

Black Walnut Hull Profile

Also known as

Juglans nigra, English Walnut, Akschota, ructus Cortex, Juglans, Juglandis, Juglandis Folium, Juglans regia, Nogal, Walnut, Walnut Fruit, and Walnut Hull.

Introduction

The black walnut is native tree of North America. Black walnuts are smaller, harder, and more pungent than the English walnuts sold in grocery stores. The hulls without the meaty kernels inside are used in herbal medicine. Black walnut trees exude a sap that discourages growth of competing plants over their roots.

Constituents

Juglone, vitamin C, zinc.

Parts Used

The powdered hull.

Typical Preparations

Tinctures, pastes and slurries. Up to 1 teaspoon of the herb 3 times a week taken internally as a tea.

Summary

Black walnut hulls contain juglone, a chemical that is antibacterial, antiviral, antiparasitic, and a fungicide. As a skin wash, black walnut hulls are used to treat ringworm and yeast infections of the skin. Taken internally, black walnut hulls are used to treat intestinal worms.

Precautions

Black walnut hulls are safe for occasional use of up to 2 weeks at a time, but black walnut heartwood is not. Avoid herbal remedies which contain heartwood.

Walnut

Botanical: *Juglans nigra* (LINN.)

Family: N.O. Juglandaceae

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---**Synonyms**---Carya. Jupiter's Nuts.

(Dutch) Walnoot.

(Greek) Carya persica. Carya basilike.

(Roman) Nux persica. Nux regia.

---**Parts Used**---Leaves, bark.

---**Habitat**---According to Dr. Royle *Juglans regia* extends from Greece and Asia Minor, over Lebanon and Persia, probably all along the Hindu-Kush to the Himalayas. It is abundant in Kashmir, and is found in Sirmore, Kumdon and Nepal. The walnuts imported into the plains of India are chiefly from Kashmir. Dr. Hooker states that in the Sikkim Himalaya, the Walnut inhabits the mountain slopes at an

elevation of 4,000 to 7,000 feet.

According to Pliny, it was introduced into Italy from Persia, and it is mentioned by Varro, who was born B.C. 116, as growing in Italy during his lifetime.

There is no certain account of the time it was brought into this country. Some say 1562; but Gerard, writing about thirty years later, mentions the Walnut as being very common in the fields near common highways, and in orchards.

The Common Walnut, a large and handsome tree, with strong, spreading boughs, is not a native of Britain. Its native place is probably Persia. Other varieties of Walnut, the Black Walnut, the various kinds of Hickory, etc., are mostly natives of North America.

The Romans called the tree *nux*, on account of its fruit. The English name Walnut is partly of Teutonic origin, the Germans naming the nut *Wallnuss*, or *Welsche Nuss* - *Welsche* signifying foreign.

It was said that in the 'golden age,' when men lived upon acorns the gods lived upon Walnuts, and hence the name of *Juglans*, *Jovis glans*, or Jupiter's nuts.

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---Description---The tree grows to a height of 40 or 60 feet, with a large spreading top, and thick, massive stem. One accurately measured by Professor du Breuil, in Normandy, was upwards of 23 feet in circumference; and in some parts of France there are Walnut trees 300 years old, with stems of much greater thickness. In the southern parts of England the trees grow vigorously and bear abundantly, when not injured by late frosts in spring.

The flowers of separate sexes are borne upon the same tree and appear in early spring before the leaves. The male flowers have a calyx of five or six scales, surrounding from eighteen to thirty-six stamens; whilst the calyx of the female flowers closely envelops the ovary, which bears two or three fleshy stigmas. The deciduous leaves are pinnate.

For drying indoors, a warm, sunny attic, or loft may be employed, the window being left open by day, so that there is a current of air and the moist, hot air may escape: the door may also be left open. The leaves can be placed on coarse butter-cloth, stented - if hooks are placed beneath the window and on the opposite wall the butter-cloth can be attached by rings sewn on each side of it and hooked on so that it is stretched taut. The temperature should be from 70 degrees to 100 degrees.

Failing sun, any ordinary shed, fitted with racks and shelves, can be used provided it is ventilated near the roof and has a warm current of air, caused by an ordinary coke or anthracite stove. Empty glasshouses can readily be adapted into drying-sheds (especially if heated by pipes) if the glass is shaded. Ventilation is essential, and there must be no open tank in the house to cause steaming.

The leaves should be spread in a single layer, preferably not touching, and may be turned during drying.

All dried leaves should be packed away at once, in airtight, wooden or tin boxes in a dry place, otherwise they re-absorb moisture from the air.

Walnut leaves are parchment-like when dry, and the leaf-stalks brown, but the leaves themselves keep their good colour when dried. They have a bitter and astringent taste. By long keeping, the leaves become brown and lose their characteristic, aromatic odour.

The bark is dried in the same manner as the leaves. When dry, it occurs in quilled or curved pieces, 3 to 6 inches long or more, and 3/4 inch broad, dull blackish-brown, with traces of a thin, whitish epidermal layer tough and fibrous and somewhat mealy. The inner fibres are tough and flattened, the outer ones, white and silky. The taste is bitter and astringent, but it has no odour.

---Constituents---The active principle of the whole Walnut tree, as well as of the nuts, is Nucin or Juglon. The kernels contain oil, mucilage, albumin, mineral matter, cellulose and water.

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---Medicinal Action and Uses---The bark and leaves have alterative, laxative, astringent and detergent properties, and are used in the treatment of skin troubles. They are of the highest value for curing scrofulous diseases, herpes, eczema, etc., and for healing indolent ulcers; an infusion of 1 OZ. of dried bark or leaves (slightly more of the fresh leaves) to the pint of boiling water, allowed to stand for six hours, and strained off is taken in wineglassful doses, three times a day, the same infusion being also employed at the same time for outward application. Obstinate ulcers may also be cured with sugar, well saturated with a strong decoction of Walnut leaves.

The bark, dried and powdered, and made into a strong infusion, is a useful purgative.

The husk, shell and peel are sudorific, especially if used when the Walnuts are green. Whilst unripe, the nut has wormdestroying virtues.

The fruit, when young and unripe, makes a wholesome, anti-scorbutic pickle, the vinegar in which the green fruit has been pickled proving a capital gargle for sore and slightly ulcerated throats. Walnut catsup embodies the medicinal virtues of the unripe nuts.

It is much cultivated in some parts of Italy, France, Germany and Switzerland, and formerly also in England, particularly on the chalk-hills of Surrey, for the sake of its timber, as well as for its fruit.

On the Continent, the wood is still in great request for furniture, but when mahogany became a favourite wood in this country, in the early

part of last century, the old walnut trees that were cut down were not always replaced by young ones, so that plantations of this tree diminished.

At one time as much as L. (Lear) 600 was given for a single Walnut tree.

The leaves have a very strong, characteristic smell, aromatic and not unpleasant, but said to be injurious to sensitive people. They have three, sometimes four pairs of leaflets and a terminal one, the leaflets varying in size on the same leaf, being 2 1/4 to 4 inches in length and 1 to 1 1/2 inch wide, entire, smooth, shining, and paler below.

The flowers begin to open about the middle of April and are in full bloom by the middle of May, before which time the tree is in full leaf.

Even in the south of France, this tree is frequently injured by spring frosts.

The wood has been much used, not only for furniture and wainscoting, but for the wheels and bodies of coaches, for making gun-stocks, and by the cabinet-maker for inlaying. It is unfit for use as beams because of its brittleness.

The oil yielded by the kernel of the fruit (the part eaten) is used to polish the wood. Not congealing by cold, it is found on this account most useful for painters for mixing gold-size and varnish with white and delicate colours. The oil has been used in some parts of France for frying, eaten as butter and employed as lamp oil. One bushel of nuts, producing about 15 lb. of peeled kernels, will yield about 7 lb. of the oil.

The green husks of the fruit, boiled, make a good yellow dye.

No insects will touch the leaves of the Walnut, which yield a brown dye, which gypsies use to stain their skin. It is said to contain iodine.

The husks and leaves, macerated in warm water impart to it an intense bitterness, which will destroy all worms (if the liquid be poured on to lawns and grass walks) without injuring the grass itself.

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---Parts Used Medicinally---The leaves and bark. The leaves are stripped off the tree singly, in June and July and dried.

Gather the leaves only in fine weather, in the morning, after the dew has been dried by the sun. The prevalence of an east wind is favourable, as the dry air facilitates the process of drying. Reject all stained leaves.

Drying may be done in warm, sunny weather, out-of-doors, but in half-shade as leaves dried in the shade retain their colour better than those dried in the sun and do not become so tindery. They may be placed on wire sieves, or frames covered with wire or garden netting - at a height of about 3 or 4 feet from the ground, to ensure a current of air - and must be taken indoors to a dry room or shed, before there is any chance of them becoming damp from dew or showers.

The juice of the green husks, boiled with honey, is also a good gargle for a sore mouth and inflamed throat, and the distilled water of the green husks is good for quinsy and as an application for wounds and internally is a cooling drink in agues.

The thin, yellow skin which clothes the inner nut is a notable remedy for colic, being first dried, and then rubbed into powder. It is administered in doses of 30 grains, with a tablespoonful of peppermint water.

The oil extracted from the ripe kernels, taken inwardly in 1/2 OZ. doses, has also proved good for colic and is efficacious, applied externally, for skin diseases of the leprous type and wounds and gangrenes.

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---Preparations---Fluid extract leaves, 1 to 2 drachms. Walnut oil.

The Walnut has been termed 'vegetable arsenic,' on account of its curative effect in eczema and other skin diseases.

William Cole, an exponent of the doctrine of signatures, says in *Adam in Eden*, 1657:

'Wall-nuts have the perfect Signature of the Head: The outer husk or green Covering, represent the *Pericranium*, or outward skin of the skull, whereon the hair groweth, and therefore salt made of those husks or barks, are exceeding good for wounds in the head. The inner woody shell hath the Signature of the Skull, and the little yellow skin, or Peel, that covereth the Kernell, of the hard *Meninga* and *Pia-mater*, which are the thin scarves that envelope the brain. The Kernel hath the very figure of the Brain, and therefore it is very profitable for the Brain, and resists poysons; For if the Kernel be bruised, and moystned with the quintessence of Wine, and laid upon the Crown of the Head, it comforts the brain and head mightily.'

Culpepper says of Walnuts:

'if they' [the leaves] 'be taken with onions, salt, and honey, they help the biting of a mad dog, or the venom or infectious poison of any beast, etc. Caius Pompeius found in the treasury of Mithridates, King of Pontus, when he was overthrown, a scroll of his own handwriting, containing a medicine against any poison or infection; which is this: Take two dry walnuts, and as many good figs, and twenty leaves of rue, bruised and beaten together with two or three corns of salt and twenty juniper berries, which take every morning fasting, preserves from danger of poison, and infection that day it is taken. . . . The kernels, when they grow old, are more oily, and therefore not fit to be eaten, but are then used to heal the wounds of the sinews, gangrenes, and carbuncles. . . . The said kernels being burned, are very astringent . . . being taken in red wine, and stay the falling of the hair, and make it fair, being

anointed with oil and wine. The green husks will do the like, being used in the same manner. . . . A piece of the green husks put into a hollow tooth, eases the pain.'

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RECIPES

'To preserve green Walnuts in Syrup

'Take as many green Walnuts as you please, about the middle of July, try them all with a pin, if it goes easily through them they are fit for your purpose; lay them in Water for nine days, washing and shifting them Morning and Night; then boil them in water until they be a little Soft, lay them to drain; then pierce them through with a Wooden Sciver, and in the hole put a Clove, and in some a bit of Cinnamon, and in some the rind of a Citron Candi'd: then take the weight of your Nuts in Sugar, or a little more; make it into a syrup, in which boil your Nuts (scimming them) till they be tender; then put them up in Gally potts, and cover them close. When you lay them to drain, wipe them with a Course cloth to take off a thin green Skin. They are Cordial and Stomachal.' - (From *The Family Physician*, 'by Geo. Hartman, Phylo Chymist, who liv'd and Travell'd with the Honourable Sir Kenelm Digby, in several parts of Europe the space of Seven Years till he died.')

The next is from a seventeenth-century household MS. Receipt Book inscribed *Madam Susanna Avery, Her Book, May ye 12th, Anno Domini 1688.*

'To Pickel Walnuts Green

'Let your nutts be green as not to have any shell; then run a knitting pin two ways through them; then put them into as much ordinary vinegar as will cover them, and let them stand thirty days, shifting them every too days in ffresh vinegar; then ginger and black peper of each ounce, rochambole two ounces slised, a handfull of bay leaves; put all togeather cold; then wrap up every wall nutt singly in a vine leaf, and put them in putt them into [sic] the ffolloing pickel: for 200 of walnutts take two gallans of the best whit vineager, a pint of the best mustard seed, fore ounces of horse radish, with six lemons sliced with the rin(d)s on, cloves and mace half an ounce, a stone jar, and put the pickel on them, and cork them close up; and they will be ffitt for use in three months, and keep too years.'