# Is Dandelion a weed or an amazing healer?

## The contributor this week is

## Anna Rummel Tenenbaum

Anna Rummel Tenenbaum connected deeply with the healing power of plants as a child in the beautiful mountains of Montana.

Since that early period, her interest has grown into her life’s work, passion and expertise.  Anna is a holistic esthetician & herbalist and owner of Apothecary Esthetics, a skincare and wellness studio in the heart of Missoula, Mt. She is trained in multiple skincare, wellness and botanical modalities including herbalism, aromatherapy & Reiki. Anna is passionate about helping others to relax, & to connect with plants as allies.  When Anna is not giving facials & creating custom natural skincare, she enjoys spending time with her four children.

## Dandelion

Taraxacum officinale other Names Common Dandelion, Lion’s Tooth, Priest’s Crown, Pu Gong Ying, Swine’s Snout, Dent de Lion Dandelion

Would it surprise you to learn that sweet dandelion, considered common to most, has been one of man kind’s most valuable botanical through out the ages?

Dandelion Taraxacum officinale is a highly valuable food and herb which is ideal for gently cleansing and supporting the liver and digestive system.

Native to Eurasia, Dandelion has been carried from place to place by humans since before recorded history. Early records of its medicinal use are found in Arabian texts from the ninth century. Dandelion was Highly valued by Egyptians, Greeks and Romans, and has been used in Chinese traditional medicine for

over a thousand years. It is one of the top five herbs used today in TCM
( Traditional Chinese Medicine)

It is likely that the dandelion traveled to North America upon the Mayflower, carried carefully here as a prized medicinal herb. All parts of dandelion are edible and medicinal. The leaves, which may be gathered in early spring, are highest in Vitamin A of all greens. Highly nutritious with slightly bitter flavor, dandelion leaves are a cholagogue.

Cholagogues stimulate bile production, and prime the digestive system. Bile assists in the absorption and break down of dietary fats. This is a wonderful help with our modern diets and a meal of fresh dandelion greens will deeply nourish and help remedy the ill effects of rich and over processed foods.

## Sautéed Dandelion Greens recipe:

3 pound dandelion greens, tough lower stems discarded and leaves cut

crosswise into 2-inch pieces 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil 5 large garlic cloves, smashed

1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon dried hot red-pepper flakes 1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt

## PREPARATION

Cook greens in a 10-to 12-quart pot of boiling salted water (3 tablespoons salt for 8 quarts water), uncovered, until ribs are tender, about 10 minutes. Drain in a colander, then rinse under cold water to stop cooking and drain well, gently

pressing out excess water.

Heat oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium heat until it shimmers, then cook garlic and red-pepper flakes, stirring, until pale golden, about 45 seconds. Increase heat to medium-high, then add greens and sea salt and sauté until coated with oil and heated through, about 4 minutes.

It’s very important that you make certain that your dandelions have not been sprayed with harmful herbicides. Try your hand at foraging and gather them from an unsprayed yard or wild place. Or purchase them organically grow from your local green market.

Embrace dandelion’s bitter flavor as that is part of the key to her medicinal properties. The bitterness stimulates saliva production~ it makes your mouth literally water. The enzymes in your saliva begin the digestive process and kick start the production of digestive enzymes in your stomach. This insures that you will absorb dandelions many minerals and nutrients!

Dandelions are rich in Vitamins A,C,D and B complex as well as minerals such as iron, magnesium, beta-carotene, zinc, potassium, manganese, copper, calcium, boron, silica and choline, of all foods, after cod-liver oil and beef liver phosphorus and the B vitamins, thiamine and riboflavin, and are a good source of protein.How wonderful and supportive for our bodies~ especially helpful forsupporting beautiful skin, hair and nails! Dandelion contains protein too, more than spinach. It has been eaten for thousands of years and used to treatanemia, scurvy, skin problems, blood disorders, and depression. Vogel, and Marei (Hobbs 1985) indicate that dandelion is also rich in micronutrients such as copper, cobalt, zinc, boron, and molybdenum, as well as Vitamin D.

Much of what dandelions purportedly do in promoting good health could result from nutritional richness alone. Vogel considers the sodium in dandelions important in reducing

inflammations of the liver.

Dandelion flowers have such a sweet and cheery disposition, they always make me very happy when they blossom in the early spring sunshine. Dandelion belongs to the Areacea ( Sunflower) family. Dandelions have compound flowers which means that the flowering heads of Dandelions are actually made up of many small ray flowers. Each of what we may think of as a petal are in fact individual flowers! The bees and butterflies love dandelion blossoms, they are a wonderful source of nourishment for our very important pollinator species.

Even though some people shudder to think of inviting dandelion to grow in their lawns, they may be surprised to learn that dandelion actually helps to aerate a grass lawn and brings nutrients and minerals to the plants which it grows near. Dandelion actually helps the grass!

Dandelion flowers can be made into teas and wine, jellies and syrups, infused into oils for sore muscles, and made into an infusion to nourish the skin and cleanse the hair. It is high in vitamin c and has a sweet and sunny flavor. I made a batch of dandelion Jelly this past springtime and it was truly a delight to all those who tasted it. People were so curious to try it and said it tasted of honey and springtime.

## Dandelion Greens Salad

from: http://www.moneycrashers.com

I love eating young dandelion greens fresh in a salad. And really, you can make the salad however you want. I often combine young dandelion greens with other lettuces like spinach for a delicious mix.

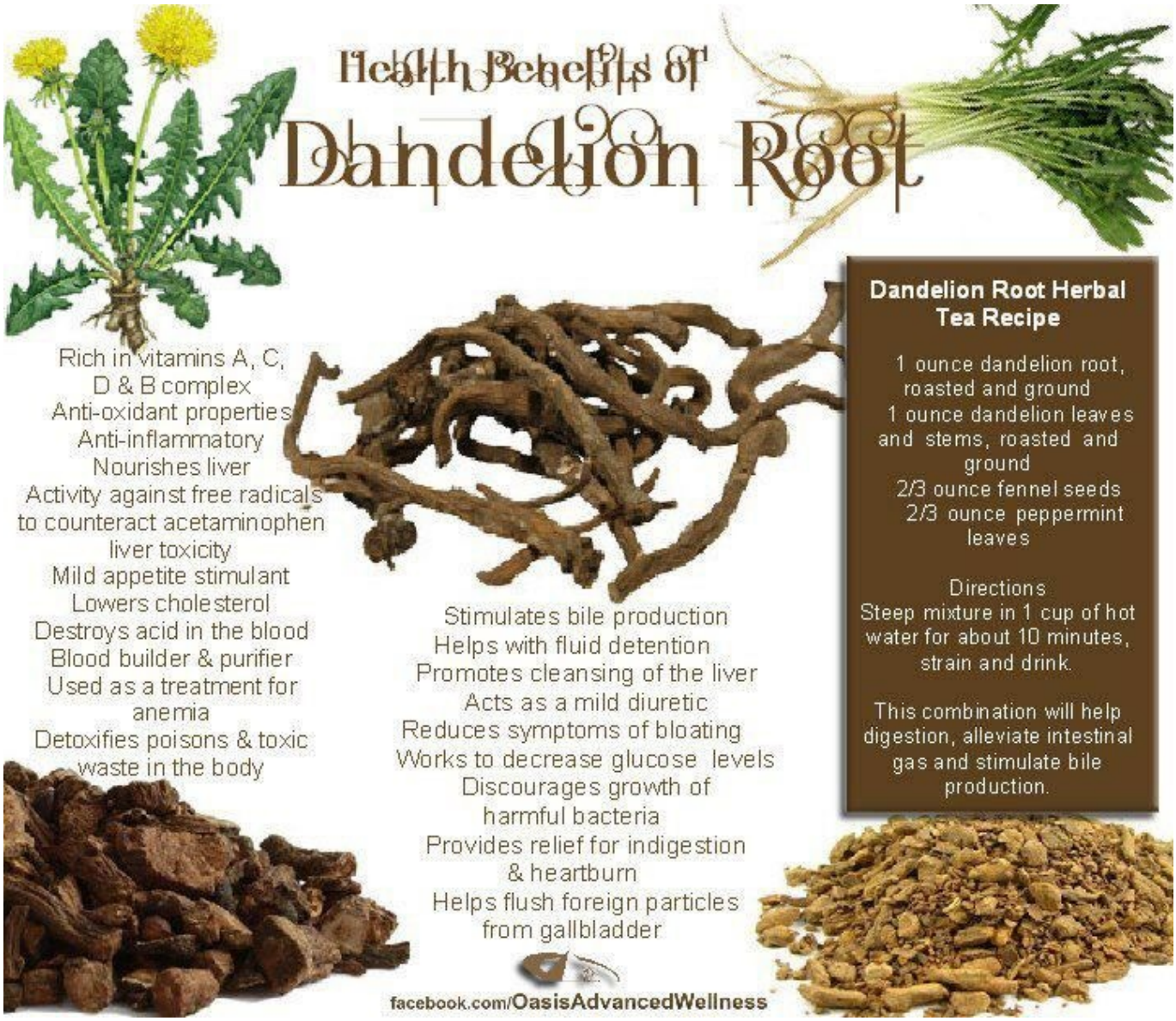
You can also add:

- finely chopped red onion
- fresh basil
- grape tomatoes
- goat cheese
- pears
- walnuts
- apples
- hardboiled eggs

- anything else that sounds delicious!

I always use a basic olive oil and red wine vinegar dressing on my salads (which is cheap and low in calories).

Remember, dandelion greens are best eaten raw before they produce a yellow flower.



Dandelion root is incredibly valuable as a liver tonic. Roasted and dried it makes a wonderful tea, great for digestion, overindulgence and helpful for clearing skin maladies of all sorts. The dandelion has a deep tap root which extends down into the soil and pulls minerals to the surface of the soil. The root itself has the highest concentration of minerals.

I love to gather all parts of the dandelion to make a dandelion compound maceration, also known as a tincture. This extract will, allow you to enjoy dandelions gifts year round. Using the whole plant is the best way to enjoy her gifts.

## Here are directions for making a simple dandelion compound tincture

http://www.holliseaster.com/p/dandelion-tincture/

All the above curative functions, and more, have been attributed to one plant known to everyone, Taraxacum officinale, which means the "Official Remedy for Disorders." We call it the common dandelion. It is so well respected, in fact, that it appears in the U.S. National Formulatory, and in the Pharmacopeias of Hungary, Poland, Switzerland, and the Soviet Union. It is one of the top 6 herbs in the Chinese herbal medicine chest.

Other uses acording to: http://www.altnature.com

## External Uses

The fresh juice of Dandelion is applied externally to fight bacteria and help heal wounds. The plant has an antibacterial action, inhibiting the growth of Staphococcus aureus, pneumococci, meningococci, Bacillus dysenteriae, B. typhi, C. diphtheriae, proteus. The latex contained in the plant sap can be used to remove corns and warts.

## Internal Uses

Dandelion is also used for the treatment of the gall bladder, kidney and urinary disorders, gallstones, jaundice, cirrhosis, hypoglycemia, dyspepsia with constipation, edema associated with high blood pressure and heart weakness, chronic joint and skin complaints, gout, eczema and acne. As a tonic, Dandelion strengthens the kidneys. An infusion of the root encourages the steady elimination of toxins from the body. Dandelion is a powerful diuretic but does not deplete the body of potassium.

Research is revealing that the many constituents of Dandelion including Taraxacin, Taraxacoside, Inulin, Phenolic acids, Sesquiterpene lactones, Triterpenes, Coumarins, Catortenoids and Minerals, mainly Potassium and calcium, are very valuable in curing a number of disorders and Health challenges . Dandelion is traditionally used as a tonic and blood purifier, for constipation, inflammatory skin conditions, joint pain, eczema and liver dysfunction, including liver conditions such as hepatitis and jaundice.

## Other Uses

When placed in a paper bag with unripe fruit, the flowers and leaves of Dandelion release ethylene gas ripening the fruit quickly. A liquid plant food is made from the root and leaves. A dark red dye is obtained from Dandelion root. A cosmetic skin lotion made from the appendages at the base of the leaf blades distilled in water, is used to clear the skin and is effective in fading freckles.

## How to Grow Dandelion

Dandelion is a very easily grown plant, it succeeds in most soils. It becomes quite large when cultivation, the leaves reaching a foot or more in length. Dandelion is often cultivated as an edible salad crop and as a medicinal herb plant.

**Here are some great Dandelion products. Just click the image to purchase.**

## Lollia Dandelion Candle

Let the scent of summer overwhelm your senses with the Lollia Dandelion No. 32 Poetic License Candle.

## Dandelion Root Liquid Extract

# Dandelion Tea

# Capresso Electric Water Kettle

glass mug & infuser