

Cedar Leaf Profile

Also known as

Thuja plicata, Thuja occidentalis, Thuja, American Arbor Vitae, Tree Of Life, Bati Mazizi, Eastern Arborvitae, False White Cedar, Hackmatack, Mazi Aghaji Mazi, Northern White Cedar, Po, Umur Aghaji, Western Arbor Vitae, Yellow Cedar, Swamp Cedar, American Arborvitae, Arborvitae, White Cedar, and Canoewood.

Introduction

Cedar is native to North America, and was once used by the Native Americans to create canoes, earning it the title "Canoewood". It was later affectionately nicknamed 'Arbor Vitae', a French term for Tree of Life, after supposedly curing one of Jacques Cartier's men of Scurvy during a 16th century expedition. As a result, Thuja occidentalis was imported to Europe for its medicinal properties, but now is primarily viewed as an ornamental tree. Today, it is mainly used in homeopathy for acute and chronic infections of the upper respiratory tract.

Constituents

Thujone (toxic), pinene, caryophyllene, pinipicrin, tannin, and resin.

Parts Used

Leaves, branch tips, bark, seeds, oil.

Typical Preparations

Tea, incense, in ceremony, in sachets, and as an extract. The leaves have an aromatic flavor and scent, and may be used with caution as a tea. The extract has antibacterial and constricting properties when used externally on skin, and may be a skin irritant.

Summary

Thuja occidentalis is an alterative, anthelmintic, antiinflammatory, antiseptic, aromatic, astringent, diaphoretic, diuretic, emmenagogue, homeopathy, expectorant, and rubefacient. A tea made from the leaves is traditionally used in the treatment of fevers, headaches, colds, coughs, absence of menses, bronchitis, and other respiratory problems. Externally, the leaves are used in steam baths for rheumatism, arthritis, colds, and as a wash for swollen feet, burns, vaginal infections, warts, rheumatism, achy muscles, psoriasis, eczema, venereal warts and sores, bruises, swellings, rheumatic pain, and fungal infections. A tincture of the leaves has been used in the treatment of warts, piles, bed sores, painful joints or muscles, and fungal infections. The leaves are used as a perfume, incense, and an insect repellent. In Chinese medicine, Cedar leaf has been used to stimulate blood circulation. Native American tribes used it to treat fevers, coughs, headaches, swollen hands and rheumatic problems.

Precautions

When used as a dietary agent- Not to be used for extended periods of time, and only to be administered by someone qualified in the appropriate use of this substance. Not to be used while pregnant or during breastfeeding. There are no reported hazards when using it as ceremony, in incense of other household crafted items.