



Natural Health Care for Animals

- acupuncture
- clinical nutrition
- homeopathy
- herbs

Special thanks to this month's supermodel: Chief, the happy hound from Sanctuary One sanctuaryone.org

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Nature's Medicine Chest

by Jeffrey Judkins, DVM
Sanctuary One at Double Oak Farm

In the eight months since relocating from rain-soaked Portland to beautiful southern Oregon, I've had the pleasure of visiting Sanctuary One on several occasions. During a recent walk on the property, amid a sea of powdery blue chicory flowers buzzing with honey bees, I was struck by the sheer "aliveness" of the land here. Not only have the staff and volunteers at Sanctuary One created a beautiful and prolific permaculture-inspired garden, they have also thoughtfully and respectfully nurtured the natural landscape.

As an herbalist, I feel like that proverbial kid in a candy store when strolling the grounds at Sanctuary One. From eight-foot-tall giant mullein to Oregon grape to "lowly" chickweed—a robust variety of medicinal plants thrive on the property. What's more, these plants can be used as medicines for common health conditions in animals here at the farm. Talk about the healing power of the earth—in the most literal sense!

One of the more visually striking medicinal plants found on the property—and throughout southern Oregon—is mullein. It's considered an invasive weed by many folks, so no worries about over-harvesting it! Its thick, velvety leaves contain a mucilaginous sugar that's not only soothing to irritated mucus membranes, but is antibacterial and an expectorant as well. This is a great herb to aid in the treatment of dogs with acute tracheo-bronchitis—commonly known as kennel cough. Put four or five leaves in a quart of water and boil for five minutes, then add a bit of honey. A medium-sized dog can drink a cup or so three times a day. (It can also be added to food if desired.) For horses with allergic bronchitis, add a few dried leaves to the feed daily.

Another plant that thrives here is plantain, also considered a weed by many gardeners, but one with a long history of medicinal use. Plantain is a low-growing green plant with oval, ribbed, short-stemmed leaves. In late summer, it sends up multiple stalks laden with seed heads. (The seeds are used commercially as fiber

laxatives, such as Metamucil.) Crushed leaves rubbed directly on irritated skin will help with a long list of ailments, including rashes, wounds, ulcerations, burns and insect bites. If the bruised leaves are held in place on the affected



Deidre with Mullein

area with a bandage, they act as a poultice, reducing swelling from injuries and possibly even drawing out splinters. A tea made of plantain and oak or blackberry leaves makes a great topical treatment for "hot spots" on dogs, and other inflamed, moist skin lesions in any species. The soothing astringent action of this combo can also be effective when given internally for simple diarrhea.

Animals newly arrived at the care farm may initially suffer emotional stress and anxiety. Luckily, there's a plant found in abundance at Sanctuary One that



Vervain

provides relaxing, calming effects: vervain. It's a common perennial in the mint family that grows up to four feet tall, and has tiny pale lilac flowers. This plant has been valued in many cultures over millennia for a multitude of medicinal uses, but its most common modern use is as a nerve "tonic" for overwrought

emotional states. Put a handful of dried leaves in the feed of a stressed horse or goat, or make a tea to be added to the food of a dog or cat. Add honey if needed—the tea is quite bitter tasting.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once described weeds as plants "whose virtues have not yet been discovered." While this is just a small sampling of the virtuous plants that thrive at Sanctuary One, these three species alone can be quite useful as safe and effective treatments for a wide variety of animal (and human!) health issues.

For information about Sanctuary One, please call 541-899-8627 or visit their website at www.SanctuaryOne.org.

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