieces are VERY difficult to grind up for a macerated or percolated tincture, unless you have a sturdy drug or hammer mill.

PREPARATIONS:

Cold Infusion (one ounce steeped overnight in a quart of water)

Dosage..... 2-4 ounces

Strong Decoction (Same proportions as above, although a bit heat-damaged)

Dosage..... 2-4 ounces

Tincture..... [Fresh Root, 1:2, Dry Root, 1:5, 50% alcohol]

Dosage..... 30-90 drops, to 4X a day

SUMMARY OF CLINICAL USES:

Weakness and boggy in lymph pulp and nodes; Rouleau of RBC, without dysplasia, mild splenomegaly; acute tonsillitis and pharyngitis.

CONTRAINDICATIONS

Coagulation disorders or anticoagulant medications.

SPECIFIC INDICATIONS

As a gargle in acute pharyngitis.

Tonsillitis.

Fibrocystic breast disease (with the elimination of all caffeine, theobromine and theophylline in diet).

Hydrocele (with *Angelica sinensis* - "Dong Quai").

Acute mastitis (internally, with *Gossypium* internally, and *Phytolacca* externally).

Thick and oppressive frontal headaches after fatty meals.

Blood, chronic slow coagulation without hemopathy.

Lymphadenitis, in chronic debility (with *Astragalus* or *Baptisia*);
or cervical or under jaw.

Mononucleosis, with widespread and inflamed nodes.

Mononucleosis, general supportive.

Splenitis, subacute, chronic or secondary to hepatitis.

As a general tonic for thick, viscous blood, and RBC clumping

CEANOTHUS FLOWERS

Hair tonic, as a rinse.

A serviceable shampoo, using the fresh flowers, rubbed in warm water, with a smidgen of castile soap



Ceanothus spinosus

Ceanothus spinosus
Green Buckbrush, California Red Root



Drawing by Mimi Kamp

Ceanothus cuneatus
Buckbrush, Red Root



Drawing by Mimi Kamp

Ceanothus velutinus
Snowbrush, Red Root

SOUTHWEST SCHOOL OF BOTANICAL MEDICINE

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