

Animal Aromatics Herbal Factsheet 3

The Herb Mat



Herb mats are a brilliant way of offering herbs to our smaller animal friends. Commonly offered to dogs and cats, smaller animals like rabbits and guinea pigs also enjoy their herbal properties. Herb mats are really easy to set up, enjoyable for your pets, fascinating to watch but beware they can be a bit messy!

We have selected the herbs below primarily for their aromatic properties. Their main aim is to release emotional issues, but like all herbs they can be selected for physical issues too. Herb mats are traditionally dried flowers, leaves, roots, barks and resins, but for added variety and interest we can provide hydrosols (distilled aromatic waters) or essential oils. Simply spray each hydrosol or drop essential oil onto a small piece of cloth (provided) and use along with the dried herbs. The hydrosols and essential oils available are too numerous to list, but if you have any preferences or would like advice choosing suitable aromatics please ask.

*The Animal Aromatic Collection**

- Angelica
- Calendula
- Chamomile (German)
- Chamomile (Roman)
- Frankincense
- Heather
- Helichrysum
- Hop
- Jasmine
- Kelp mix
- Lavender
- Liquorice
- Mimosa
- Mullein flower
- Red clover
- Rose petals
- Rosehip shells
- Sandalwood
- Spearmint
- Valerian
- Violet leaf
- Yarrow

* Herbs are seasonal, and availability may be limited.

'Pick your own' from your garden & spice cupboard

You may have some useful herbs growing in your garden just waiting to be picked and offered fresh in the herb mat. Popular herbs include mint, sage, thyme, lemon balm, cat nip, bay, fennel and verbena. Why not raid your spice cupboard? Popular spices include cinnamon, star anise, cloves and vanilla.

Not sure what to choose? Offer them and see!

Setting up your herb mat.

As with all self-selection choose a quiet time of the day, make sure fresh water is available, your pets are not hungry and you have plenty of time.

Choose a 'mat', carpet or even a clean sheet to place your herbs on. Herb mats can be a bit messy, so don't do this on your best carpet! Pile each herb or aroma infused cloth around your 'mat' and introduce your dog, cat or other small animals to the herbs. It's useful to video their choices and reactions for future reference. Reactions can include sniffing, chewing then spitting out, licking, ingesting or rolling various parts of the body in the aromatics. Some even run off with a sample to their beds. After the session, your pets may be very sleepy, want to be alone or show other emotional changes. Please leave time and space for this to happen.



Left: Cinnamon sticks are a popular choice to chew. In this case he spat out the bark and didn't eat it.



Right: Rolling and falling asleep on rosehip shells.