

INFUSE

Week 1 - Introduction



Chickweed (*Stellaria media*)

Gathering
GROUND

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Welcome to Chickweed Month!

I can't wait to share about the magic and medicine of this little cutie.

She may be small, but she's surprisingly powerful!

First we will meet her in a journey. Then we'll get to know more about her physical traits, where she grows, and how to find her.

Stay Stellar,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.



We begin with an introduction to
Chickweed in the following journey...



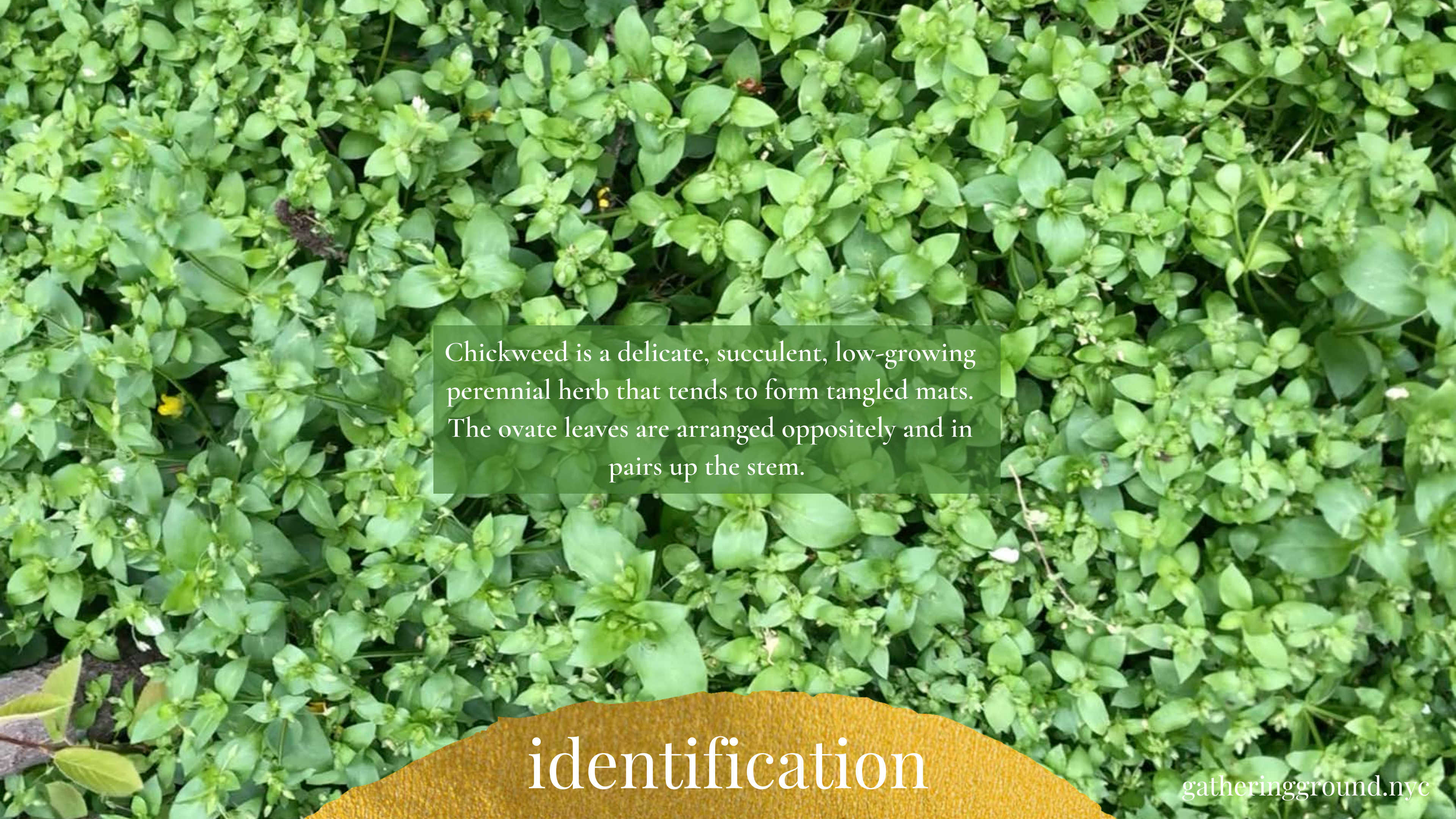
meet Chickweed

etymology

Chickweed gets its common name from the animals who like to eat this little green plant.

Stellaria refers to the "star" shaped flowers, and in the species *Stellaria media*, "media" refers to the medium-sized blooms.





Chickweed is a delicate, succulent, low-growing perennial herb that tends to form tangled mats. The ovate leaves are arranged oppositely and in pairs up the stem.

identification

Running up the side of the stem is a single line of fine hairs that changes direction with each leaf node.

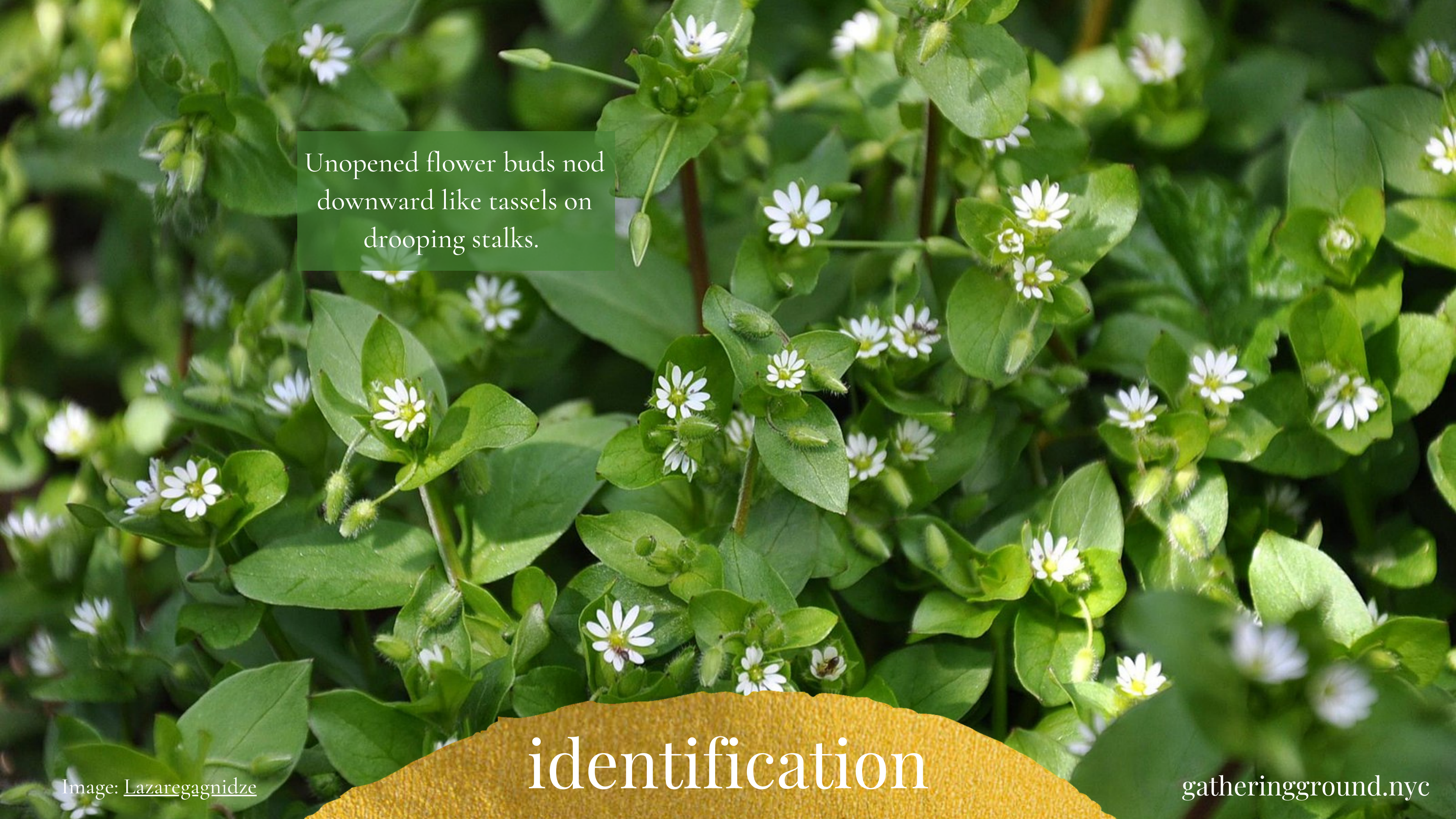
Splitting the stem in half reveals a fine inner thread-like core.

identification

At first glance, the petite, white flowers of Chickweed appear to have ten petals, but upon closer inspection you'll find five deeply divided petals.

Cradling the petals are five hairy green sepals forming a star.

identification

A close-up photograph of a dense patch of green plants. The plants have small, rounded, bright green leaves. Interspersed among the leaves are numerous small, white, daisy-like flowers with yellow centers. Some flowers are fully open, while many are still in the bud stage. The buds are small, green, and have a slightly fuzzy or hairy appearance. The overall scene is a lush, green field of these small plants.

Unopened flower buds nod downward like tassels on drooping stalks.

identification

look alike

There are several species of *Cerastium*—or Mouse-eared Chickweed—which could be mistaken as *Stellaria* Chickweed. The leaves of Mouse-eared Chickweed tend to be narrower, more lance-like, and fuzzier in their appearance.



Image: [Gertjan van Noord](#)

Cerastium fontanum is likely to be most easily mistaken for *S. media*. Both are edible and nutritious, but *Stellaria* is more well known for its medicinal value.



Image: [Dluogs](#)

Chickweed (*S. media*) is a plant in the Caryophyllaceae (Pink or Carnation) family, native to Eurasia and is now found throughout the world - it is one of the most widespread "weeds" out there.

Chickweed grows on almost every continent.

There are somewhere between 90 and 120 species of *Stellaria*.

The species we will focus on is *S. media*.



distribution



invitation

Be humble.

Stay low.

Get close to the earth.

Feel the coolness.

Feel the moisture.

Look for small, pointed, slightly succulent leaves,

Tiny tassel flower buds,

Or diminutive bright white petals looking up at you.

Feel for the singular row of hairs or use a lens to see.

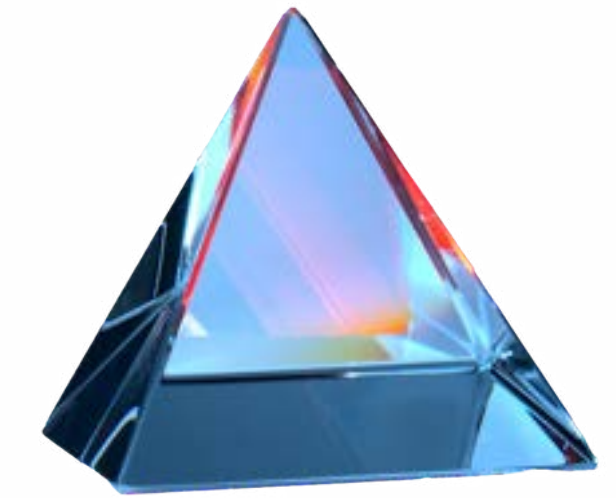
Have you found Chickweed?

honoring

Set up an altar to Chickweed

Here are some suggestions for what to include:

- Stars
- Sparkly things (prisms, crystals)
- Images of chickens or other birds
- A vessel of water
- White or green candle



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Week 2 - Keep it cool

Chickweed (*Stellaria media*)

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It's week 2 of Chickweed month

In the beginning of spring, there is a feeling of coolness and moisture that, along with the increased sunlight, teases the plants to emerge. It is at this time that little weeds like Chickweed begin to peek up out of the soil, seemingly overnight in some cases.

Get outside and get close to the earth. Seek out little niches in the edge, along fence posts, next to logs. Look for Chickweed with a humble eye and you may just be rewarded for your efforts.

Keep it cool,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "L" and a trailing flourish.



Let's go out and find a
Chickweed patch to play in!



meet Chickweed

gatheringground.nyc

cool

Despite the humble nature of this plant ally, she stands out amidst the other "weeds." She has a kind of pep and clarity, her starry eyes – when open – look up at us to catch our attention.

There's a sense of coolness, a calm collectedness of her smooth lines. Her toothless clean edges, crisp defined veins in vibrant green near-succulent leaves, and that straight row of fine hairs that are so characteristic of this plant evoke a sense of order.

Chickweed is, physically and energetically, a cool character.

cool

This coolness translates into her benefits.

Moistening, cooling Chickweed relieves dry, hot conditions tending toward inflammation and obstruction.

Here are just a few of the conditions this plant has been used to treat:

dry, sore throat tending toward hoarseness

dry, irritated cough

mouth sores

inflammation of the intestinal tract

constipation

burns, wounds, rashes, eczema, itching

sore eyes

Though her name speaks of the stars –
and she certainly calls that energy down to Earth –
Chickweed is connected to the moon.

She has an affinity with the waters of the body, and
to the wombspace. Working with Chickweed
brings flow to the uterus. This action combined
with the cleansing power of Chickweed may help
to dissolve fibroids and cysts.



fluidity



Chickweed is also a mild diuretic that helps the body regulate water levels.

An infusion or tincture is also beneficial in cases of cystitis or other urinary tract inflammation, especially when combined with other demulcent, vulnerary, antimicrobial herbs such as Common Mallow (*Malva neglecta*) and Violet (*Viola* species), or cleansing diuretics such as Horsetail (*Equisetum* species).

fluidity

dissolve

Chickweed has a dissolving action on respiratory and digestive congestion. Drinking an infusion or taking the tincture of Chickweed can loosen thick, mucus-heavy coughs and ease intestinal inflammation.

The plant, eaten regularly or taken as an infusion, tincture, juice, or succus can break down fat and clear fatty deposits (including lipomas), lubricate the joints in cases of arthritis or rheumatism, and ease mastitis (inflamed breast tissue).





To make the infusion

One quart: add 1 quart boiling water to 1 cup fresh or 1/4 cup dried aerial parts

One cup: add 1/4 cup fresh or 2 tbsp dried aerial parts

Steep, covered for 20 minutes to 1 hour.

Drink 1 cup up to 3 times per day.

infuse

tincture

To make the tincture, combine:

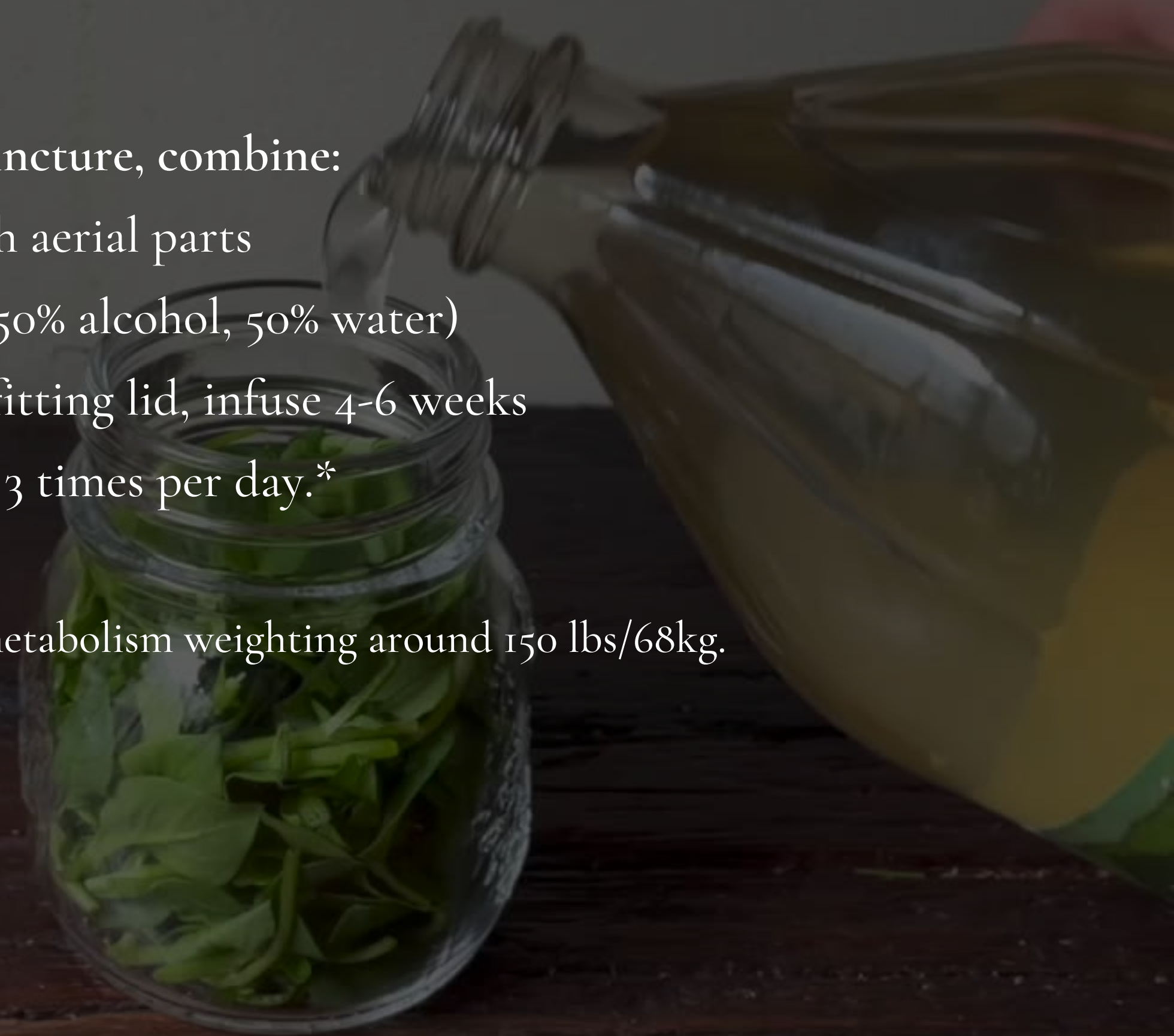
1 part fresh aerial parts

2 parts menstruum (50% alcohol, 50% water)

in a glass jar with tight fitting lid, infuse 4-6 weeks

Take 30 drops 3 times per day.*

*Dosage for a person with a "typical" metabolism weighting around 150 lbs/68kg.



Beloved Let Us Once More Praise The Rain

by Conrad Aiken

Beloved, let us once more praise the rain.

Let us discover some new alphabet,
For this, the often praised; and be ourselves,
The rain, the chickweed, and the burdock leaf,
The green-white privet flower, the spotted stone,
And all that welcomes the rain; the sparrow too,—
Who watches with a hard eye from seclusion,
Beneath the elm-tree bough, till rain is done.

There is an oriole who, upside down,
Hangs at his nest, and flicks an orange wing,—
Under a tree as dead and still as lead;
There is a single leaf, in all this heaven
Of leaves, which rain has loosened from its twig:
The stem breaks, and it falls, but it is caught
Upon a sister leaf, and thus she hangs;
There is an acorn cup, beside a mushroom
Which catches three drops from the stooping cloud.

The timid bee goes back to the hive; the fly
Under the broad leaf of the hollyhock
Perpends stupid with cold; the raindark snail
Surveys the wet world from a watery stone.

And still the syllables of water whisper:
The wheel of cloud whirs slowly: while we wait
In the dark room; and in your heart I find
One silver raindrop,—on a hawthorn leaf,—
Orion in a cobweb, and the World.



What can we offer Chickweed?

It is good to give back to the plants. They are the foundation of our lives – from food and medicine to clothing and shelter.

Here are some offering ideas for Chickweed.

Water

Moonstone

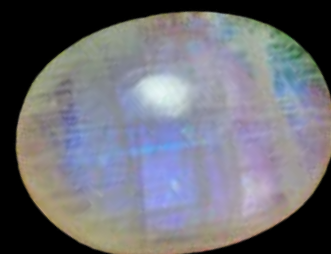
Eggshells

Tobacco

Fragrant herbs

A song

offerings



wildcraft

Always ask permission before harvesting.
Survey the area. Is it safe? Mostly unpolluted?
Know the history of the land.

And when you've received the yes, then you are
ready to harvest with your full attention.

wildcraft

Chickweed is at its peak in spring though you may be able to find some in summer in shaded areas.

For this endeavor, you'll just need your hands and something to collect your bounty in!

Gather the entire aerial portion of the plant. Chickweed can be dried, though it's preferable to use fresh, as a juice or succus, or in tincture.



A daily dose of vinegar infused with Chickweed serves as a nourishing tonic to help the body assimilate nutrients while also breaking down excess fat.

Watch how I infuse the vinegar in the following video.



craft

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Week 3 - Soothe operator

Chickweed (*Stellaria media*)

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It's week 3 of Chickweed

If you've touched Chickweed you'd know of her coolness. If you've crushed her stems or rubbed her leaves between your fingers you would know of her moistening quality.

These traits are part of what make Chickweed appealing as a wound healer and soother of soreness and irritation. In this week's lesson we'll explore the other characteristics that have earned this plant the well-deserved reputation as a healing ally for skin.

Soothingly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz", written in a cursive style.



support

Growing in dense patches or communities, Chickweed gives one the sense that they are supported by many helpers, and the Universe.

This plant is here to support us when we get hurt, when we feel stuck, or when we need nourishment. This week, we'll explore how Chickweed is an ally to help when we feel wounded.

flower essence



According to Pacific Essences, Chickweed flower essence "allows you to acknowledge and experience timelessness, being fully present and able to respond."

This reminds me of the ability to respond when someone needs support in some way - knowing how to be fully present is one of the most important abilities in that moment.



In the following video I'll show you how to make a flower essence with Chickweed.



Seeing stars from a cut you've suffered?
Starry little Chickweed can help!
Anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, styptic and
soothing *Stellaria* is a great ally for minor wounds.



stars

signatures

While it appears that there are 10 petals on this plant, Chickweed has 5 deeply divided petals on each flower. These deeply divided petals are a signature for cuts or bleeding.


The tiny hairs along the stem, and around the leaves and sepals, allude to Chickweed's usefulness for the skin and nervous system.

signatures

The little white flowers also
look to me like little eyes
with big eyelashes.



The Chippewa use a decoction
of Chickweed leaves as a wash
for sore eyes.

A close-up photograph of a chickweed plant, showing its characteristic green, rounded leaves and small, white, daisy-like flowers. The background is a soft-focus field of the same plant. The overall lighting is natural, highlighting the textures of the leaves and petals.


Chickweed is a great herb to use topically. It works well as a wound-healing salve and drawing salve to ease the itching, burning, and/or inflammation of splinters, stings, bug bites, burns, cuts, or dry skin.

skin

poultice

A Chickweed poultice halts bleeding of fresh wounds while providing pain relief and protection against potential infection.

The Haudenosaunee use the plant this way, and with other herbs to treat swellings.

A close-up photograph of chickweed plants, showing vibrant green, rounded leaves and small, light-colored flowers. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

Make Chickweed ice cubes by juicing or blending the herb with water to have on hand for scrapes, burns, and bites.

Use a Chickweed compress or bath to bring relief to inflamed sore, aching joints and menstrual cramps.

juice & 'press

oil

Massage Chickweed-infused oil into breasts, lymphatic tissue, and the abdomen to break up congestion in these areas of the body.

In this video I'll share how to make a Chickweed-infused oil and salve, and a spit poultice application.



craft

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Moerman, Daniel. *Native American Medicinal Plants: An Ethnobotanical Dictionary*. Portland, OR: Timber Press. 2009.

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references

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Week 4 - Nourish

Chickweed (*Stellaria media*)

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Week 4 of Chickweed is here!

Have you ever thought to get down on the ground and eat a little weed like Chickweed?

This humble friend emerges in spring just when we need her nourishment, as our bodies cleanse after the cold weather of winter and early spring. In the Northern Hemisphere, we are gearing up to be more active and preparing for the imminent warmer months.

Let's dig into this cooling and energizing ally, who will help ready us for the seasonal shift.

Deliciously yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.



chick

Chickweed is for the birds!

And I mean that in the best possible way.

We can look to the Chickens who like to nibble this
nourishing weed for inspiration.

The nutrient density of this plant is on par with – and
sometimes exceeds – that of veggies like spinach and kale.



Guess who put the "chick" in Chickweed?

Here are some of the vitamins & minerals that have been found in Chickweed:

vitamins A, D, B complex, C

calcium

potassium

phosphorus

zinc

manganese

copper

iron

silica

nutrients

saponins

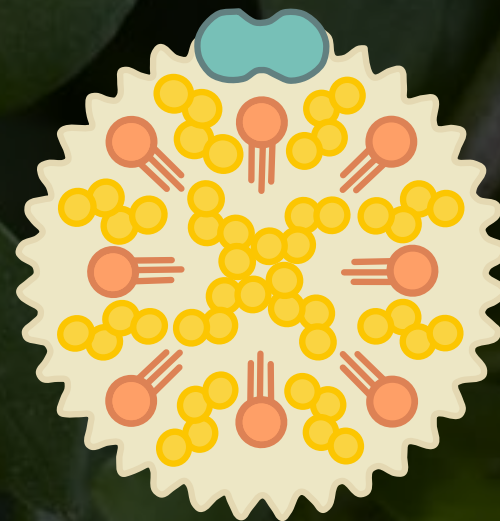
Chickweed isn't just nutrient dense.

Eating this amazing little herb and taking the tincture, vinegar, juice, or infusion aids in the assimilation of nutrients and minerals.

The saponins - or plant soaps - present in the plant help to increase cell membrane permeability to allow for the transport of nutrients through the body.

The saponins are also part of what give Chickweed the ability to dissolve and break down benign tumors and cysts, as well as congestion in the respiratory and digestive tracts.

Chickweed is said to help prevent and treat obesity as well.



nutrients

metabolism

Chickweed is said to help regulate metabolism and in particular has an effect on the thyroid. For those who experience underactive thyroid (hypothyroidism) and are prone to weight gain, Chickweed may be beneficial for bringing balance.

Chickweed can be easily incorporated into a variety of dishes. Chop it up and toss it into spring salads, add it to soups, or put it on sandwiches,

Following are two simple ways to add Chickweed to your meals...



eat the weeds

quesadilla

Let food be thy medicine!

Here is a delicious way to enjoy the benefits of Chickweed - in a quesadilla!

My son loves quesadillas, so it's also an easy way to sneak greens into reluctant veggie-eaters' meals.

It's quick and easy to make. Check it out:



Smoothies are an easy way to pack in a lot of nutrients, and sneak some green into your diet.

Adding Chickweed to smoothies gives us all the nutritional benefits of this little plant, plus the added benefit of improving assimilation of nutrients.

The following recipe is just one variation - you can tailor it to your tastes or nutritional needs!



smoothie

meditation

Nourishment isn't just what we eat - it's also anything we take in to our bodies, minds, and spirits.

In the following meditation, we will tap into what nourishes us, with the help of Chickweed.



disclaimer

The statements herein have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. The recipes and information in this course are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

This course is also not meant to replace medical care. If you are in need of medical assistance, please reach out to a qualified healthcare practitioner.

Wild Abundance. The Glories of Chickweed: Uses, Cultivation, Recipes, and More. Accessed April 12, 2022. Available at:
<https://www.wildabundance.net/blog/the-glories-of-chickweed/>

Neves, Liz. Northeast Medicinal Plants: Identify, Harvest, and Use III Wild Herbs for Health and Wellness. Portland, OR: Timber Press. 2020.



references