

Definitions starting with B

Bush Medicine

Modern [DOCTOR MEDICINE](#) was traditionally often difficult to obtain on the more remote Bahamian islands, and it was often prohibitively costly even for those living in and around Nassau. Because of this, people had to rely on the healing properties of native plants in [BUSH MEDICINE](#), a practice that is still widespread despite the advent of the district nurse to replace the traditional [BUSH DOCTOR](#) (or [BUSH MAN](#), [ROOT DOCTOR](#), or [PROFESSOR OF PLANTS](#)) and [GRANNY](#) (or [WISE WOMAN](#)).

The commonest way of preparing such medicine is to boil the plant and then drink the resulting [BUSH TEA](#), e.g. [CERASEE](#) for coughs, [CHICKEN GIZZARD](#) or [DILL SEED](#) for diarrhea, etc. Such infusions could also be used for [BUSH BATHS](#), e.g. [OBEAH BUSH](#) for aching bones or a mixture of [JUMBY](#), [TAMBRAN](#) and [GUINEP](#) for influenza. Other plants are applied externally: a poultice of [GUM-ELEMI](#) leaves is used for insect stings, and the sap of [ALOES](#) (also found in commercial products) is used to soothe skin irritations. The dried flowers of the [POUND-CAKE BUSH](#) are sprinkled on sores; the root of [JOHN DOCTOR](#) is crushed and used to revive someone who has fainted; the [ROCK BUSH](#) is chewed to relieve mouth sores. An infusion of [SHEPHERD NEEDLE](#) can be applied externally for sores or prickly heat, or taken internally for nausea. A man worried about [LOSING HIS NATURE](#) can drink an infusion of [COURAGE BUSH](#), [LOVE VINE](#) or [STIFF COCK](#), usually mixed with rum. Although many such plants are medicinally effective, faith in others is based on folklore on desperation, such as [MATCH-ME-IF-YOU-CAN](#) (a leaf of which is worn in one's shoe for colds), [CHURCH-YARD ROSE](#) (drunk as an infusion for leukemia), or [FOOT GRASS](#) (drunk to protect pregnant women from evil magic). Still, it is hard not to be swayed by such convincing names for plants as [STRONG MAN'S WEED](#), [LIVE-FOREVER](#), or [DEAD-MAN-GET-UP](#), See Higgs 1978.

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