

Discover the Flora of Our Campus

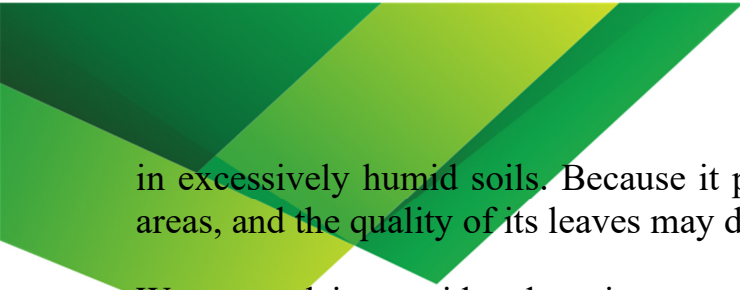
Wormwood

Artemisia is a group of perennial herbs and semi-shrub plants belonging to the Asteraceae (composite) family. Wormwood species are mainly distinguished by their gray-green leaves, strong aroma, and bitter taste. The stems are straight, branched, and persistent. The leaves are finely dissected, giving the plant a distinctive appearance. Depending on the species, the height can range from 20 centimeters to 1.5 meters. The flowers are small, usually yellowish or light green. Fine hairs on the plant help it adapt to arid climates. Its strong smell and essential oil content are the main characteristics that differentiate wormwood from other wild plants.



Wormwood is mainly distributed in dry and semi-arid regions of Asia, Europe, North Africa, and North America. There are hundreds of *Artemisia* species worldwide. In Azerbaijan, various wormwood species are commonly found, especially in the Aran region and semi-desert areas. They grow naturally in steppes, foothills, and dry pastures. Some species can even survive in saline soils and near deserts. Being drought-resistant, wormwood is widespread in regions with limited water resources. As it forms a significant part of the natural vegetation, it dominates the plant cover in many areas.

This plant prefers dry and sunny climates. It grows better in light, sandy, and well-aerated soils. Its ability to survive long periods without rain places it among drought-tolerant plants. A strong root system allows it to absorb water from deep soil layers. Wormwood has a high adaptability to both cold and hot conditions and can thrive in mountainous regions, semi-deserts, and steppes. However, its growth may weaken



in excessively humid soils. Because it prefers sunlight, it grows poorly in shaded areas, and the quality of its leaves may decrease.

Wormwood is considered an important plant for humans and ecology. It helps prevent soil erosion and contributes to maintaining stable soil cover in arid regions. In desert and semi-desert zones, it serves as a source of fodder for animals. Its strong aroma repels certain insects, giving it natural protective properties. Wormwood contains essential oils, bitter compounds, and various biologically active substances, which is why it has been used in traditional medicine since ancient times. It has been applied in various forms to treat digestive problems, loss of appetite, and certain inflammatory conditions. However, excessive use can be harmful to human health, as some species contain potent active compounds.

Artemisia species have various applications. In medicine, especially traditional medicine, they are widely used. Essential oils from some species are extracted and applied in the pharmaceutical and cosmetics industries. In agriculture, certain species are used as natural pest repellents. Some wormwood species are planted decoratively in parks and gardens. Due to its aroma, it is also used in the perfume industry. In arid agriculture, it has some importance as livestock fodder. Modern research continues on the biologically active substances in wormwood.

An interesting fact about wormwood is its long history of use. Historical sources indicate that this plant was used for medicinal purposes thousands of years ago. Some Artemisia species have been used in the preparation of famous medicinal products. Because of its strong aroma, dried wormwood was historically kept to repel insects from living areas. Some cultures considered wormwood sacred and protective. Even in space research, it has been studied as a drought-tolerant plant. Its adaptability to harsh conditions has made it one of the most resilient plants in nature.

