

## HERB ROBERT

(*Geranium Robertianum*) of the Geraniaceae family

Also known by the names of - Herb Robertianum, St. Robert, Storkbill, Cranesbill, Red Robin, Fox geranium, St. Robert's Wort, Bloodwort, Felonwort, Dragon's blood. This list of common names gives a rather vivid description, of a small plant that I have come to revere, and it is always welcome, in my garden.

**Description** Annual, to 30-40cm, stems branch in many directions, and these stems may turn red, in colour. Green leaves, 6cm long, form opposite, at knotted joints in the stem; leaves are palmate in shape, deeply cut, and often tinged with colours of pink, red or bronze. Stems and leaves are covered with very fine hairs. Very dainty, bright-pink, 'joy giving' flowers, 15mm across, have five, rounded petals. Flowers develop, in groups of 2 or 4, at leaf axils. The base of the blossom quickly fills out, develops into the oval seed receptacle, 17mm long, and when mature, looks like a bird's beak, which is why the plant has been given the common names: 'storkbill' and 'cranesbill'. As the seeds dry off, nature has a way of dispersing: by opening the 'beak' and ejecting with a sudden spring action, flinging the 5 small, oval seeds in five directions, ensuring that there will be future generations of the plant, for mankind's use. I believe this plant should be in every garden, ready for service.



Propagation is by seed. Plants thrive in shady, damp places, growing very quickly, flowering profusely, and self-seeding readily: if the seed is not picked, before it is dry. This week, I had a phone call from a lady in Hobart, Tasmania, who was trying to find out about this plant, growing profusely in the garden, of the property she purchased. She had the plant identified, as herb robert; then her curiosity was aroused when she was given information of its therapeutic uses. I asked her how the herb liked Tasmania's cold winters, and she said, it thrived. How wonderful it is, to know the herb will grow in a wide range of climates. Herb robert grows well in sub-tropical conditions, provided it is given shade in summer. The bush will produce a bounty of leaves, provided it is fed and watered consistently. Regular picking of leaves will encourage more leaves to develop.

In the garden, I have observed that this herb seems to have an affinity with other plants it is near. I have found that no insect pests bother it; this may be due to the plant's constituents or the smell of the leaves. As the smell of the leaves, acts as an insect deterrent, it can be used in animals' bedding. Crushed leaves rubbed on arms and legs, will help deter insects from biting. When leaves are crushed, they always remind me of wild foxes, a smell, which I remember from childhood when growing up on a farm. And it seems others, before me, noted the similarity of the smell too, as indicated in the common name, 'fox geranium'. Do not mistake herb robert with *Geranium maculatum* which also has the common name of **Cranesbill**; native to USA, perennial to 50cm, with rhizomous root, upright stems, deeply indented grey/green leaves and 5-petalled, pink/lavender flowers, considerably larger than herb robert. The roots are used as an infusion for diarrhea, bleeding, and ulcers internally and externally. There is another herb robert 'look-alike', which tends to be of perennial form, has much larger leaves and very red stems, but in my experience, it flowers sparingly and does not produce a lot of leaves to use.

**Constituents:** volatile oil, flavonoids, ellagic, gallic and citric acid, resin, bitters, tannin, geraiine, lignans, albumen, pectin **Vitamins:** A, B, C **Minerals:** calcium, potassium, magnesium, iron, phosphorus, germanium, manganese, sodium **Actions:** antioxidant, antiseptic, astringent, antibiotic, adaptogen, antiviral, styptic, tonic, diuretic, digestive, sedative, anti- diabetic, vulnerary

**Medicinal uses** Herb robert is a supreme, therapeutic herb. Although, very little information is available, on the constituents, this herb's action is one of the most outstanding herbs that we can use regularly as *an enhancer of the immune system*. Research has revealed *herb robert is a source of the antioxidant, germanium*, a valuable element to the body, as it has the ability to make oxygen available to the cells. More oxygen, at cell level, means the body has the opportunity to fight disease by its own powers, and healing can take place, quickly. Lack of oxygen, available to the cells, can be caused by free radicals and a toxic state around the cells: meaning the cells cannot get the required oxygen or the nutrients to regenerate. The area becomes anaerobic, the beginning of pain, disease, wayward cells and cancer. Dr. Otto Warburg, twice Nobel Prize winner, said in 1966, "The prime cause of cancer is lack of oxygenation of the cells". He discovered that riotous, wayward cancer cells could not exist in the presence of abundant oxygen, but only in an anaerobic state. As oxygen plays such an important role in cell health and immune function, using herb robert regularly, can be something very practical we can do, for overall wellbeing. Dr. Kazuhiko Asai who has spent many years researching germanium and is the author of the book 'Miracle Cure Organic Germanium' says, "When there is oxygen deficiency in the immune system, the blood becomes acid and sickness results".

Germanium not only works as an oxygen carrier and catalyst, but also stimulates electrical impulses, at a cellular level, which has a beneficial ripple effect, throughout the whole body. Germanium's remarkable effects on the immune system has been documented in medical journals: as an energy giver, immune builder, and as a powerful therapeutic and preventative, as a vigorous adaptogen, acting to alleviate minor or major health imbalances, including high cholesterol and high blood pressure. As herb robert may act on viscosity of the blood, it is recommended that any person on blood thinning medication, be carefully monitored by their health care provider. Germanium has been called an oxygen catalyst and one of the most powerful free-radical scavengers found in nature, to provide

an antibiotic, antiviral, antioxidant arsenal, and, I believe this is what we experience, when we make herb robert part of our daily lives.

Herb robert contains ellagic acid. Recent research has found that ellagic acid may slow growth of some tumours caused by certain carcinogens, and therefore has been used to fight and prevent cancer. So, we see, herb robert has many actions that can work on our behalf.

Many years ago, someone shared with me an article on herb robert that has given many people new hope for various conditions of the body. The article was written by V. Ferrandiz N.D. Spain, published in 1976 as a news item, in 'Herald of Health', entitled: 'Geranium robertianum, ancient herb used in the treatment for defeating cancer'. The article gave details of how to use the herb, and several case histories. The following three paragraphs are from the article:

*'In this article, I will report on the healings accomplished with a humble herb, St. Robert's Wort or Geranium robertianum. This healing is not a modern invention, within the natural healing arts. The great botanist and teacher, Dioscorides, had already described it. Probably, someone in Portugal had read about his description of the remedial action of Robert Wort against cancer, and knowing about some cases of this terrible disease, started to use this herb or recommend it to the patient's relatives, and so its healing virtues soon spread over the country, which attracted the attention of the media, who began to investigate and collect information from several sources.*

*In February 1953, the 'Natura' magazine printed a letter by P. Friere, an outstanding Portuguese Journalist, stating, "My colleague, Mr. Nunes de Carcalho, reports about his mother-in-law, aged 83 years. She had been afflicted with bowel cancer, confirmed by two doctors and x-rays. They advised that not one but two surgical interventions were deemed extremely essential, but, despite this, the poor old lady possibly would not stand the operation, at her age. Someone told Mr. De Carcalho about a person who knew about a prescription with which she used to cure this disease. The woman prescribed a mixture of powdered leaves of St. Robert's Wort and fresh raw egg yolk. The patient took this and was healed. The plant has astringent, homeostatic and antibiotic action. Shortly after, the wife of the journalist fell ill, and the same doctor who advised the two operations for the old lady, attended her. It was at this time that the doctor discovered that the woman, whom he thought would have been dead, was healed. Then, more information was found about others who had been healed; some, of cancer of the bowel; others, of lung cancer; of breast cancer; and cancer of the uterus. Especially mentioned, was the case of a lady afflicted with intestinal cancer as diagnosed by x-rays and doctors; she was in her last stage of endurance, as the wound was deep and large. Treated with this remedy, herb robertianum, in a few weeks and with some enemas, a total purification was accomplished. To this, the reporter added... it is usual for doctors to doubt their own diagnosis, rather than accept that cancer has been cured by a humble herb.*

*Another woman healed with this herb, was Anna Cruz Caridade, who had inoperable lung cancer, with branches leading to the neck and arms. She heard about the healing virtues of St. Robert's Wort and tried it. Very soon, an improvement ensued and, after a time, was completely healed. Some time later, lumps appeared in her breasts, rib and shoulder and her doctor advised a series of radiotherapy treatments. But she remembered what had*

*happened with the lung cancer, and again, tried the same herbal treatment. Gradually, the nodes started to recede and diminish in size, till they were completely gone'.*

Now, over 25 years since the man shared the article with me, I know of many people who have benefited with this extraordinary herb. People telephone, and say specialists are rather mystified that they can no longer find any trace of cancer on x-rays or tests. Did their doctor make a wrong diagnosis? I prefer to acknowledge that herbs have been given to us for our health and healing.

Adam called to tell me he had been diagnosed with advanced bowel cancer; his doctor had told him to go away and die. He had been told about herb robert, and started taking the herb daily. His cancer is now in remission.

A lady, in Brisbane, was very sick with cancer, but was not told the full extent of her condition. Lee started on a regime of raw foods, herb robert and wheatgrass juice. Sometime later, the doctor admitted her to hospital and put her through many x-rays. Eventually, the doctor told her the reason for all the x-rays. Previous x-rays had shown extensive cancer of the spine and lymph nodes. The new x-rays showed not one sign of cancer. Lee said the doctor gave her 'a bit of unconventional advice... to continue with what you are doing'. Lee said she was using 3 teaspoons of herb robert with raw egg yolk, every morning.

I well remember a lady with cancer of the mouth (she had been a smoker), she heard about herb robert from her sister, who traveled from Brisbane to join in a herb course. She made the herb into an infusion: gargling the warm tea and then swallowing it. The specialist was baffled at her next visit. She now lives in full health.

Recently, a lass rang from Brisbane. She had lumps in her breast. Someone told her about herb robert and she had been taking the herb for about 8 weeks. She said, "I don't know if it is coincidence, but the lumps are going". Perhaps, it is a coincidence; perhaps, it is a miracle. Perhaps, her body was healing with the help of the herb.

Over 10 years ago, I held a herb course for people at Kingaroy. Some time later, a lady who attended the course, rang me to say that her vet had given the verdict: that their aged dog with cancer should be put down. She asked me if it would be worth trying herb robert. I suggested chopping up half a dozen leaves, very finely, and mixing this with the dog's food daily. The dog made a full recovery. She told the vet what she had done. Sometime later, she rang me: to say her vet had rung her, asking what herb she used for her dog, as he had another aged dog with cancer.

Recently, Donna rang for some herb robert, as her dog had a cancerous growth and the vet had only given the dog four weeks to live. She started the dog on the herb. This week, she rang to say that the lump had diminished in size considerably, and that she needed more of the plant.

Val called the Herb Farm, to see what could help her dog that had severe abscesses. I told her about the herb and she started giving her pet a teaspoon of the dried herb mixed with a little water and added to the food each day. She rang back, soon after, to say that the herb robert quickly got rid of the abscesses.



Recently, Mary from North Queensland visited the Herb Farm and was enjoying a holiday on the Sunshine Coast, and a new lease of life. Her life had been marred by lung cancer, but now was free of any sign of it, which Mary believes was due, entirely, to taking herb robert daily for eleven months, and that she will continue to take it.

Audrey wrote, from Sydney, to share that her brother has eliminated a skin cancer on his leg, with herb robert, which he was due to have cut out... "Our doctor was very surprised at the results, and mentioned it to a doctor colleague of hers, who is beginning to show interest in alternative methods".

Some years ago, the local 'Cansurvive' group asked me to speak, at their monthly meeting. Martina had numerous skin cancers; she started eating 5 leaves daily and all her skin cancer disappeared. She told a friend, who did the same, eating 5 leaves a day and, after 6 weeks, had no sign of any skin cancer.

Robyn wrote to me from interstate, saying that drinking the herb had resulted in bladder cancer disappearing, not even leaving a scar.

Recently, Janet excitedly rang to say that, after using herb robert for 3 weeks her tumour count went down, from 29 to 10. Janet now shares herb robert with many people; just simply passing on information that has helped her. She told me how she'd had car trouble, having to stop at a service station, and that she started sharing with the assistant. He knew someone with cancer, so he said he would pass the information on. Janet felt that her car problems were part of a divine plan that took her to the service station, as someone needed to know about the herb. This is what we could call our 'Australian caring spirit' and sharing the best of herb folklore.

Most people, who start on herb robert, immediately experience relief from pain. Some see improvement in conditions very quickly, while others may only experience better health after many months, of using the herb.

Clarissa wrote from interstate to say, "After 2 weeks on the herb, lumps in the breast cannot be detected with ultra sound, so it is within my interest to keep on with the herb".

No person can say any treatment will eliminate cancer or other diseases; however, it is encouraging to read of people who have taken natural remedies to aid the body's natural, innate healing capacity. To my knowledge, no scientific research has been done that shows it can cure any ailment. It does have special properties, like many other herbs, that can help the body to heal. Many factors can play a part in recovery from illness: including diet, exercise, natural herbal remedies, positive attitude, a loving environment, and being able to release stress. Many people have benefited by the herb, or experienced pain relief from various conditions, however this does not mean that everyone will experience full return to health.

Herb robert, has been revered in herbal history for many ailments; these have included... to stimulate a sluggish metabolism; relieve fevers, jaundice, depression, osteoporosis, uterus inflammation, ulcers and other stomach problems, for diarrhea, diabetes, shingles, enteritis, skin conditions, bruises, inflammation impotency, rheumatism and arthritis, gout, hemorrhages, herpes, digestive and cardiac disorders, epilepsy, lethargy, eye and adrenal gland diseases; liver, kidney and bladder ailments; mouth and throat conditions including

mouth ulcers, mucus congestion, catarrh, colds, influenza, asthma, and other respiratory conditions; infectious sores and infectious diseases; hemorrhoids, swollen breasts, painful inflammation around finger and toe nails; and as a blood cleanser, blood builder and body detoxifier.

A friend had a growth forming over her eyes, causing blurred vision. Barb completely cleared the film, and the problem, by bathing her eyes with an infusion of the leaves.

Doreen shared with me, in a letter, her experience with the herb, "I am now bugged with cataracts on both eyes. The left eye was completely blind. So I made a tea of the leaves and mixed aloe vera with this. I wash the eyes out with this mixture, twice a day. After about 3 weeks of this treatment, I am starting to gain a little sight in the left eye, and the right eye has also improved. Thank you for telling me about herb robert".

The herb has come to the rescue, as a gargle, for many people with mouth ulcers, bleeding gums and sore throats. Rub bruised, fresh leaves over the area, or use the herb, made into a tea, as a mouth rinse and gargle. Several diabetics have found using herb robert, regularly, has helped to stabilise blood sugar levels.

Herb robert is used to help clear colitis (inflammation of the colon), a condition which interferes with the normal, wave-like motion of peristalsis, causing cramps, constipation and mucus discharge. Recently, a man shared his experience using the herb; he had suffered with irritable bowel syndrome for several years. A friend told him about herb robert and he started taking it as a tea daily and experienced complete relief after several weeks.

Chronic fatigue has been relieved, for people who start on the herb. Robert shared his experience of herb robert with me. For ten years he had been unable to work, due to sickness, and had been to many doctors and natural therapists. In 1999, he was diagnosed with chronic fatigue. He started taking 4-5 leaves a day and, within a couple of days, his problem of cold feet, which was due to poor circulation, was eliminated. Within a short period of time, he was walking and jogging up to 6 km a day, and life was worth living again. At present he is working over 60 hours a week, but he said he must keep up taking the herb daily, to be free of fatigue. He has shared his experiences, with friends who also suffered with chronic fatigue. One friend had suffered for 24 years, and now, also, has received relief by the daily ritual of eating several leaves of the herb.

It was valued highly as a wound herb, no doubt due to its astringent properties. It was also thought to be a herb capable of mending fractures. In Europe, it is seen growing wild, and has been a traditional herb for cancer: as it was believed to be a dose of natural radiation. In the plant world, a number of plants with red leaves, stems or fruit have been considered to have radiation-like substances, and herb robert is one such plant, as leaves and stems often are red. My herbal mentor, called herb robert '*the radiation plant*'.

Rudolph Breuss, in his book, 'Cancer and Leukemia', gives advice for treatment of cancer and other, seemingly incurable, diseases, saying that: besides the vegetable juice regime, and kidney tea, herb robert is essential, when dealing with all cancers, as it stimulates the kidneys to reject and eliminate poisons. He recommended that a pinch of the herb be steeped in 1 cup of boiled water for 10 minutes and drunk, cold, daily. In one chapter in the book, he wrote on infertility; he recommended, for couples who have had difficulty conceiving that both husband and wife should sip a cup of herb robert daily (made the

same way as for the cancer treatment above). He knows this method is effective, from feedback he has received. In his 'hints for farmers' he recommends a handful of herb robert, mixed with concentrates and a little salt, fed for 3 days to cows, that cannot come into calf.

The astringent action, of leaves and stems of the plant, has been valued from mediaeval times, for healing wounds and to stop bleeding: which gave it the common name, 'bloodwort'. The herb has also been noted as a blood builder. Several people who had been taking it, reported back to me that when having blood tests, the attendant remarked on the bright red colour of the blood, a sign of very healthy haemoglobin. Haemoglobin is a complex compound (of amino acids and iron) which gives the red blood cells their colour, and it is the red blood cells that are the vital vehicle by which oxygen is carried from the lungs to the cells of the body.

For external use, juice from crushed leaves is rubbed on sunspots, rashes, sores; or leaves made as an infusion are used as a wash or a poultice. A hot poultice made of steeped leaves is said to be soothing to bladder pains, neuralgia, bruises, fistulas and persistent skin problems. Besides applying the herb as an infusion in cases of skin cancer (or applying fresh crushed leaves), it is recommended that the herb also be drunk, as a tea. For cancer of the uterus and rectum, as well as drinking the herb as a tea, it is recommended to use the herb as a tepid irrigation, 2-3 times a day, with bougie or enema bag.

Another application of the herb has been as a foot infusion, said to help remove toxins, heavy metals and radiation from the body. This is highly recommended for people who have been subject to many x-rays, or people continually working in the fields of computers, mobile phones, and other electronics, giving off ELF and VLF radiation, infrared and microwave irradiation, and x-rays. To make the **Foot Infusion**: take a handful of chopped herb, place into a bowl (large enough to rest both feet in) pour 4-5 cups of boiling water over it and stir, vigorously. Then add cold water, to adjust heat bearable to place feet in. Sit in a comfy chair with your feet in the bowl for 15 minutes, relax and read your favourite herb book. This is also excellent therapy for tired or aching feet.

The original article I was given stated for cancer treatment, the method of use was to take the leaves and stems of herb robert (either dried and powdered, or finely chopped, fresh leaves) to make a heaped teaspoonful. This was mixed well with a fresh, raw egg-yolk, taken first thing in the morning, on an empty stomach. Raw egg yolk contains the sulphur type amino acid cysteine, which has the ability to be quickly absorbed through the walls of the intestine and carry the herb with it into the blood stream and reach the cells to release its healing properties. Don't be put off by the thought of the raw egg-yolk, as believe me, it is quite palatable. The finer the herb is cut, the easier it is to swallow. The flavour is not unpleasant. If using dried leaf to mix with the egg yolk, the dried can be softened with a very small amount of water before adding egg.

When I experimented, I found approximately 20-25 leaves and stems (10-15cm long) were required to make 1 teaspoonful of finely chopped leaves (number of leaves will depend on size of leaves). To keep up this daily dose, quite a number of plants need to be growing and well established to have sufficient leaves for a daily supply. For people who require a consistent, on-going, supply of leaves, I recommend, that as plants flower and set seed,

that these seeds be handpicked. Seed is mature when the capsule is 2cm long, with the oval seed receptacle being plump and hard, when felt with 2 fingers. Nip off the hard capsules and leave to dry 3-4 days. Sow seeds in a shady spot in pots, or styrofoam vegetable boxes are ideal, as they can accommodate a thick planting of seeds. Cover seed with 5mm of fine soil. Water regularly, so the soil does not dry out. Germination can take from 2-6 weeks (depending on temperature and climatic conditions); and these plants may take 8-12 weeks to be of size to use. Feed plants every 10 days with liquid seaweed or other organic fertilizer.

For people using the herb daily, mixed with raw egg-yolk... it is advisable to get 6 or more large pots, or styrofoam boxes of plants established, and also to maintain an ongoing regime of regular seed planting. It is the consistent, daily, use of the herb that is important, to improve health. Many people eating the herb as fresh leaves, or as fresh or dried leaf tea, have reported improved health from many illnesses. Other people take it daily as a preventative and to strengthen the immune system. When using it as a tea, the suggestion is to drink it hot, 1/2 an hour before breakfast; 1 cup made with 1 teasp. dried herb (or equivalent using fresh leaves, which is approximately 4-5 teasp. of finely chopped fresh) to 1 cup of boiling water, steeped 3-5 minutes. Some people add another cup of boiling water to the dregs mid-morning (some people then even eat the dregs to get everything); and some people make another fresh cup mid-afternoon, thus having 2 full strength cups a day and 2 cups made with the dregs. The tea can be sweetened with honey if desired. Many people just eat the fresh leaves on a meal, or blend the fresh leaves together with vegetable or fruit juices.

As people share with me how they have used the herb and the wonderful benefits they have experienced I am over-awed and inspired. Like the amazing feedback from Anna, who rang to say her husband had bad warts for over 30 years, he started taking herb robert tea daily and after several months all the warts disappeared! Let me share how I use the herb. Each morning, before breakfast, I visit my garden to collect 4-5 leaves and stems of herb robert. Then I pick 5-6 gotu kola leaves, several nasturtium leaves and flowers, a small handful of sheep sorrel and whatever else I feel like adding, which may be a comfrey leaf, watercress, yarrow and lemon balm (if I am planning to have avocado on toast). In the kitchen, the herbs get cut rather coarsely with a knife and heaped over muesli, fenugreek sprouts and kefir; toast, or whatever I may have for breakfast.

Herb robert has always been esteemed for its homeostatic action, the ability to help maintain an environment of physiological, organic stability, even when the body's natural function or condition has been disrupted.

I believe this herb can be a valuable addition to every person's daily wellbeing. Use it as part of cancer treatment, or cancer prevention. In the year 2000, the Australian Bureau of Statistics mortality figures from cancer, showed 35,628 deaths, in a population of less than 20 million. A recent report in the Sunshine Coast Daily Newspaper, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2006 stated that 1 in 3 people are affected by cancer. With this alarmingly high, incidence of cancer in Australia, let's all do what we can, at a personal level, to change these statistics. Share information of the benefits of herb robert with family and friends. If we can all grow and use the healing properties of herb robert, and thereby increase the concentration of oxygen circulating in our bodies; also, our immune system can be strengthened, so that our body can resist disease, and lay the foundation for vitality and wellbeing. It is believed,



that the herb was probably named after the 11<sup>th</sup> Century French saint, Robert Abbot of Molerne, whose medical skills were legendary.

Let's use this herb for our health and healing. *Herb robert... could be called a true saint... for the way it has helped and blessed so many people.*

Written by Isabell Shipard author of [How can I use herbs in my daily life?](#)

Shipards Herb Farm website [herbs-to-use.com](http://herbs-to-use.com)