

Chamomile



Objectives

To promote and share knowledge of herbs, their cultivation and use.

Charities Act No. C.C. 29074

Meetings and outings

Meetings of the Wairarapa Herb Society are normally held on the third Tuesday of the month from 1.30 - 3.00 pm at the Old Courthouse in Holloway Street, Carterton.

Outings and field trips take place on a Saturday during the warmer months of the year.

Committee members

Christine Volker - President
Sheira Chen - Secretary
Alan Butler - Treasurer
Amanda Hall - Scholarships Co-ordinator, Library
Jenny Dey
Cindy Munn

Contact

waiherbs@gmail.com

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A note from our President

Greetings dear WHS members

November is certainly the month of rapid plant growth and by the looks of it the month of garden tours and rambles as well. In fact there were so many that we decided to skip our outing for November and have a January one instead, Sheira has checked out the award winning Masterton lavender farm and has us visiting there. Please check you inbox in the New Year for details.

In this issue of our News letter you find a bit of a write up about the New Zealand Herb Federation conference which was held in Tauranga earlier this month. Kryisia, Nao and myself attended this inspiring event. It was great to meet up with so many herbalist from around the motu. What really stayed with me was the message from Robert McGowan as he explained the meaning of Mauri as being the oneness of life and environment. If we look after our land we look after ourselves and our future and the future of generations to come. He was very hopeful that we can turn this current situation around and that many small ways will widen the path to a better future for all.

With this positive outlook in mind we all can enjoy the upcoming festive season.

The WHS committee wishing you a wonderful and joyful time with your friends and family and if you find the time please come along on the 13 December , 12 noon, 32 Mill Grove , Carterton to celebrate with your fellow herbalists.

Meri Kirihimete

Christine

Welcome to new members

A warm, herby welcome to our new members

- Di Batchler
- Craig O'Styke
- Fiona Baker
- Christine Prattley
- Nicki Thomas
- Wendy O'Styke
- Claudine McNab.

It's great to have you as part of our herb community.

Upcoming meetings

First 2026 meeting
Courthouse meeting for all members
Tuesday 17th of February
Topic: TBC

Upcoming outings
Visit award winning Lavender farm in Masterton
Date: TBA

If you have ideas for meetings or outings please send an email to us at waiherbs@gmail.com. We'd love to hear from you.

Herbs and their uses - a certificate course offered by the Herb Federation of New Zealand

A reminder that we support our members to do individual papers of the **Certificate Course**. Please let us know if you are keen to do some study (waiherbs@gmail.com), choose a paper, sign up directly with the Herb Federation, and when you have successfully completed the paper let us know and we'll reimburse you. Individual papers cost \$50.

Scholarship News: Herbs and Their Uses Course

Applications for our annual community Scholarship closed on 10 November. The Course 'Herbs and their Uses' is a 12 module course administered by The Herb Federation of New Zealand. We offer scholarships to individual modules of this course. Successful students choose a module of interest to them. The study is self-paced, with flexible start and finish dates.

We are happy to announce members of our Wairarapa Community Steff Wilmore and Jasmine Spooner are our new Scholarship recipients. We wish them all the best in growing their herbal knowledge - which they can use personally and share with others in the community. This study opportunity is also available to all our WHS members. When ever you feel ready, select a module, pay for it and WHS will reimburse you the cost upon your successful completion. check the HFNZ website <https://herbs.org.nz/education/certificate-course/>. Alan Butler our new treasurer has taken up the challenge and is studying 'Culinary Uses of Herbs'. Well done Alan, and we look forward to a yummy afternoon tea at one of our meetings!

Another WHS member, Krysia Grant is our first Scholarship recipient to have completed the entire 12 modules of the course. This was a substantial amount of work over three years. Congratulations Krysia we are proud of your effort! Krysia's thoughts of the course "each module has a different herbal focus and is a mix of academic learning and practical activities. It gave me a good introduction and overview of herbs. For example in one module I learned about the history of herbs and in another, I needed to make a herb spiral. There is plenty to



learn about the world of herbs, and this course has definitely helped me on my herbal journey".

If you are interested, please enquire at one of our meetings or email waiherbs@gmail.com

New Life Member



The wonderful Di Grant was made a life member of our society.

Dianne and her husband Ian have been tireless supporters of the Herb Society for many years. Being both publishers and writers they helped to edit and publish the camomile cooking book which was a great fund raiser for the Herb society.

Many thanks to Di who also supported many of our meetings and outings over the years.

The WHS committee

Our annual plant sale was successful once again

Thank you to all contributors to this year's annual plant sale. We made \$300 for the WHS kitty.



Herb garden tidy up

The Society's herb garden is located in the Community Garden at Haumanu House, behind the Police Station in Carterton. Everyone is welcome to visit and pick herbs.

Our next working bee will be advised via email.

Please bring your favourite weeding tool and something to share with a cup of herbal tea.

Marketplace

Do you have something to share, swap or sell, or are you looking to source a plant or seeds for your herb garden? Please send your request to waiherbs@gmail.com.

Seed saving

Spare seeds (labeled and dated) can be given to a Committee member who will send them on to the Herb Federation of New Zealand. The [Herb Federation](#) provides a useful summary on how to collect seed.

Almo Books discount

Support local! Herb Society

Masterton community gardens

Report by Jo Woodcock

The Garden is located at 14 Park Avenue, situated at the rear of St. Matthews Church.

GROW COMMUNITY GARDEN VISIT: Saturday 6th September at 1.30 pm

On a cold and windy afternoon a small group of us braved the weather to see this special garden in our region. It was lovely to enjoy a hot cuppa afterwards in the community hub.

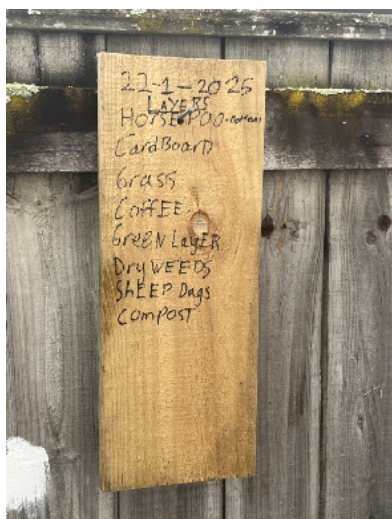
Masterton's Community GROW Garden which featured in the House and Garden Magazine a couple of years ago, and was nominated for a community award.



G - Garden (for)
R - Resilience
O - Optimal
W - Wellbeing

The Grow Garden concept was brought to us by Bev Jack who is the Wairarapa Community Centre Trust Co-ordinator, based in Perry Street, Masterton, and was initially set up with a number of plots which various community groups signed up to





manage, with the mahi of their members. This has evolved more recently into growing vegetables for the Community Kitchen, and they have been supported from the beginning by Waiwaste donations of organic composting material.

https://www.youtube.com/shorts/o69Ak_CpTVY willow Plant support structure

Plant sunflowers they remove toxins...Could do this first before making into gardens/ field of sunflowers.

Always let one plant go to seed to remove seeds for replanting. (use a stick to identify this)



Archways made from 4 warratahs, PVC pipe for the edging and mesh reinforcing steel



Security: All green houses and sheds are locked. The garden gets vandalised and all vegetables are taken.

October 2025 outing

Our October outing was to Longbush Cottage <https://longbushcottage.co.nz/> situated at 1023 Longbush Road, Longbush 5884 for another look at what the owners had added and what nature had done over the past year. As in previous years the Tulips were in full bloom for the annual 'festival'.





Trading table

Our Trading Table at our monthly meetings is an opportunity to give and take (for a gold coin donation). Money raised goes towards subsidising our outings, as well as other WHS activities.

Bring along your excess fruit, vegetables, herbs and seeds, and you never know what you'll find to take home.

Membership and scholarships

Our membership currently sits at five life members and 41 members.

Three of our members are currently being supported through the Herb Federation of New Zealand Certificate course in [Herbs and their uses](#).

Local publications

We aim to publish an article in the Carterton Crier and Midweek newspaper on a regular basis. If you don't receive these publications you can view current and back copies of the Carterton Crier [here](#) and for e-editions of the Midweek click [here](#).

Bachflower remedies

Presented by Christine Volker

Our afternoon session on September 16 was well attended. We explored the world of Flower essences which were first discovered by the renowned physician



Commercial Bachflower remedies

Edward Bach who practiced for over twenty years in London as a consultant and bacteriologist.

The late Edward Bach gave up his lucrative practice in 1930 to devote his full time to the finding of the remedies and the perfection of his method of Flower healing. Flower remedies use the vibratory essence of flowers to balance the negative emotions that lead to and are symptoms of disease.

Dr Bach believed that diseases were not primarily due to physical causes but some deeper disharmony, which would lower the individuals vitality and resistance. He believed that health and harmony is our natural state and we can achieve this if we listen to our true souls.

Dr. Bach developed thirty eight remedies and all of them are rooted in what he called the seven states of healing generated by

- Peace
- Hope
- Joy
- Faith
- Certainty
- Wisdom
- Love

He stated that an illness is also a change of mood.

Many natural health practitioners still use these essences and they are applied as follows:

To treat the emotional outlook generated by disease;

To balance a particular recurring pattern in the personality;

To alter a temporary emotional response and situation;

As a preventive measure.

The most used and well known Bach flower remedy is called rescue remedy. It is a blend of five essences and is used in emergencies, for panic, shock, loss of control and mental numbness.

Rescue remedy can calm exam nerves and relieve the anxiety of flying or a dentist visit.



Preparing a Bachflower rescue remedy

I talked to a pharmacist who used it during the pandemic to stay calm and collected. She had great results taking it.

In our session we also explored how flower essences are made. The essence is created close to the source (flowers used) on a sunny day, the flowers are emerged into a glass bowl filled with spring water (rainwater can be used) a natural stick is used and after 5 hours the water is decanted and filled into stock bottles with alcohol to preserve the essence.

Flower essences are now extracted from many more flowers and a NZ company uses New Zealand bush flowers. An Australian company Gurudas integrates

Eastern Philosophy as a basis of understanding the essences supplied.

There is much more to explore, enjoy.

Notes from the New Zealand Herb Federation national conference

By Christine Volker

I had the great opportunity to attend this years conference which was titled "Living with Herbs"

The conference was held in Tauranga and the venue was the Cargo Shed situated right on the waterfront.

The Herb federation was also celebrating its 40 year since it was established in Invercargill.

Gillian Polson (author, herb grower and herbalist) had the vision and dedication to bring a long awaited dream of a national body to reality. It was never thought to replace the Herb societies which already existed in NZ (the Wairarapa herb society was established 1982) but rather provide something more for those with a more serious interest in herbs. To this day



the NZ Herb Federation has been true to its founding members and is a helpful body to all the local societies providing a News letter, study material, a library, a seed bank and an ever updated online presence to find help and advise about anything involving herbs.

The conference provided an amazing variety of speakers.

Robert McGowan/ Pa Ropata a Rongoā Herbalist is the founder of Tiwaiwaka , a movement focused on caring for the whenua.

The Tīwaiwaka movement is a philosophy and collective in Aotearoa New Zealand focused on restoring the health (mauri) of the land (whenua) by prioritizing Papatūānuku (Earth Mother) over profit, offering a hopeful way forward through guiding principles and reconnecting people with nature, inspired by the native fantail bird and led by practitioners like Pā Rob McGowan. It emphasizes practical care, traditional knowledge (mātauranga), and collective action to heal the environment, using principles from Pā's books and workshops.

Carolyn Eichler - 100 wild things / plant educator

You find her amazing work on line. Determined that we find medicinal help in the plant world she started a research project and listed 100 plants which can be foraged for food or medicine. It is a survival list tailored specifically for NZ. Carolyn heads an initiative called Prepper Kiwi.

Dr Sandra Clair / Medicinal Herbalist

Well known as the former owner of Artemis, an award winning herbal medicine business, Sandra Clair has also worked as regulatory adviser, media commentator and TEDx speaker. She delighted the audience with a journey back to the time were users of medicinal plants were precise observers of plant actions. The empirically noted effects were often encoded into the vernacular or medicinal names of plants.

Rixt Botello / Medicinal Herbalist / author / educator

Rixt lives on 50 acres of herbal wonderland in Paihia and uses her property as a natural gathering and teaching playground. Her core belief is that what matters most is the love for all “life”, to preserve for the future generations, not solely humans, but rather our green herbal friends ...as without them we are nil.

She is also very concerned that natural resources get depleted as it happens with white sage in South America. There is a growing demand for white sage and it can't be met without destroying the environment where it grows. She urges everyone to grow it here (it grows well) and not to buy imported smudge sticks.

Naomi who also attended the conference commented, that she liked the idea to forage carefully and leave enough for others. Many wild herbs are endangered now.

I hope these notes inspire you to research some of the presenters on line and read more about their work.



Our final 2025 meeting

Report by Jenny Day

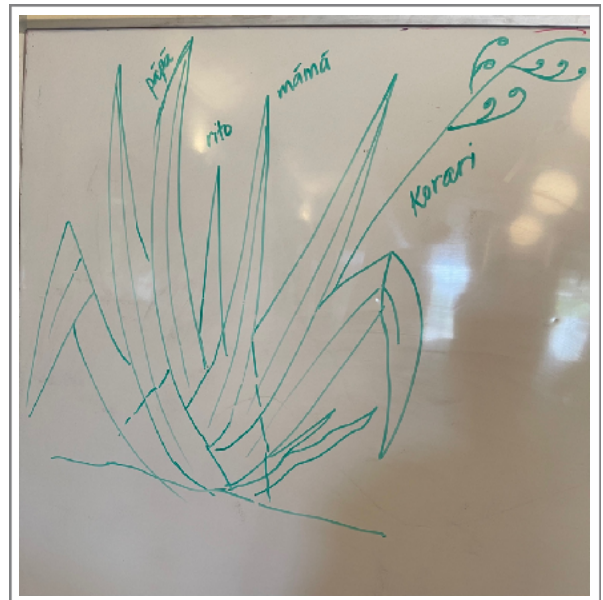


We enjoyed a lovely afternoon with Edith Rolls, a Rongoa Practitioner who came to talk to us about the various uses of Harekeke (Flax). Edith spent 30 years teaching then moved into Healthcare. She learns how to use the plants sustainably for harvesting and healing and says "We must look after the plant that looks after us."

The sketch of the flax plant shows the mother and father leaves and the rito (baby) all being protected in the middle of the plant. Do not cut any of these leaves for harvesting but pick the leaves outside of the mother and

father. The flower is the grandparent "Korari", when the flower is orange it means the plant is pregnant. Cut the leaves downwards and away from you so the rain can go in and feed the root system. The best time to harvest is spring and summer.

You can use the leaves in their raw state or you can start a process of drying and if you wish dying the flax other colours. Edith uses red onion skins to get a nice burgundy colour, just drop the flax into the boiling

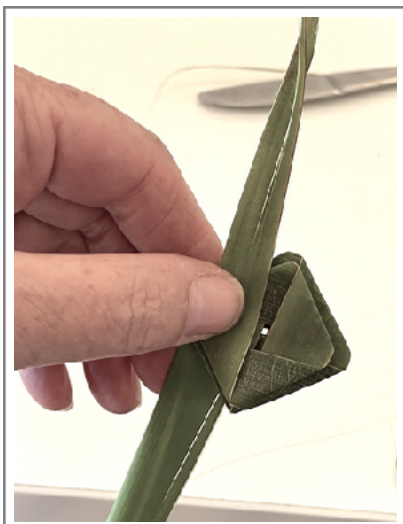


dye water. The more you wet and dry the flax the browner it will go.

The boiled flax can act like an insecticide, keeps cockroaches and mice away which is handy if you are making baskets for food storage. Plus if you tip the water the flax was boiled in around the outside of the house it stops ants coming in.

Harekeke is from the Lily family and there are over 70 species of it in NZ,

59 of those varieties can all be used for different things, for food storage and cooking through to just ornamental use... be as creative as you like and use for hair ornaments, twist into flower shapes, book tokens, buttons, bowls and much more...



Ready to give it a go