

**Botanic name:** *Fragaria vesca* L. -- Sp. Pl. 1: 494. 1753 [1 May 1753] (IK)

**Common name:** Woodland Strawberry

**Family:** Rosaceae

**Habitat:** Pastures, banks, meadows, forest margins, rocky outcrops, broad-leaved and ridged forests, logging clearings.

**Distribution:** Native to Europe and Asia. Also found in central and Southern America.

**Description:** Perennial herb, with runners up to 2 m long; stems pubescent, with hairs ascending obliquely spreading; leaves arranged in basal rosette, quite long-stalked; blade palmate, with 3 leaflets; leaflets elliptical, wedge-shaped base, toothed margins, both sides smoothly and sparsely haired; corolla regular, white, broad; petals 5, quite round, touching each other or covering each others' edges; calyx 5-lobed; with epicalyx; stamens 20; gynoecium separate, pistils several. Receptacle glabrous. Inflorescence is a lax cyme; fruit long berry, red, juicy, shiny, small achenes

**Phytochemicals:** Tannins (argimonin and pedunculagin), traces of oil, proanthocyanins, flavonoids (quercetin and rutin), phenolic acids (salicylic acid, coffee acid, and chlorogenic acid) (leaves and roots). The fruits contain salicylic acid, invert sugars, and anthocyanin (fragarine).

**Medicinal/Economic Uses:** Berries have been used as an herbal remedy for gout, arthritis, and throat inflammation and kidney disease, improve digestion and act as a general tonic; used cosmetically in skin care creams to restore and strengthen the skin, reduce wrinkles, bleach freckles and relieve sunburns. Fruit juice has been used as a natural treatment for chilblains, and fresh strawberries have been used to remove tartar and discoloration on the teeth. Berries and/or fresh or dried leaves are often used in conjunction with other medicinal herbs in so-called blood-purifying teas. Since the fruits are rich in iron and potassium, they can be a good addition to the diet of those suffering from anaemia. The young leaves can be eaten, either raw or cooked. The leaves of wild strawberries are mildly astringent (contracting), diuretic and are considered to have blood-purifying properties. An herbal tea made from the leaves has been used internally to relief diarrhoea, gastroenteritis, ailments of the urinary tract and haemorrhoids; used as a gargle to relief bad throat, gum inflammation and mouth ulcers (canker sores), and externally to treat minor burns, cuts and scrapes