

Herbs and Plants of Barsaive

“Being a compilation, in part, never intended to be complete, detailing those miracles of nature that aid us in defending ourselves against the ravages of disease and decay, and especially efficacious against the Horrors. May Jaspree protect all who use the advice contained herein.”

– Klarvik Dom, herbalist to the Court of Throal

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Introduction

Herbs and plants abound in **Barsaive**. During the days of the Scourge, when the use of magic was discouraged, lest it attract the unwelcome attentions of Horrors, medicinal plants were used for many different purposes. Since the ending of the Scourge, these same herbs, and others since discovered, have remained in active use by most of the name-giver races. Not everyone is an adept, and for those who are unable to actively weave threads or bind magics to their true pattern these plants serve as a natural alternative to enhance the user's natural abilities. For more herbs and plants refer to the Earthdawn Survival Guide supplement and the Skypoint & Vivane campaign set.

Terminology

In the descriptions given for herbs and planets following, several terms are actively used. For brevity, these are explained in detail here. Take careful note of the **Method** and **Type** categories. These can quite dramatically affect the way in which the plant is used during game play, particularly combat. Examples and narrative are given *in italics* following the description of the particular herb or plant.

Method

The method of application. Most methods take one combat round (10 seconds to apply). This includes *Spray*, *Ingested*, and *Tincture*. The herb used will take effect on the round following application. Other methods, including *Fumes*, *Applied* and *Poultice*, take (10 minus the applicant's Dexterity step) rounds to apply. The effect will occur in the round following application.

Type

The part of the plant used during the application or to create the lotion/unguent. Gamemaster's may wish to check for damage to the plant during "accidents" or after combat. *Berries*, *Leaves* and *Petals* are particularly prone to damage unless carefully protected. Most herbs and potions come with an appropriate container, included in the weight of each dose.

Availability

The availability factor of the item, expressed as the level of availability and a modifier in parentheses () to be added to the base difficulty number for purchasing one dose of the herb or plant. This modifier is added to the Haggle step, always considered to be 9 (skill rank of 4 plus attribute step of 5), of the merchant to determine whether the item is available or not.

- Reduce the difficulty number by -1, to a maximum of -3, for each day the purchaser is prepared to wait for the goods.
- Reduce the difficulty number by -1, to a maximum of -3, for each additional +10% above the base cost of the goods the purchaser is prepared to pay.
- Increase the difficulty number by +1 for each additional dose of the herb or plant above the first the purchaser wants to buy.

The final result is the difficulty number that must be rolled against by the merchant, with a step of 9 (1D8+1D6). Success indicates the merchant has a quantity of that herb in stock (or at least has it readily available).

Weight

The weight of one dose of the herb, including a container, in pounds. This is for encumbrance purposes. The container is considered to be of a type suitable for the herb in question, and may be nothing more than a simple leather strap tied around the stalk of the plant. The container is assumed to be disposed of after the herb has been used. This makes book-keeping a little easier.

Cost

The cost of one dose of the herb, including a container, in silvers. Depending upon the gamemaster's whims, this should be considered a "base" cost, and does not take into account scarcity or other economic modifiers.

Unusual Herbs and Plants

Angel Breath

[Method: Spray; Type: Petals; Availability: Unusual (+2); Weight: 0.25; Cost: 40]

An aromatic or perfume. When the liquid from the crushed petals is sprayed onto the wearer's body, it adds +1 step to the user's base Charisma step for 2 hours. Also useful for masking disgusting smells (try applying Angel Breath to a piece of cloth wrapped around one's face while venturing into sewers and swamps).

Note: Angel Breath doesn't work on all name-givers. Ork Skorchers, in particular, are immune to the effect of this plant (in fact it may even have the opposite effect).

"I never before noticed your exquisite beauty, my dear. That perfume you wear is truly remarkable." The comment slipped unbidden from the lips of the Theran nobleman as he softly kissed her neck and shoulders.

"Why thank you," she whispered back. "And I've plenty more surprises for you as well." Her fingers tightly clenched the haft of the Basami Dagger as she poised herself for the strike.

Arnica

[Method: Ingested; Type: Leaf; Availability: Unusual (+2); Weight: 0.25; Cost: 10]

Relieves the damage caused by cold or frostbite. Adds +3 steps to the character's base Toughness step for his next Recovery Test made after taking damage from cold-based sources. The character must have taken at least 5 points of cold damage for this herb to be useful.

Cat's Tail

[Method: Fumes; Type: Vine; Availability: Unusual (+2); Weight: 0.5; Cost: 15]

This vine has a decongestant effect. Adds +3 steps to the character's base Toughness step for his next Recovery Test made against damage caused by smoke or water inhalation. The character must have taken at least 5 points of smoke or water damage for this herb to be useful. The fumes from the brewed or charred vine are inhaled, causing any excess smoke or fluids to be expelled as a mucus.

Fidfac

[Method: Ingested; Type: Berries; Availability: Unusual (+2); Weight: 0.25; Cost: 50]

Consuming these berries reduces the effect of fatigue, allowing the character to perform normally without requiring any sleep. One dose of Fidfac is good for counteracting one night's lost sleep. For each additional night after the first, the character must make a Willpower test against a Difficulty number equal to twice the number of nights under the influence of Fidfac.

Failure means the character immediately falls into a deep slumber, and cannot be awakened until 24 hours have passed. In any case, the character must spend at least a number of nights normal sleep without using Fidfac as she has taken doses of the herb, to avoid making this test.

Note: One unfortunate side effect of using this herb is that, as the character has not had 8 hours of "real" sleep, she does not recover her normal quota of Recovery Tests, gaining only a maximum total of one Recovery Test per day until the outstanding sleep has been caught up with. Daily Karma Rituals can still be performed, but with a penalty of -1 Rank for each night of sleep outstanding (this can mean that a character won't be able to perform her Karma Ritual - she is just too tired).

Glisten

[Method: Tincture; Type: Petals; Availability: Unusual (+2); Weight: 0.25; Cost: 20]

Gives the character low-light vision for 15 minutes, equal to that possessed by elves and orks. The use of Glisten causes 1 point of Strain.

Hawk Eye

[Method: Tincture; Type: Stalks; Availability: Unusual (+2); Weight: 0.25; Cost: 25]

Increases the character's vision. Adds +1 step to the character's visual Perception tests for 15 minutes. This includes Perception tests for looking into the astral plane. The use of Hawk Eye causes 1 point of Strain.

Rag Knot

[Method: Ingested; Type: Root; Availability: Unusual (+2); Weight: 0.25; Cost: 30]

When chewed, this root acts as a mild anesthetic. Reduce the step penalty caused by having multiple Wounds (each Wound over the first) by -1 step. This means that Wound penalties accrue from the third Wound taken, instead of the second. The effect of Rag Knot lasts for 4 hours.

Stitch Leaf

[Method: Applied; Type: Leaves; Availability: Unusual (+2); Weight: 0.25; Cost: 25]

When applied to the wound (several Stitch Leaves are often needed for this, and thus they are usually sold in "bunches" of three leaves) the edges of the stitch leaf adhere to the flesh and effectively suture the wound shut, stopping bleeding in the process. The Stitch Leaf needs to remain in place for 15 minutes to gain full effect. Any strenuous activity during this time reopens the wound causing bleeding to start again. The price shown above is for a "bunch" of three Stitch Leaves, constituting one application.

Rare Herbs and Plants

Bretna

[Method: Poultice; Type: Root; Availability: Rare (+5); Weight: 0.5; Cost: 50]

Acts as a coagulant, stopping bleeding almost immediately when applied to a Wound. Further activity on the part of the character does not restart the bleeding again.

Corpse Nut

[Method: Poultice; Type: Nut; Availability: Rare (+5); Weight: 0.5; Cost: 60]

Skin repair. Useful for treating minor or general burns (removes 1 Wound caused from burn or heat damage) or for treating more serious magical effects, such as those caused by damage from an Onion Blood spell, in which case it removes an additional Wound (2 Wounds total).

Fern Plus

[Method: Ingested; Type: Nodules; Availability: Rare (+5); Weight: 0.25; Cost: 150]

When chewed, the nodules act as a stimulant, increasing the character's physical skill and talent test steps by +1 step for 15 minutes. The use of Fern Plus causes 1 point of Strain. After that period, reduce all the character's steps correspondingly by -1 step for 4 hours. Habitual use of Fern Plus causes a flushed look to the character, as if he or she was suffering from circulatory problems.

Grunn Fern

[Method: Fumes; Type: Stems; Availability: Rare (+5); Weight: 0.25; Cost: 90]

When the fumes from a Grunn Fern brew are inhaled, the character recovers more quickly from the effects of nerve damage, such as that caused by the Pain spell, or similar. The fumes also serve to protect the character for 2 hours from additional nerve damage, adding +3 steps to the character's Willpower or talent step for Resistance Tests made against such effects.

Hoag Wort

[Method: Ingested; Type: Berries; Availability: Rare (+5); Weight: 0.25; Cost: 80]

An anesthetic, similar in effect to Rag Knot, but reducing the step penalty by -3 steps for a 4 hour period.

Milkweed

[Method: Poultice; Type: Leaves; Availability: Rare (+5); Weight: 0.5; Cost: 75]

Application of a Milkweed poultice helps recover the damage caused by an extraordinary Wound effect to limbs (arms or legs, but **not** the head), effectively knitting together muscles and bone. Each application removes one such effect from the character.

Sour Dock

[Method: Ingested; Type: Stalks; Availability: Rare (+5); Weight: 0.5; Cost: 110]

Recovers the damage caused by an extraordinary Wound effect to the head, effectively removing the effect of concussion. Each application removes one such effect from the character.

Spik Leaf

[Method: Poultice; Type: Leaves; Availability: Rare (+5); Weight: 0.25; Cost: 90]

When this poultice is smeared over the character's exposed body areas, add +5 steps to the character's Toughness step for Recovery Tests against burn or fire-related damage. Spik Leaf is even good against damage caused from Dragon Breath, or so they say...

Stink More

[Method: Ingested; Type: Root; Availability: Rare (+5); Weight: 0.25; Cost: 125]

A highly effective purgative, killing most natural forms of parasitic infestation, and adding +3 steps to a character's Toughness step for Recovery Tests against damage caused from parasites. It has an unfortunate side-effect in that it causes severe diarrhea in the character for 6 hours, hence its name.

Veil Shift

[Method: Tincture; Type: Stalks; Availability: Rare (+5); Weight: 0.25; Cost: 50]

Allows the character to see into the Astral Plane for 15 minutes as if she had the windling ability of astral sight. The use of Veil shift causes 1 point of Strain.

Very Rare Herbs and Plants

Gensin

[Method: Tincture; Type: Clove; Availability: Very Rare (+9); Weight: 0.25; Cost: 500]

Preserves the body of a dead character in a form of suspended animation. When administered into the facial orifices, ears, nose and throat the distillate prevents the character's True Pattern from breaking up and disappearing. Gensin is good for 6 hours, hopefully long enough for the character to either gain more recovery tests, so that a last chance salve can be administered, or to get assistance from a temple of Garlen.

Additional doses of Gensin can be used on a character, each prolonging the "life" of the character for 6 more hours, to a maximum number of doses equal to the character's base Willpower step. If the character hasn't recovered after that, then her True Pattern breaks up and she is dead.

Endplay

Credits

Design and Development

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Contributions

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Dedication

To my son Nathaniel James Keats with all my love.

Version

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