

History of Cat's Claw

Cat's Claw is a woody vine that is found in the exotic highlands and jungles of the Amazon rain forest. This rain forest, which spans an area of almost 2.3 million square miles, gives life to more plant and animal species than any other ecosystem in the world. It is estimated that there are between 35,000 and 80,000 different plant species that can be found in this Amazon region. No one knows all the medicinal properties that the flora found in the Amazon rain forest have to offer. This region has provided mankind with a large variety of therapeutic herbs, but its potential has barely been tapped. By conserving and respecting the Peruvian folklore of this region, Cat's Claw was rediscovered. Cat's Claw, which may be one of the Amazon's most impressive health-promoters, has an alkaloid and phytochemical content that may distinguish it as one of the most important herbs of the 21st century.

The bark and roots of this vine have been used throughout history by Peruvian tribes as an invaluable natural medicine. Peruvian tribal folklore often talks of decoctions and teas that are made from the Cat's Claw vine and their ability to cure tumors, soothe arthritis, ease gastric upsets, and boost the immune system. It is considered a sacred botanical by the local Indians, as it grows wild in the highlands of the Peruvian Amazon and South America.

The bark and roots of the vine have been used for generations by Ashanica Indians to treat many health problems that target the immune and digestive systems particularly. Cat's Claw has long been valued by many Peruvian tribes for its treatment for dysentery, with many people speculating that the herb dates back to the time of the ancient Inca.

The vine of the Cat's Claw shrub commonly grows on the foothills and along the river banks of the Amazon. It takes a great deal of time to grow and mature, with more than twenty-years necessary for the plant to reach its full size of over one hundred feet in length. Cat's Claw species usually grow in the regions from the Amazonian Basin in the south to the high jungle areas of Junin. It was named because of the thorns which cover the vine and look very similar to the claws of a cat. These small, hooked spines allow the vine to wind itself up the Peruvian trees so that it can seek more light, as it grows under the immense shade of the forest canopy.

The vine produces a white or yellowish flower that is very fragrant and easily pollinated, and blooms in pairs on opposite sides of the stem. Although the leaves of the vine are attractive and glossy, the claw-like spines effectively keep intruders away, as they have latterly suspended men in mid-air who have gotten caught up on the vine's hooks. Current harvesting of the Cat's Claw vine involves only the bark, as the roots are carefully protected to preserve the plant. It is necessary to remember that many of the plant species that are found in the rain forests of the world must be conserved and protected.

About the Author

More information on Cat's Claw Herb is available at VitaNet ®, LLC Health Food Store. <http://vitanetonline.com/>

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