



the Herbal Thymes



June/July 2009

www.newhsa.org

Year 10

Post Office Box 277 - Seymour WI 54165



HERB OF THE YEAR Bay Trivia

Wood was used to give an aromatic tang to smoked foods.

Widely cultivated in many areas of the world.

If wintering in temperatures 35-60F, it will go dormant and does not require much light and little water. If wintering in warmer rooms, give as much sun as possible and provide adequate water.

While tolerant of most conditions, do not let it dry out completely.



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Meeting Minutes Will be Emailed by Secretary

From the Chair - Yvonne

It has been a very busy several months for me with organizing the Herb Fest, planning and planting in our herb beds, the Garden Faire, and helping to plan the schedule for the Scots' visit. Not to mention trying to get my house and yard ready for the summer. I imagine you are all feeling the same, it is a busy time of year. With the beautiful weather lately working outside is a pleasure!

I want to THANK everyone who participated in all our club activities. We have been very active in the community with Herb Fest, planting and maintaining herb beds at GBBG and Heritage Hill, Garden Faire, and the Faerie Fest. We can be very proud of all our accomplishments.

Many of our recent activities have attracted much interest and we acquired some new members, Marlene Garvey, Nancy Helbick, and Judith Laskowski. Welcome to these ladies, who have already volunteered with the club activities.

We can now look forward to the Scottish sister club visit at the end of August. I have been in contact with my house visitor, Patty Hope. She and her husband Malcolm are looking forward to their Wisconsin visit with great anticipation. I hope many of you plan to come to some of the events we have scheduled for them, it will be so nice for the Scots to meet all of you.

Arca Max Gardening Tips

Moldy Strawberries: Gray mold (Botrytis) rears its ugly head in cool, humid conditions (including places like your refrigerator). The spores are everywhere, but they only attack damaged or dead tissues, such as those of your bruised and soggy berries. If you can somehow prop up the berry branches to keep them off the ground, not touching each other, and where the breeze

can keep them relatively dry, you'll have better luck.

Many growers use a thick layer of straw mulch to keep the berries from touching the ground. Remove infected, bruised or otherwise damaged berries to further deter it from spreading. It may be too wet to try this now, but you can take steps to keep this from happening in the future by

dosing your plants with **compost tea**. Beneficial organisms in compost fight off fungal spores and the nutrients boost plant health. Here's how scientists brew it when conducting experiments:

1. Mix one part mature compost that includes some rotted manure (horse, cow or chicken) with five parts water. (Make sure that the material is fully composted, so potential pathogens associated with manures will be killed.)
2. Allow the mixture to sit and ferment in the shade for 10 to 14 days.
3. Filter the mixture through cheesecloth to remove chunks. The stuff can smell pretty bad, so don't do this in your kitchen!
4. If you must dilute it to stretch the batch, don't dilute by more than half.
5. Spray or coat upper and lower plant surfaces. Repeat every 2 to 3 weeks.

Thin carrot seedlings as they emerge so new plants won't compete for moisture and nutrients. Thin the first time so leaves do not touch. In a few weeks, thin a final time so carrots are 4 inches apart.

Rejuvenating Lavender

Question: I have had a beautiful lavender shrub for about ten years now. Over the past few years, it seems to have flattened and spread out (perhaps from snow?) Now many of the woody branches are laying on the ground and seem to have rooted along their length. Is there anything I can do to bring it back to its original shrubby form? Can I dig up the branches where they appear to have rooted to form new plants?

Answer: Lavender is almost a woody shrub,

especially as it gets older. From your description it sounds as though you might be able to layer the branches that are so close to the ground by heaping a bit of compost and soil over top of the part that is touching the ground and thus encouraging it to root. Otherwise, tip cuttings root fairly easily in dampened soilless mix or sand.

In terms of pruning, cutting into the oldest wood can shock the plant and kill it. A light pruning of the new growth now in late spring will encourage the subsequent growth to be dense and bushy and thus cover up the old bare stems.

Regular pruning can help the plant look better over time--a trim or shearing in late spring along with removal of any winterkill, followed by a shearing after each bloom flush should help keep plenty of vigorous new growth coming in. It sounds as though your plant may simply be showing its age and could be replaced.

Grow Container Eggplants

Growing eggplant in 12-inch wide containers filled with potting soil allows you to reduce the chance of eggplants being killed by wilt disease and let's you place the plant in the sunniest location

Control Spittlebugs

If you notice white "spit" on stems of your succulent flowers such as daisies, then you have spittlebugs. A few bugs won't harm the plant, but if you have many spray insecticidal soap on them.



GREETINGS FROM PERTHSHIRE SCOTLAND

We are enjoying hot summer weather like we haven't had for years. The local farmers are delighted and are already cutting their silage.

Herbs in my garden are thriving and have provided me with a glorious display of colour, scent and foliage. It feels good just to look at it!

Our herb group meetings are finished for the summer and start again in October. To end the season we visited Cawdor Castle dating back to 1398 near Inverness in the north of Scotland. Cawdor is supposed to be the most romantic castle in Scotland and it is certainly a delightful place to visit. Over the centuries it has undergone several refurbishments and is now lived in by the

Dowager Countess of Cawdor for 6 months of the year when it is not open to visitors. It has a much loved homey feel about it with many treasures and personal items on show. The gardens are a delight with great herbaceous borders, a maze and a Laburnum walk under planted with Bluebells; both were in full bloom when we were there.

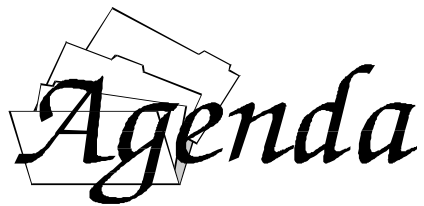
Only seven weeks to go until our group will be visiting you in Wisconsin at the end of August and we are very much looking forward to coming. It will be lovely to see our herbie friends again and hopefully make some new ones. I hope to meet as many of you as possible during our time over there.

Cath McGregor
2 July 2009

Dues Reduction Program

HerbFest5 Setup: Jackie, Yvonne, Kristin, Tracy, NancyE, PattyB, Jeri,
HerbFest TV Spots: Jackie2, Kristin
HerbFest 4: Tracy2, Yvonne3, Jackie3, Lynn, Kristin3, PattyB, LindaS,
Garden Fair Set up: Yvonne, Sandy, Jackie, PattyB, Jeri, Tracy, Hilaire, Kristin, NancyE
Garden Fair Worked: Yvonne, Sandy, Kristin(2), Tracy2, Jackie, Marlene, Hilaire3, PattyB2, Erin, NancyE
Garden 1 (3 out of 5): Yvonne, Sandy, Hilare, Jeri, Jackie,
Garden 2:
Garden 3:
Garden 4:
Garden5:
Heritage Hill Garden Work 1 (3 out of 5): Hilaire, Marlene, Bernie
Heritage Hill Garden Work 2:

Heritage Hill Garden Work 3:
Heritage Hill Garden Work 4:
FairyFest Setup:
FairyFest: Tracy(2), Nancy(2),
Newsletter Articles (need 6):
Make decorations for Heritage Hill:
Decorate Heritage Hill:
Take down decorations:
Perfect Attendance:
Misc Donations:
Garden Fair Chair: Jackie
Recruit a new member:
PR Coordinator: Rodney
Membership: Bernie
Website: Tracy
Frontier: Dixie
Newsletter: Jackie
Spring Tea: Kristin



Agenda

Green Bay Botanical Garden - 7:00 - July 14

6:00 Work in the Garden

6:30 Board Meeting

July Treats - Hilaire

Herb of the Month - Culvers Root

Welcome & Introductions

Old Business:

Final report - Garden Fair - Yvonne/Sandy

Final Report - Faery Fest - Tracy

Scottish visit - Jackie/Yvonne/Sandy

New Business

Harvest Tea - Mary C.

**Please bring agenda to the meeting - only a limited number will be available.
Go Green - bring a mug for tea!**

Herbs of the Month Coming Up:

July - Cup Plant

August - Borage

September - Edible Flowers

October -

November -

December - Potluck Xmas Party at Patty Bellins

TREATS:

July - Hilaire

August - Nancy

September -

There are a couple of our aprons left for sale - contact Yvonne.



You mean I have to learn Latin??

By Cindy Meredith of Cindy's Herb Cottage

Thanks to Cindy Meredith for permission to reprint her wonderful article on Gardener's Latin! Visit her website at <http://theherbcottage.com>

Well, you don't actually have to learn Latin to be a gardener or to enjoy herbs and flowers, but knowing the botanical name of a plant, especially an herb, is very helpful.

If you use herbs for cosmetic or medicinal purposes, knowing the botanical name can be a matter of safety.

All plants and animals, too, are classified by the binomial system. That is, each organism can be uniquely identified by 2 words- the genus and the species. The value of this system is that people who speak in different languages can be sure they are talking about the same plant, for instance, by using the genus and species name in what is now called "modern scientific" Latin. *Coriandrum sativum* is cilantro, coriander, Chinese parsley.

As you can see there are several common names for the herb, and by using the botanical name, everyone knows exactly what plant we're discussing.

The Genus describes the group to which all the like plants belong. *Mentha* is the genus

to which all true mints belong. Each mint has its unique species name.

Spearmint is *Mentha spicata*

Peppermint is *Mentha x piperata*.

The "x" indicates that this species is a hybrid or cross between two other mints. In the case of peppermint, it is a cross between *M. spicata* and *M. aquatica*. When discussing a particular genus, it is common practice to use simply the first letter of the genus so long as it is clear which genus is being referenced. If you see the "x" in a botanical name, seeds from that plant will likely not come true to type. So, beware anyone selling Peppermint Seeds!

How do you remember all those Latin names??, I'm often asked. It's like learning any names. You just learn them. In many instances the botanical name actually gives you a clue as to some of the characteristics of the plant itself.

For example: if you see a plant with the species name "alba", that means the flower will be white. Here is a short list of some other common colors found in the species name of various plants:

argenteus- silver, silvery
niger- black
coccineus- scarlet
rubens- red

azureus- sky blue
caeruleus- blue, dark blue
purpureus- purple
violaceus- violet

aureus- gold
luteus- yellow
sempervirens- always green
viridis- green

There are variations on the above words, but these are some very common ones. Some of the words used for the species name indicate the shape of the leaf, fragrance or taste, markings or how the plant grows.

alternatus- leaves grow in an alternate pattern on the stem
cordatus- heart shaped
dentatus- toothed
erectus- upright
frutescens- shrubby

globosus- round
reptans- creeping
hirsutus- hairy
pubescens- downy
fulgens- shiny
concolor- evenly colored
variegatus- variegated

humilis- low growing
minor- small
scandens- climbing
tortuosus- meandering
verticalis- vertical

Let's look at a few herb names and see if we can decipher the common name from the Botanical one.

Artemisia vulgaris- OK, this is in the *Artemisia* genus, and it is known as the common or "vulgar" one. If you guessed "mugwort", you're right!

Mentha suaveolens- Mint (*Mentha*), sweet smelling is Apple Mint.

Lavandula dentata- This lavender (*Lavandula*) has "dentate" or toothed leaves. It's also known as French Lavender.

Ulmus rubra- *Ulmus* is the genus for Elm, and *rubra* means red or reddish. Slippery Elm does have sort of reddish bark.

Anethum graveolens- *Anethum* is the genus for Dill, and *graveolens* refers to its strong fragrance.

Trifolium pratense- This time the Genus also tells us about the plant. *Trifolium* means 3-leaved, *pratense* is from the meadow. It's Red Clover!

Pronunciation is sometimes an obstacle to feeling comfortable with botanical names. No one wants to embarrass themselves in front of another. Just remember that the names are not Latin, but rather 'latinized.' Most people pronounce latinized words as they speak their own language: just by sounding out the syllables.

When you learn a little bit about the world of the botanical names of plants, you learn a lot about their characteristics, behavior, time of bloom, leaf markings and more. Don't be afraid of the botanical names of your plants. Learn to read them and know you're learning more about the herbs and plants we love.

COOK'S CORNER

Strawberry Vinegar

2 pints of strawberries, halved, 1/4 cup reserved
1 quart cider vinegar (organic is best)
1 cup sugar

1. In large saucepan (non-reactive) combine berries and vinegar. Let stand, one hour.
2. Add the sugar to the saucepan, and heat to a slow boil to dissolve the sugar. Simmer for 10 min.
3. Use a coffee filter to strain vinegar into 3 sterile 1-pint bottles. Press out as much juice from the berries as possible.
4. Add some of the reserved strawberries to each bottle. Cap, seal, and label. Store in a cool, dark place for 2 weeks before use.

Could use as a base for a pork marinade, or heated slightly with olive oil for a salad dressing.

Basil Balsamic Vinegar

4 sprigs fresh basil
1 clove garlic, peeled
1 t. whole black peppercorns
1 pint balsamic vinegar

1. Combine all ingredients, except vinegar into a wide-mouth jar.
2. Pour vinegar into the jar and cover tightly.
3. Store the jar in a cool, dark place. Check the flavor after one week. Decant from the wide-mouthed jar through a coffee filter into a narrow-neck bottle.
4. Cork, cap, label, and store in a cool, dark place.

Can sprinkle this vinegar over fresh sliced tomatoes and cucumbers.

June Herb of the Month Anise Hyssop

Latin Name Agastache foeniculum
Family Lamiaceae (Mint)
Zone: 4

Other names: Elk mint, Giant Hyssop
Native: North America
Description: 1-3' tall, blue/purple flowers
Propagation: Sees, cuttings, root division
Location: Sun to partial shade

Name from: Greek Agan and stachys meaning "many ears of wheat" - having many spikes referring to the tiny blossoms

Parts to use: Roots, leaves, flowers
Garden Use: Attracts bees and butterflies
Myths/Legends: None located

Historical Medicinal Uses: Native Americans used for coughs, colds, pains in chest from coughing

Culinary Uses: Sweetener, in honey

Cosmetic Uses: None located

Notes/Research:

Recipe: **Anise Hyssop Lemon Cake**

1 (18 oz) package lemon cake mix
1 cup chopped fresh, dried, or frozen anise
hyssop flowers
1 cup chopped pecans, toasted

Prepare cake mix as directed on package. Fold anise hyssop and pecans into batter. Pour batter into a greased and floured Bundt pan. Bake at 350F for 35-40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool in pan for 10 minutes on a rack..