

Pronounced 'wuht', derived from the Old English 'wyr't' meaning plant, medicinal herb with from old stock with ancient roots - if a weed is a plant in the wrong place, then Mugwort it seems is in the wrong time too - historically this curative has been revered and used for over 2000 years as a herbal medicine, a sacred and 'visionary' herb to the Anglo Saxons, known as Mater Herbarium (Mother of Herbs) and one of the nine sacred healing herbs of the medical compilation known as the Lacnunga (Remedies) manuscript kept in the British Museum. Mugwort tops the Nine Herbs Charm, used in incantation when working and mixing herbs:

"Remember thou, Mugwort, what thou declared  
What thou advised at the proclamation of the Gods  
First thou were named, the eldest of worts  
Thou hast might against three and against thirty,  
thou hast might against venom and against that which flies.  
thou hast might against the loathsome that yond the land fareth"

Mugwort can be found on Sheppey, along with other native uncultivated plants, often dubbed weeds, growing naturally in the environment self-seeding on infertile wasteland without help and despite environmental challenges. Part of mighty plant genus Artemisia, whose contemporary medicinal uses include malaria treatment and 'potent and broad anti-cancer properties in cell lines and animal models' (US NIH) Mugwort specifically is also known as an oneirogenic, a substance which produces or enhances dreamlike states of consciousness, containing 'thujone' the active component of absinthe, an "excitatory on the brain (analeptic)...which may produce mood elevation and antidepressant effects."(Richard W. Olsen NIH) Sheppey is home to a large collection of medicinal rare wildflower species such as Stinking Goosefoot, Bulbous Foxtail, Hairy Vetchling, Flixweed, Lesser Calamint, Annual Knawel, Sea Clover, Bithynian Vetch amongst hundreds of other less rare and more commonly known medicinal plants such as Valerian, Milk Thistle, Cuckooflower and White Dead-nettle.

Useful Wildflower resources...

Wildflower researching resource [wildflowerweb.co.uk](http://wildflowerweb.co.uk)

Nature Guide Simon Ginnaw runs tours at Elmley Nature Reserve, Sheppey for Wildflower identification throughout the summer [elmleynaturereserve.co.uk](http://elmleynaturereserve.co.uk)

For best effects in lucid dreaming it is recommended to be drunk as tea at night, burnt as incense or in your pillow case in dried form. 'Smudging' is the ritual tradition used by indigenous American and Canadian peoples by burning one or more medicines gathered from the earth: the medicine is placed in a container - a shell, ceramic/stone

bowl or copper/cast iron pan; a 'smudge ball' made from the dried leaf of the plant and rolled into a small ball for burning; once lit the smoke is pushed forward with a feather or fan. Implicit in the ritual is an understanding that all of life is a ceremony, nothing is excluded - 'when we smudge, we first cleanse our heads, eyes, ears, mouths and bodies. These actions remind us to think good thoughts, see good actions, hear good sounds, speak good words and show the good of who we are.' For best effects in lucid dreaming it is recommended at night, the dried herb can also be put in your pillow case or made into a night time tea.

NB. Never use Mugwort when pregnant as it causes the uterus to contract.