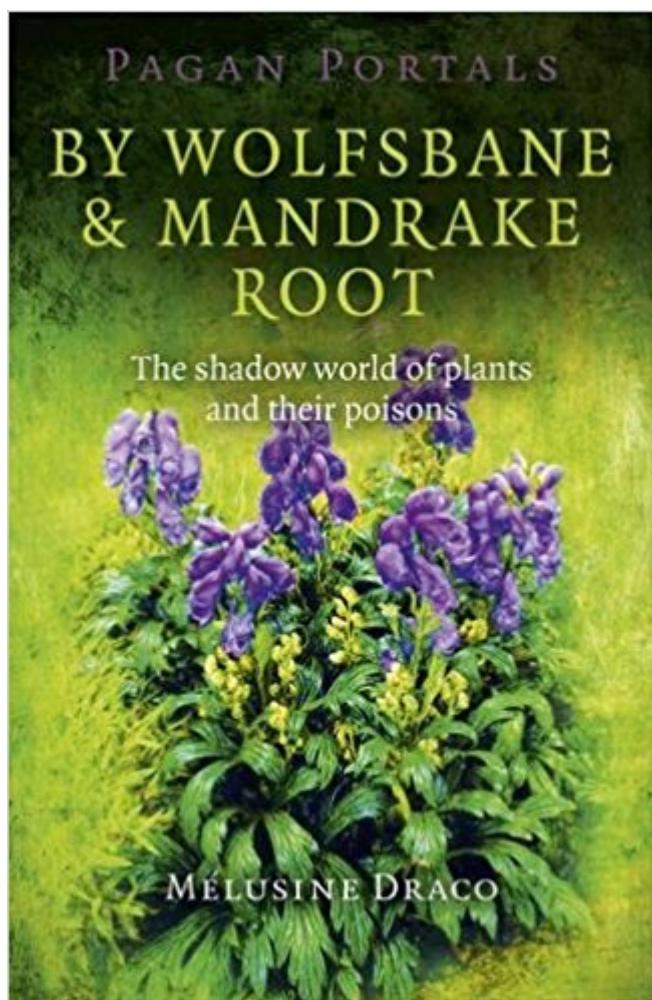


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# Pagan Portals - By Wolfsbane & Mandrake Root: The Shadow World Of Plants And Their Poisons



## Synopsis

A large number of poisonous plants have beneficial uses in both domestic medicine and magic. Needless to say, when utilising a toxic plant in magic, we are adding certain extra deadly or potent energies into the mix and it is inadvisable to start messing about with deadly poisons unless we've made a thorough study of the subject - and not just by glancing at a paragraph in a book on herbal preparations!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Melusine Draco originally trained in the magical arts of traditional British Old Craft with Bob and Miriam Clay-Egerton. She has been a magical and spiritual instructor for over 20 years with Arcanum and the Temple of Khem, and writer of numerous popular books. She now lives in Ireland near the Galtee Mountains.

Awesome little book packed with information on the darker side of the botanical world. It is a short/quick read, but it is a wealth of knowledge. This is VERY old school witchcraft. Not the fluffy bunny, airy-fairy Wicca in the Scott Cunningham/Silver Ravenwolf vein. It seems to have a very British vibe to it, probably because a lot of the plants listed are European and not American. These are NOT plants to be fooled about with lightly, so having this information contained in a small, but well written book is a great find. It is well researched. I have cross and recrossed references and

they check out. This was written by an actual practitioner, not someone who threw together a mish-mash of incorrect information for the sole purpose of making a quick buck on a book. I have been a practitioner for well over forty years and there is plenty of information that was new even for me. This book belongs in every traditional witch's library. Whether you actually ever use the plants listed to not. Who knows, you never know when you might need to make a bitter pill or potion. Lol. I highly recommend this book. Good job!

A lot of information in a little book! Well-researched, packed with historical anecdotes presented in a clear and easy-to-read style. This is the kind of book that gets one excited about going deeper into the subject, even when you already have a good amount of knowledge of poisonous herbs. There are a couple of caveats, however, regarding the scientific names of the plants. When written, the scientific name is italicized, and includes both the genus name and the species epithet, with the genus name being capitalized. None of the plant names had Genus (with capital letter) -- I don't know if this is a modern way the Brits write scientific names, but as a plant biologist I found this annoying, if not incorrect. Also there were some incorrectly spelled plant names, for instance Monkshood should be *Aconitum napellus*, and Pennyroyal should be *Mentha pulegium*. But these are trivial, editorial issues. On the whole, this is a wonderfully entertaining, factual book that will delight any herbalist!

excellent addition to my reference library

Melusine Draco's latest book *By Wolfsbane & Mandrake Root: The Shadow World Of Plants And Their Poisons* is a great introduction into the world of baneful plants. I would recommend it to anyone interested in learning more about this subject. Coming in at only 96 pages, the book is brief and to the point. She starts the book off by giving a fairly thorough introduction into the historical, mythological and fictional worlds of poisons. This section is full of interesting information; from political assassinations, the Gospel of Aradia, Shakespeare, J.K. Rowling, women poisoning their husbands, the flying ointment of witches and much more. As a traditional witch she places emphasis on the connection of poisons with that of witchcraft, sorcery and cunning folk traditions. The second part of the book discusses historical methods of detecting poison and trying to counteract it. The information about how people would use stones to detect poisons was really interesting. Some gemstones were believed to neutralize poisons and were placed on the goblets of Royalty as a protective measure. Other stones were believed to ward off poisoning just by wearing

them or having them on your person. Certain imagery and amulets as well as prayers and incantations were also used to help ward off poisoning. The historical use herbs to combat poisoning is also examined - most being herbs that induce vomiting. The third section of the book is a very well researched encyclopedic list of baneful plants and fungi including every day plants and herbs around us that aren't normally discussed or thought of as such. The magickal uses of these plants are only briefly mentioned afterwards. The last chapter of the book discusses using these plants for cursing or bottling. Melusine has one of the most balanced views I've seen on cursing. She does not dismiss cursing as ethically wrong while placing emphasis on the seriousness of doing so and the magickal coin that such a working may cost the witch in the long run. She also warns that a curse cannot be undone by the one who's cast it. Her preferred method is bottling, which seems to be somewhere between a curse and a binding which she believes can be undone by unbottling the spell itself. She then concludes the book by giving a good number of her bottling spells to stop various forms of harassment, incorporating the use of baneful plants.

What a totally fascinating read, from the history of poisonings to the herbs and such used to do so. Plenty of references to take note of, as well as terminology, stepping back centuries. The Alnwick Castle's Poison Garden in England has long been on my bucket list of must see's and this book has just reinforced that desire tenfold. The chapters are laid out splendidly with history, alphabetical herbs of caution, with effects, properties and magical elements noted, how to avoid them and how to utilize them. I had not heard of "bottling" prior to reading this and as far as curses go, that's the ticket! (Not that I would, mind you!) Plenty of book references for later reading. This is a very concise, well-planned and exceptionally informative book I think is a must for any gardener, if just for the symptoms of poisoning, given so many of these plants are most likely sitting pretty in your own yard.

I loved Wicked Plants! This one was a natural draw! I've always found poison usage interesting from a historical standpoint. It seems so many well known figures in history used poison to get rid of folks who stood in their way! And of course witches were often blamed for using poisons (herb women get blamed for everything!) when some died. Unfair. or maybe not. Doesn't matter, Draco writes a wonderfully informative book on the subject and one I enjoyed reading!

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