

Chickweed Class



Chickweed



- *Stellaria media*, or better and more commonly known as chickweed, is an annual plant. This plant is a member of the Caryophyllaceae family, and can also be known as common chickweed, chickenwort, winterweed, maruns, caches, star chickweed, satinflower, and even mouse-ear chickweed. The name *stellaria media* derives from Latin. *Stellaria* means “star like”, while *media* means “medium-sized.” Chickweed is native to Europe, however it is a very adaptable plant and can also be found the United States, Iceland, near the Arctic Circle, and even in areas of high altitudes near the equator. Archaeologists have found evidence of chickweed use dating back to the 5th century A.D. Ancient European civilizations used chickweed for food. Did you know that there is an old wives tale that chickweed can be used for obesity?
- Chickweed plants only grow up to about 3 to 8 inches tall, however its branches can grow to a length of about 16 inches long. It has small green oval shaped leaves which are pointed and untoothed. These leaves grow in pairs opposite of each other and can grow to half an inch to one inch long. The stem of the plant actually has little fine hairs that extend the full length of it. The chickweed plant does have flowers that grow on it as well. Its flower are small and white, only growing up to about 1/8 of an inch across and each flower has five petals on it.
- Chickweed can be used in many different products and industries. It can be used for culinary purposes, bath and body products, medicinal purposes, skin care, soap making, and hair care. Common products that can include chickweed are shampoos and conditioners, soaps, ointments, bath teas, lotions, creams, salves, toners, facial masks, and scrubs. Did you know that Scandinavian orchardists use chickweed as ground cover underneath their trees, believing that it will bring them a higher quality fruit?



Growing Conditions

- Chickweed is a highly adaptable plant, which is why it can be found in such diverse environments. It can survive in very cold climates, as well as extremely hot. It can be found in areas with full sun exposure, as well as partially shaded areas. While it is technically an annual plant, because of its adaptability, it can survive very cold winters and may still grow throughout the season. While this plant prefers to grow in moist soil, it can also grow well in dry soil. Chickweed does have a very shallow, fibrous root system and grows out in a thick mat as its stem spread.
- This plant reproduces by seed, when its stems spread over the ground. Each plant can produce anywhere from 2,500 to 15,000 seeds. These seeds are mainly about 1/16 of an inch long and are a dark brown or dull red color. After the parent plant has produced these, the seeds can begin to grow after about five to seven weeks. If the seeds have ripened during warm weather, the plant can start to grow right away. However if the seed has ripened during cold weather, the seed can wait until the spring time before it begins to grow.
- Chickweed can actually harbor some pests and diseases that can affect other plants such as thrips, lygus bugs, cucumber mosaic virus, and also tomato spotted wilt virus.

Uses in Industries



Food

- One of the more common uses for chickweed is for culinary purposes. It can be used as an ingredient for salads, sandwiches, and lasagna. A chickweed pesto can be made and served over pasta, or even used as a dip. It can also be chopped up and served with omelets as well as being cooked like spinach. You can also make a chickweed tea that can be used for different medicinal purposes. Animals can also eat chickweed as well. Birds will eat the seeds and leaves of the plant, as well as cows, pigs, horses, sheep, and rabbits.

Bath and Body Products

- Chickweed can be used for many different industries and products. Besides its many culinary uses, chickweed can also be used for medicinal purposes, skin care, hair care, soaps, and bath and body products. When used for the soap making process, chickweed helps to treat itchy skin and reduce inflammation, as well as working to draw out toxins from your body.
- Common bath and body products that can include chickweed are scrubs, facial masks, toners, shampoos and conditioners, bath teas, salves, ointments, creams, lotions, and soaps.
- For hair care, chickweed helps to soothe the hair and scalp as well as hydrating them. It also brings many needed vitamins to the hair, such as vitamin c.
- Your skin can greatly benefit from chickweed as well. It helps to heal wounds and remove splinters from the skin, as well as treating eczema, minor burns, psoriasis, acne, nettle burns, lesions, and insect bites. It also helps to soothe itchy and dry skin, as well as working as a great treatment for hemorrhoids and varicose veins. Chickweed can even be used as treatment for the rash caused by poison oak and poison ivy, and also treats boils and abscesses.

Uses in Industries

Cont.



Medicinal

- There are many wonderful medicinal benefits to using chickweed. It contains many important vitamins and nutrients that are essential to the body such as niacin, thiamine, saponins, iron, rutin, vitamins B6, B12, C, and D, biotin, choline, carotenes, magnesium, calcium, potassium, phosphorous, and zinc.
- Chickweed tea can be used for a wide range of medicinal purposes. If there is an infected splinter in your finger, putting the finger in chickweed tea will actually help to draw the splinter and the infection out. It can also treat boils as well as eye infections.
- This plant can actually work as a diuretic, and can help to aid in weight loss. It also has many anti-inflammatory properties that can help with arthritis.
- Chickweed contains saponins, which can work as a cleanser for your kidneys, liver, lungs, and skin, and also helps to get rid of congestion.
- It also works as a natural antihistamine and can be used as treatment for many conditions such as constipation, scurvy, rabies, blood disorders, bowel and stomach problems, itching, joint pain, asthma, lung diseases, ulcers, dyspepsia, conjunctivitis, and inflammation.
- Chickweed also helps to combat water retention, bloating, congestive heart failure, and even swollen ankles.
- For women, chickweed can be used to help with menstrual pain. For mothers who have just given birth, chickweed can also be given to help speed up the mothers' recovery and to help milk flow properly.



Other Uses

- In the 17th century, the English physician, Nicholas Culpeper actually credited chickweed as beneficial for “all pains in the body that arise.”
- Nature’s Garden sells [chickweed](#) for external use only. We do not sell it as a food item. The information above talks about how great chickweed is for many industries, however we only sell it for external use. We provide this data for educational purposes only. Nothing in this article is to be construed as medical advice. Please consult your doctor before using this product or any of this information for treatment purposes.
- Are you wondering how to have even more fun with our products? Well be sure to check out all of our awesome [free classes and recipes](#)! You’re sure to come across ones you’ll absolutely love!



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