



Cleavers Juice - A Spring Tonic

Here Anna shows you a couple of ways of bringing the Spring goodness and juice out of this common plant to make a scrumptious Spring tonic. Cleavers (*Galium Aperiene*) or sticky weed comes up in March and you can find the early growth by looking for its tangle of plant matter from its previous year's growth in the hedgerows. If you go to the base of this you will find the new Spring growth sprouting up vibrant and juicy. You can easily break the stalks low to the ground to harvest.

Cleavers

Many have childhood memories of throwing sticky weed at each other and it sticking to clothes. In addition to a Spring tonic, this plant lends itself to making crowns and the previous years growth makes wonderful tinder bundles. You'll notice:

- The narrow leaves are arranged in rosettes or whorls
- The stalks and leaves are covered in little hooked bristles
- They have traditionally been used as a filter or sieve

Ages

All ages

Duration

15 minutes

How To

- Gather cleavers (also known as 'sticky weed')
- Put some cleavers in the jug and add water
- Reserve some cleavers for making a nest-like sieve
- Hold the jug so that it does not tip over whilst you pound the leaves on the bottom of the jug
- After a certain amount of pounding, the water will start to turn green and the plant stops feeling crunchy under the spoon and feels softer
- Pour into cups through the cleavers nest-like sieve

Equipment Needed

- A jug
- A pounder (in this case we use a wooden spoon in the jug)
- Water

Disclaimer: The advice in this guide is considered to be correct at the time of writing, but Red Squirrel Resources accept no liability for actions inspired by these resources.

- Cups
- If children are making their own, they will each need two cups and a stick that they have peeled

Variations

- Give the children 2 cups each
- In one cup they can collect some sticky weed or cleavers and put a bit of water in and then pound using a stick they have carved for the purpose.
- They can make a miniature sieve to pour their potion into the other cup

Teacher Tricks and Tips

- Children really enjoy the juice with a splash of apple juice

Invisible Learning

- Deepening relationship to plants and their gifts
- Deepening relationship to place

Hazards to Highlight

- Ensure it is cleavers that you are foraging
- Forage from a safe place - watch: foraging considerations - safe foraging practice

Risk Assessment Considerations

These are the risk assessment consideration documents to be referred to for this activity.

- Plant Based Activities
- Site risk assessment (specific to your site)

Links

- Safe Foraging Practice
- Respectful Harvest
- Spring Green Pesto
- Nourishing Nettle Tips

Tags

- Foraging, Wild food, Nutrition, Spring, Foraging,