

## *Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian*

### **Weeds, weeds, and more weeds**



**After the wind, the camellia blooms carpet the ground and must be removed.**

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Carolina geranium (*Geranium carolinianum*), also known as cranesbill because of its profusion of half-inch beaks after flowering, is a very dainty and pretty weed when it is young. The palmate leaves are lacy, fern-like, with hairy petiole stalks and tiny five-petaled pink flowers.

For the first month, after it sprouts, it resembles a ground cover. As the weather warms, it seeks the sunlight while branching out two feet or more. The seed has a hard core which allows it to withstand a long dormancy in the soil. Carolina geranium is not edible, but its roots, considered anti-bacterial, anti-fungal and astringent, are used as an external medicinal herb to stop bleeding and as a gargle for sore throats. Hand pulling while it is still young is the best control method.

Black medic (*Medicago lupulina*), also known as yellow trefoil or hop medic, is a broadleaf plant that looks like clover with yellow flowers. It establishes itself in areas that have endured drought, in disturbed soils, or those in need of increased irrigation. As a legume, it fixes its own nitrogen which helps it to overcome lawn grasses in nutrient-poor soils. When the flowers mature, they form a black seedpod which lends itself to the name. A friend of mine informed me about its nutritional value as an herb. In Mexico, black medic is highly desired as an edible green and is expensive to buy.

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**The pretty palmate leaves and pink buds of Carolina geranium weed look like a ground cover.**



**The hillside is a bit barren after the weeds have been pulled.**