

MALLOW (COMMON) *Malva sylvestris*, L.
(N.O.: Malvaceae)

Common Name: HIGH MALLOW.

Features: Mallow, popular name of plants of the genus *Malva*, family Malvaceae, including annuals, biennials and perennials. There are about thirty species native to Europe, North Africa and Asia, several of which have been naturalized in North America. *Malva sylvestris* grows abundantly in fields, roadsides, and waste places.

This species is erect or branching, 1-3½ in. high, with rounded heart-shaped leaves; small flowers are pink-veined against purple appearing clustered or single flowering from May to October. The whole plant abounds in mucilage, more especially the root; odour slight; taste sweetish. The fresh dried leaves are put into decoctions; the root may be dried but it is best fresh, if chosen when there are leaves growing from it.

Medicinal Part: The herb.

Solvent: Water.

Bodily Influence: Demulcent, Emollient.

Uses: As with other mucilaginous herbs the properties of *M. sylvestris* are an excellent demulcent in coughs, irritation of the air passages, flux, affections of the kidney and bladder, etc. Pliny wrote: "That anyone taking a spoonful of mallows will be free of disease." Parkinson wrote: "Leaves and roots boiled in wine or water or in both with parsley doth help to open the body for hot agues. Leaves bruised and laid on the eyes with a little honey take away the inflammation from them." The Chinese eat the leaves raw in salad, or boiled as spinach.

Dose: 1 teaspoonful of the herb to 1 cup of boiling water. Drink one or two cupfuls a day. Of the tincture ½-1 fl. dram.

Externally: In inflammatory conditions of the external parts, the bruised herb forms an excellent application, making as it does a natural emollient cataplasm. Our Indians used leaves, soft stems and flowers, steeped and made into a poultice for running sores, boils and swelling.

Russian Experience: *Malva* is known and pronounced in Russia as we do in America. There are several wild species throughout the land. Industry has stimulated cultivation.

Folk Medicine: The medical properties of *Malva* are appreciated in cases of cathartic excess of the stomach and bowels. Also respiratory ailments of the common cold, sore throat, lung congestion, etc. used as a tea, poultice or *Nastoiika* (with vodka). *Malva* contains a large amount of mucilage and sugar, plus Vitamin C, minerals, kerotin and colouring matter.

Industrial: For 1 acre 8-10 lb. of seeds are needed, on an average. The following is estimated after a three-year period: roots 1,000-2,000 lb., leaves 1,000 lb.; seeds 200 lb. Ordinary grain seeding is done during the spring, or transplants from the greenhouse, in which case they yield more from the first year harvest.

Decoctions:

To boil in water

Demulcent: Soothing

Emollient:

Softening-Relaxing

Cataplasm:

*A Soothing Poultice
often Medicated*

Cathartic:

Purgative-Purifying

Emptying of the bowel

A laxative



COMMON MALLOW
Malva sylvestris, L.
(Dr. A. J. Thut, Guelph, Canada)