Herbalism for the Post-Collapse Dystopian Herbal Medicine

Rise of the Hudson Valley Herbalist

The Scenario

1. Due to Planned Parenthood getting shut down by the current administration, a virus escapes into the ecosystem.
2. 'Cat people' have a natural resistance to the disease due to an immune system adaptation from constant exposure to purring.
3. Those affected by the virus become 'zombies' and are rabidly technophobic and pharmaphilic and start destroying all machinery and ingesting any medications they can find.
4. They also crave the flesh of cats (monsters!) and cat people.
5. You are all now cat people
6. The unafflicted (that's you) collect their cats and possessions and move to your reclusive encampment by a well protected lake in the Catskills
7. The virus is known to burn itself out in about 64 months, so the goal is to stay alive for 5.3 years.

Your Place in the Scenario

1. You have been training to be an herbalist for many years before the collapse.
2. You have pilfered the scant amount of the drugs you can find, the majority of medicines are now plant-based.
3. Every day you scour the fields, forests, swamps, lakesides and abandoned lots to procure the plants for your apothecary
4. You are also growing a fledgling garden
5. There is no ammo so you will need to prepare and employ herbal poisons and plant traps to keep the community safe
6. You have been experimenting with various plant combinations to stop the virus in case of zombie bites

Roles of the Herbalist

1. **Apothecary**
   - Set up and maintain an herbal supply
   - Drying and storing herbal products
   - Protecting the apothecary from wild animals (i.e., raccoons, rats), zombies and inclement weather.
2. **Botanist**
   - Botanical identification
   - Knowing which plants are safe, medicinal and potentially dangerous
3. **Emergency response team**
   - Preparation and training for medical emergencies
   - Organize jump bags for run teams
   - The jump bag will contain emergency supplies and both herbal and conventional medicines

4. **Gardener**
    - Growing various medicinal plants and foods
    - This will need to be easily grown in the local environment without any electrical source to grow them or keep them after harvesting
5. **Herbalist**
    - Knowing the medicinal uses of local plants and the ones in the apothecary
    - Taking care of medical needs
    - Differential diagnosis
    - Working with other health care workers
6. **Medicine maker**
    - Preparing various botanical medicines
    - Knowing which mediums best extract the plants
    - Using the ingredients on hand which include water, ethanol (made by the group's distiller), and vinegar
7. **Pharmacist**
    - Working with any remaining drugs
    - When you make trips to the zombified towns, which pharmaceuticals do you consider the most important to gather
    - What are your priority drugs and who will you give them to
8. **Poison and trap maker**
    - Utilizing local toxic plants to ward off zombies
    - Knowing how to make zombie traps from grape vines and other plant materials.
    - Setting up a protected perimeter
9. **Teacher**
    - Teaching community members how to recognize, prepare and use herbal medicine
    - Setting up class schedules for people in different age groups. What would be different when teaching adults, teenagers and young children
10. **Wildcrafter**
    - Gathering plants
    - Knowing which plants to gather as well as poisonous look-alikes
    - Plants will have to be gathered ninja style so you don't get caught by roving zombie bands

Common Health Issues

1. Allergies
2. Asthma
3. Bleeding
4. Broken bones
5. Diarrhea
6. Drug replacements
7. GI disturbance
8. Headaches
9. Infections
10. Insect and animal bites
11. Mental health
12. Pain
13. Rashes
14. Respiratory issues
15. Soft tissue injuries
16. Teeth
17. Ticks
18. Wounds

19. Zombie bites

Treatment Categories

1. Animal care
2. Antibacterials
3. Antidiarrheals
4. Antiinflammatories
5. Antioxidants
6. Antiprotozoals
7. Antiseptics
8. Antivirals
9. Anxiolytics
10. Astringents
11. Diabetic aids
12. Digestive aids
13. Dental aids
14. Drug replacements
15. Hemostats
16. Mental health aids
17. Midwifery aids
18. Pain aids
19. Respiratory aids
20. Vulneraries

Medical Considerations

1. Please Note-this section is not suggesting that these plants could replace pharmaceuticals, the idea is to stimulate thoughts about this topic. Please do not try substituting any medications without knowledgeable advice.
2. An important consideration in this dystopian situation is how to replace pharmaceuticals that would be in short supply or not available
3. Are there plants that can replace medications for serious health conditions such as:
    - Hypertension
    - Heart failure
    - Thyroid conditions
    - Cancer
    - Diabetes
    - Chronic pain

Field Kit and Run Bag (local plants)

1. Antibacterial Tincture (for internal and external use)
    - Achillea millefolium
    - Berberis thunbergii or B. vulgaris
    - Pinus spp resin
    - Quercus species
2. Antiinflammatory Tincture (for internal and external use)
    - Achillea millefolium
    - Betula lenta
    - Hypericum perforatum
    - Populus spp buds, leaves
    - Salix species
    - Stellaria media
11. Bandage Dressing-Large leaves kept slightly moist to apply as a dressing
    - Inula helenium
    - Mosses

- Symphytum officinale
- Verbascum thapsus

12. Charcoal
13. Conifer resins
    - Kept in a metal container to be heated
    - As topical antiseptic as well as holding down dressings
14. Lobelia inflata tincture-as an emergency inhaler
15. Pain Tincture
    - Valeriana officinalis
    - Scutellaria lateriflora
16. Personal medicines (for the runner or patient)

Important Local Plants to Know

Achillea millefolium-Yarrow

1. Main part used-leaf and flower
2. Medicinal categories
   - Antibacterial
   - Antiinflammatory
   - Antimicrobial
   - Antiseptic
   - Bitter
   - Burn wash
   - Diaphoretic
   - Hemostatic
   - Wound healing

Ambrosia artemisiifolia

1. Main part used-leaf
2. Medicinal categories
   - Allergies
   - Antihistamine

Berberis thurberi/B. vulgaris-Barberry

1. Main part used-roots, stem bark, leaf
2. Medicinal categories
   - Antibacterial
   - Antiviral
   - Blood sugar aid
   - Wound remedy

Betula lenta-Black birch

1. Main part used-inner bark
2. Medicinal categories
   - Antiinflammatory
   - Flavoring agent

Conifers
1. Main part used-resin
2. Medicinal categories
   - Antibacterial
   - Wound healing

Eupatorium perfoliatum-Boneset
1. Main part used-Leaf, flower
2. Medicinal categories
   - Antiinflammatory
   - Antiviral

Lobelia inflata-Lobelia
1. Main part used-whole plant
2. Medicinal categories
   - Adjuvant
   - Antispasmodic
   - Asthma aid
   - Headaches
   - Nerve tonic

Quercus spp-Oak
1. Main part used-inner bark
2. Medicinal categories
   - Astringent
   - Wound healing

Salix spp-Willow
1. Main part used-inner bark, leaf
2. Medicinal categories
   - Astringent
   - Wound healing

Scutellaria spp-Skullcap
1. Main part used-whole plant
2. Medicinal categories
   - Pain relief
   - Sleep aid

Solidago/Euthamia-Goldenrod
1. Main part used-leaf, inflorescence
2. Medicinal categories
   - Diuretic
   - Allergies

Local Medicinal Plants and Fungi (native and introduced)

1. Achillea millefolium-Yarrow
2. Acorus calamus-Calamus
3. Horse chestnut-Aesculus hippocastanum
4. Ailanthus altissima-Tree of Heaven
5. Allium schoenoprasum-Chives
6. Allium tricoccum-Leeks
7. Allium vineale-Field garlic
8. Alnus spp-Alder
9. Ambrosia artemisiifolia-Ragweed
10. Anemone spp-Windflower
11. Angelica atropurpurea-Angelica
12. Aralia nudicaulis-Wild sarsparilla
13. Aralia racemosa-Wild sarsparilla
14. Arctium lappa-Burdock
15. Arctium minor-Burdock
16. Artemisia vulgare-Mugwort
17. Asarum canadense-Wild ginger
18. Berberis thunbergii-Barberry
19. Berberis vulgaris-Barberry
20. Betula lenta-Black birch
21. Capsella bursa-pastoris-Shepherd's purse
22. Caulophyllum gigantea-Blue cohosh
23. Cichorium intybus-Chicory
24. Clematis virginiana-Clematis
25. Conifer resins-Conifers
26. Crataegus spp-Hawthorn
27. Daucus carota-Wild carrot
28. Dipsacus fullonum-Teasel
29. Elymus repens-Couch grass
30. Equisetum spp-Horsetail
31. Eutrochium maculatum-Joe pye weed
32. Eupatorium perfoliatum-Boneset
33. Euthamia graminifolia-Goldenrod
34. Fallopia japonica-Japanese knotweed
35. Filipendula ulmaria-Meadowsweet
36. Fragaria spp-Wild strawberry
37. Galium aparine-Cleavers
38. Galium spp.-Bedstraw
39. Ganoderma tsugae-Reishi fungus
40. Gaultheria procumbens-Wintergreen
41. Glechoma hederacea-Gill-over-the-ground
42. Hamamelis virginiana-Witch hazel
43. Heracleum maximum-Cow parsnip
44. Heracleum mantegazzianum-Giant cow parsnip
45. Hericium erinaceus-Lion's mane
46. Hypericum perforatum-St. Johnswort
47. Impatiens spp.-Jewelweed
48. Inula helenium-Elecampane
49. Juniperus virginiana-Eastern red cedar
50. Leonurus cardiaca-Motherwort
51. Lobelia inflata-Lobelia
52. Malva moschata-Musk mallow
53. Malva neglecta-Mallow
54. Menta arvensis-Wild mint
55. Mentha x. piperita-Peppermint
56. Mentha spicata-Spearmint
57. Monotropa uniflora-Ghost pipe
58. Nepeta cataria-Catnip
59. Oenothera spp-Evening primrose
60. Panax quinquefolius-Ginseng
61. Pedicularis canadensis-Lousewort
62. Phytolacca americana-Poke
63. Pinus spp.-Pine
64. Plantago spp.-Plantain
65. Polygonatum spp.-Solomon's seal
66. Populus spp-Poplar
67. Prunella vulgaris-Self heal
68. Prunus serotina-Wild cherry
69. Quercus spp.-Oak
70. Rhamnus cathartica-Buckthorn
71. Rhus typhina-Sumac
72. Rosa spp.-Rose
73. Rubus allegheniensis-Blackberry
74. Rubus idaeus-Raspberry
75. Rumex obtusifolius-Yellow dock
76. Rumex crispus-Yellow dock
77. Salix spp.-Willow
78. Sambucus nigra-Elder
79. Sanguinaria canadensis-Bloodroot

80. Scutellaria galericulata-Marsh skullcap
81. Scutellaria lateriflora-Skullcap
82. Smilax spp.-Greenbrier
83. Solidago spp.-Goldenrod
84. Spiraea spp.-Buckbrush
85. Stellaria media-Chickweed
86. Symphytum officinale-Comfrey
87. Symplocarpus foetidus-Skunk cabbage
88. Taraxacum officinale-Dandelion
89. Trametes versicolor-Turkey tail
90. Trifolium pratense-Red clover
91. Tussilago farfara-Coltsfoot
92. Ulmus rubra-Slippery elm
93. Urtica dioica-Nettles
94. Vaccinium macrocarpon-Cranberry
95. Vaccinium spp-Blueberry
96. Valeriana officinalis-Valerian
97. Verbascum thapsus-Mullein
98. Verbena hastata-Blue vervain
99. Viburnum opulus-Crampbark
100. Vinca minor-Periwinkle
101. Viola spp.-Violet

Medicinal Garden-able Plants

This list covers plants that are easily grown out-of-doors in the Finger Lakes region. It does not include plants that can also be wildcrafted, though it would be helpful to grow many of these as well. These are mainly grown for their medicinal rather than food, value.

1. Avena sativa-Oats
2. Allium spp-Garlic, Chives, Onions
3. Armoracia rusticana-Horseradish
4. Capsicum-Cayenne
5. Calendula officinalis-Calendula
6. Cannabis spp-Marijuana
7. Centella asiatica-Gotu kola
8. Convallaria majalis-Lily-of-the-valley
9. Datura stramonium-Jimsonweed
10. Digitalis purpurea-Foxglove
11. Echinacea purpurea-Echinacea
12. Ginkgo biloba-Ginkgo
13. Humulus lupulus-Hops
14. Melissa officinalis-Lemon balm
15. Opuntia humifusa-Prickly pear cactus
16. Papaver somnifera-Poppy
17. Ricinus communis-Castor bean
18. Silybum marianum-Milk thistle
19. Tanacetum parthenium-Feverfew
20. Trigonella foenum-graecum-Fenugreek
21. Zea mays-Corn

Local Poisonous Plants

1. Ageratina altissima-White snakeroot
2. Cicuta maculata-Water hemlock
3. Datura stramonium-Jimsonweed
4. Heracleum mantegazzianum-Giant cow parsnip
5. Mayapple-Podophyllum peltatum
6. Toxicodendron radicans-Poison ivy
7. Toxicodendron vernix-Poison sumach
8. Veratrum viride-False hellebore

Dystopian Herbalist Role Play Game

1. The group will act as a collective and try to survive in this new altered environment as well as fighting against the zombies

2. There will be a list of roles with short descriptions for each
3. The group will divide up the jobs and give them to either an individual or a group of individuals.
4. Each of the jobs needs to be represented
5. Each person will either be acting individually or as part of a group
6. Each person or group will be responsible for a list that they will share with the class. Examples
    - Gardeners-what they can grow, why they should grow it
    - Apothecary-how to keep the herbs safe and dry
    - Poison specialists-which herbs they will gather and prepare and how they will be used.
7. People can collaborate and work together on the practicalities and implementation of any of the roles.
8. Try to do much of this from memory, as well as collaborating and working with these notes.
9. There is no electricity from any source in this scenario
10. Some items can be scavenged, but not too many and not too elaborate. Be creative.
11. All the plants that are used must be able to be gathered or grown locally
12. If devising contraptions, there needs to be an explanation on how you will gather the parts and how they will be put together.
    - For instance-if building a greenhouse, what materials will you use and where will they come from.