

# VELVET ANTLER:

## A DECADE OF COLLECTING RESOURCES ON A 2000-YEAR-OLD REMEDY

by Diana Susen

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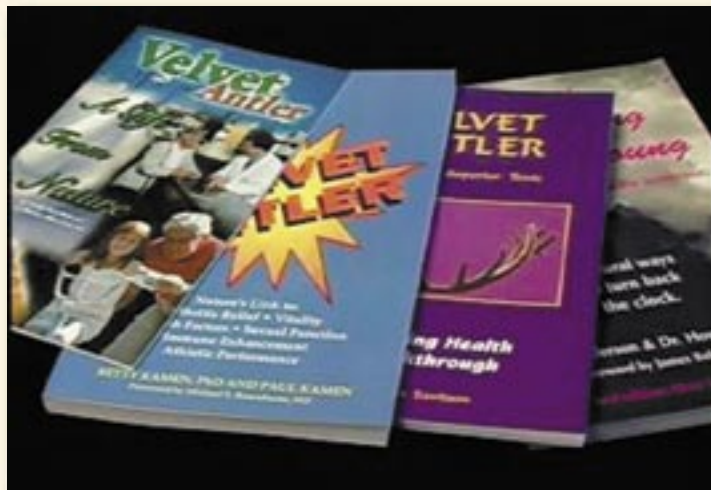
In 1996 there was not much talk about velvet antler. It had gone virtually unnoticed in the U.S. nutritional supplement market, but today research and clinical trials have substantiated its use.

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This unique natural product is known throughout the world and recognized by specific names. In China, it's known as "lu rong" — the first documented evidence of use was found on a silk scroll recovered from a Han tomb in Hunan province during the Hun Dynasty 206BC—220 AD. Velvet antler is said to be the most significant ingredient in Chinese medicine next to ginseng. In Korea, it's called "nok young" — used as an herbal medicine to maintain good health and strengthen a weakened body. In Russia, it's called "pantui" — used since the fifteenth century; users that now include Soviet Union Olympic athletes. In North America, it's simply called velvet antler — taken for maintaining healthy joints, promoting immune functions, strength, endurance and anti-aging.

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published his book *The Benefits of Velvet Antler* and released his second printing called *Velvet Deer Antler: The Ultimate Anti-aging Supplement* in the year 2000. A research microbiologist with a doctorate in Optometry, and a Ph.D. in Nutrition, Dr. Duarte has written over a dozen best selling health books. In the latest edition of his book, Duarte covers the historic use of velvet antler by athletes and states "the IGF-1 (Insulin Growth Factor) derived from velvet antler may be the answer

that all bodybuilders and our senior citizens have been looking for; an answer that may even promote greater health and extend life."

One of the most comprehensive single authored books to date on velvet antler was published by Nutrition Encounter in 1999. In the fifty-two page book, *The Remarkable Healing Power of Velvet Antler*, Betty Kamen PhD and Paul Kamen share the facts and scientific research on velvet antler they have collected. A well known columnist for health news publications, Betty holds a MA in psychology and PhD in nutrition. Her son, Paul, a naval architect by trade, is a contributing writer for magazines. Their book defines the components in velvet antler and explores the reason velvet antler is so special. To help explain the use of velvet antler as a nutritional supplement for joints, this book gives the reader excellent details about arthritis and states, "Velvet antler may be one of the missing elements in the modern diet that has allowed such a tragic loss to our collective health."

In 1999, *Velvet Antler: A Literature*

Review, written by Helen J. Batchelder, was released. As an editor of several herbal publications, Ms. Batchelder's knowledge of botanicals and the need for the public to understand their efficacy prompted her to include a complete catalog of citations regarding velvet antler in her booklet. Among the summary of biochemical effects of velvet antler included is the suggestion that peptide growth factors, such as epidermal growth factor (EGF), may have a role in wound healing and may be useful in the estrogen replacement therapies, since EGF supplants estrogen in genital tract development.

The 1999 publishing of the book *The Secrets of Staying Young*, written by Nina Anderson and Dr. Howard Peiper focuses on natural ways to turn back the clock. Anderson is a nationally acclaimed researcher specializing in preventive medicine and Peiper, a Naturopath O.D., has written various books on health. This book touches briefly on the effect velvet antler plays in converting cholesterol to testosterone.

In 2000, three pieces dedicated solely to velvet antler were published. The first was authored by Alison Davidson with the help of Dr. Helen Zhou, a doctor of traditional Chinese medicine. Alison, a journalist, editor, author and video producer in the health field, called her book *Velvet Antler, Nature's Superior Tonic*. This 80 page paperback was written to serve as an introduction to this ancient and powerful remedy. This book briefly covers antler velvet's history and tradition of use, the scientific research that supports these traditional claims, together with examples of velvet's well-documented therapeutic benefits. Allison calls velvet antler "An amazing health breakthrough."

The 2000 edition of *Velvet Antler, A*

*Gift From Nature*, and second reprint in 2001 has made this 28 page booklet one of the most published pieces on velvet antler. Written by two Canadian women, Dietary Technologist Cindy Ewashkiw and Registered Nurse Marion Allen, this booklet is informative, yet an easy to understand health guide on velvet antler. Included are the biologic and therapeutic effect of velvet antler in animals

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and humans. Among the research cited is the 'Chemical Characterization of Growing Antlers from Wapiti' from the University of Alberta in Edmonton.

A small but powerful pamphlet, *Velvet Antler: Science Substantiates New Hope for Arthritis Sufferers*, authored by P.S. McNeary, was made available through NAEBA in 2000. Two compelling messages stated here are: "velvet antler could be the most significant breakthrough for arthritis sufferers in the world today." And "velvet antler contains an amazingly comprehensive nutritional profile including collagen, amino acids, essential fatty acids, minerals, trace minerals, and other functional proteins, all vital components for human metabolic function."

Lastly, the most prestigious book, *Antler Science and Product Technology* is the proceedings from the International Symposium on Antler Science and

Product Technology held in Banff, Canada in April 2000. This 473-page book published by the Antler Science and Product Technology Research Centre in 2001 contains antler biology, chemistry, clinical and medical studies, as well as special lectures from this all-important gathering of researchers from around the world. This book was edited by a group of well-known researchers on the subject of velvet antler including J.S. Sim, H.H. Sunwoo, R.J. Hudson, and B.T. Jeon. This book has been an essential tool in building a scientific foundation for the traditional nutraceutical uses of antler.

As 2006 comes to a close and a look back at the last 10 years, it is clear that these books and publications on velvet antler have played an important role in educating the public about this marvelous supplement. This once "secret"

and mysterious substance is no longer a stranger to the anti-aging and health industries. The continued research studies and anecdotal evidence continue to be paramount in substantiating the claims of today and matching them with their historic use.

Modern science is proving what the ancients knew long ago

— velvet antler can be used to support good health.

**Editor's note:** Diana Susen, along with her husband Bob, own Meadow Creek Elk Farms in West Bend, Wis. Meadow Creek is celebrating their tenth year in the elk business. Since 1996 they have been sourcing velvet antler powder to nutraceutical markets and selling velvet antler capsules on their Internet store. All books and booklets included in this article are available on their web site [www.elkantlers.com](http://www.elkantlers.com).