

# 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  
Sandi Duckett

## Contact

[waiherbs@gmail.com](mailto:waiherbs@gmail.com)

## Keep connected

Facebook

## A note

## from

Greetings to you and your whanau

The month of August has, according to Google, the following virtues which are: honesty, courage and truthfulness. A happy society group, established 1997, chose August as the happiest month.

Here in NZ, August it is often a cold and wet winter month. Some bulbs planted in anticipation of spring might show the occasional green leaf coming out from the sodden ground. However it's a great time to divide herbal plants like lemon balm, oregano or any other clump forming herbs. The surplus makes a nice present to a fellow plant lover and also can be potted up for our annual plant sale in November.

Dahlias are considered a herbaceous perennial originating from Mexico and brought to Europe around 1700. The tubers don't like a strong frost. However in some regions they are absolutely fine in the ground, cut back and heavily mulched.

I dug some up which were planted in the wrong place and which will be replanted this month. Dahlias have been used as food and medicinally also their flowers, if no pesticide is used, are eatable!

Last month the WHS had a successful AGM and 3 new committee members were elected. They are Sandi Duckett, General Officer; Sheira Chan, Secretary; and Alan Butler, Treasurer. Congratulations and thank you for joining the team.

Many thanks for their professional and dedicated work are going to Kryisia Grant ( Treasurer ) and Nao Hampton ( Secretary). Both put many hours in to keep the ship afloat.

This Newsletter is brought to you with the computer publishing knowledge of Jürgen Schumacher who kindly agreed to help the society out using his skills.

We are working to bring you an interesting program and at the time of writing we are in the process to confirm basket weaving with Harakeke, Fermentation and Bach Flower usage. As usual we send emails prior to the afternoon events.

**our President, Christine**

## Welcome to new members

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A warm, herby welcome to our new members Ange Boland and Sheira Chan. It's great to have you as part of our herb community.

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## Upcoming meetings

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### 19 August, 1.30pm

Cindy Munn, followup on her session, Herb and Digestion, focussing on the liver. Please send any questions to Waiherbs email.

### 16 September, 1.30pm

Bach Flower remedies have the power to restore harmony to a disturbed emotional state in humans and animals.  
Presented by Christine

### 21 October, 1.30pm

Compost fermentation (tbc)

## Upcoming outings

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### 6 September, 1.30pm

Masterton Community garden, introduction by the community group (tbc).

### 4 October, 1.30pm

Long Bush cottage, a booking has been made to see the tulips and flowers. Please r.s.v.p. to be included.

Details of the garden can be found online: [longbushcottage.co.nz/](http://longbushcottage.co.nz/)

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### 18 November, 1.30pm

Harakeke, Flax basket making with Edith Rolls

If you have ideas for meetings or outings please send an email to us at [waiherbs@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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.

## Seed saving and potting up seedlings

A reminder to save seeds and pot up any seedlings that are coming up in your garden. We have an annual herb sale later in the year (currently proposed for the 19th of October at Carterton Memorial square); this is our annual fund raising event, so the more herbs the better!





## 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.

A tidy-up meeting should be every third Thursday of the month. Our next working bee will be at 11am on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August.

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](mailto: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 members can enjoy a 10% discount at Almo Books and Cafe in Carterton.

## Review of previous meetings

### Calendula - 15 April 2025

Report by Odette Rowe and Amanda Hall



Thank you to our scholarship student Odette Rowe for presenting at our April meeting and providing a write up.

Calendula has a wide range of healing properties. I love how calendula can care for us from top to toe - scalp to corns on our feet. From mouth ulcers to boils on

our bum! From inside to outside and on multiple levels of healing too - emotional and spiritual connections as well as the more obvious physical properties.

[Deb Soule](#), an American herbalist who I trained with for women's health, has a beautiful approach to herbalism that embraces the multidimensional healing of many herbs. She loves calendula. It restores the body's sense of it's own physical boundaries - healing wounds topically, internally and also healing wounds to the spirit. The flowers embody warmth, light, brightness - all qualities of the sun.

Each of us has the potential to be a vehicle for light and love, radiating warmth and compassion. Calendula offers guidance, showing us how to be vibrant, to embody our inner light and let it shine in an authentic way. Notice how calendula follows the sun - opening in the morning and closing in the evening; a sign of a healthy boundary to preserve its energy. It does not shine all the time!

### Trauma

Calendula brings warmth and consciousness to unhealed places, allowing us to be guided in releasing and healing old wounds.

For anyone who does not feel comfortable touching their own body, calendula can still heal in this way through tea, spiritual baths, foot baths, sitz baths and face steams.

If you need to restore or create healthy boundaries, especially physical boundaries, then calendula oil rubbed into skin will be so beneficial.





## 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](#).

When you pick calendula flowers your fingers get sticky with the resin. This antiseptic resin is valuable for healing tissues of all kinds.

### Women's health

Calendula assists lymphatic circulation of the breast tissue - make a calendula oil and massage into the area.

Take the flowers whenever your immune system is lowered and also for viral and fungal conditions such as candida.

Calendula helps relieve PMS by stimulating the action of the liver to speed up the breakdown of hormones.

It regulates menstruation, heals vaginal infections (especially thrush) and wounds eg childbirth tears, vaginal atrophy.

It's the best herb for vaginal suppositories and perineum sitz baths. It helps with congestion in pelvis and is great for releasing stagnation here and easing heavy bleeding and cramping.

**Do not drink** calendula during pregnancy!

It's also great for the Perimenopausal years.

Make your own calendula oil for perimenopausal dryness - it can be used on the whole body but especially beneficial for your lady bits. The best oil to use is almond oil or sunflower and camellia oil.

### Chair yoga for pelvic floor health and lymphatic drainage

Shoot your arms up and out from you and diagonally across your body and make a whoosh sound. Do several repetitions on each side. This gets the circulation moving and prompts drainage. Sit up straight in your chair to support your pelvic floor.

### Calendula tea

My favourite tea recipe is nourishing to the body and cleansing for the lymph glands. You can also use it for painful breasts and skin problems.

25g red clover flowers  
25g dried cleavers  
25g dried calendula flowers  
25g dried oat straw  
25g dried nettle leaves

Mix all the dried herbs together in a sterile jar, label, date and seal.

To use - place 1 tsp of mix in a small teapot or a cup with a saucer on top, strain and drink. Take up to 3 times daily as and when required.

## Review of previous outings

### Parkvale Gardens - 12 April 2025

Report by Jenny Dey

Danny has owned the ex-dairy farm approximately 10 years and has spent that time planting extensively all over the 8 hectares, mainly to get rid of the paddock grass and “This will be a lifetime of planting and ongoing restoration”, he says. Trees and bush also line parts of the banks of the Parkvale stream that runs through the property bringing shade to help get rid of the aquatic weeds.

They have recently put in vegetable gardens, and the fruit trees which are now a few years old are helping to establish a productive food larder.

Danny likes to plant taking patterns out of nature and makes communities of trees. There are many plants included in areas which like the dry and the amount of colourful foliage is amazing for example the creamy/yellow yarrow which in the moonlight goes iridescent with bluey/green tones.

There is a philosophy of gentle gardening and Danny reckons “the scruffier the better”. The plants are mostly left to seed down with barely any dead heading so that there is a natural vegetation process appearing in all areas which in turn helps form some low maintenance, and of course bring the birds and insect life in. There were initial lessons learnt with frost and drought and wind but now they can celebrate what and where plants want to grow naturally. The bulk of planting is now in line with this.

Planting in plant communities Danny considers the root structure of what is being planted in a particular community, the aim being to allow better cohabitation with the roots so they are not all trying to occupy the same space underground. The lesson here for all of us and it will take some time, is to look at the root structure of plants you put in or pull out of your garden and note the different structures in the roots and match them to your garden. Layering the tap roots ensures each plant receives the good nutrients at its level.





## Site visit at Parkers Road organic property - 3 May 2025

Report by Christine Volker

Gumboots were advised for the visit as we had a very wet week but the sun came out on the day and the cheerful group had a walk over the mown grass paths.

The property had been bare farmland 14 years before . Thomas and myself planted hundreds of trees

as wind shelter. We used natives but also many deciduous trees like oaks, European beech trees, birches , maple trees, tulip trees and European lime trees.

Leaves create a great carbon rich mulch and we needed lots. To help with the recovery of the land we used a microbial tea . Healthy soil includes bacteria, fungi and other microbial life. This soil food web , the complex world of soil dwelling organism create a nurturing environment for plants to grow. We got our inspiration from the book " Teaming with Microbes " by Jeff Lowenfels and Wayne Lewis. On our walk we also realised that healthy gardens are not tidy as our personal living spaces. Seeds heads don't have to be cut off because over winter the seed heads create a welcome nutrient for the birds. A food forest has shared treasures like unprotected berry bushes for our feathered friends because having many birds in your garden means less pests.



We concluded our outing by learning how to make willow water, a solution which like commercial hormone powder , activates plant / root growth in cuttings.

Willow contains Salicylic acid (marketed as an exert as Aspirin) the growth hormone in willow is indolebutyric acid . Both together are excellent as cuttings don't rot and this infusion prevents infection.

### Method

Use wild willow, strip some bark with a sharp knife, put in a heat proof container and cover with boiling water, steep for a day or day.

Decant into a container with a lid, ready to use, keep it in a cool place, for a month. Put your cuttings into the solution, I leave mine in there for an hour but just dipping works as well.

Willow bark does relief pain and it is used by herbalist as a natural pain killer . Please note this should not been used during pregnancy.



## Meeting with Edith

### 20th May 2025

Before we welcomed our guest we introduced ourselves and named our favourite tree.

There are many trees which have medicinal properties.

All trees are very important, in fact life on this planet would be impossible without trees.



Speaker Edith Rolls

The book of the month selected was not from our library but is a very interesting read if you like to know more about our friends the trees.

The Arbornaut by Meg Lowman

The following quote is from the book

“ Destroying a tropical rain forest and other species-rich ecosystems for profit is like burning all the paintings of the Louvre to cook dinner “ ( E.O. Wilson , Harvard)

Our guest Edith Rolls brought with her a wonderful assortment of healing balms, tinctures and oils.

Edith is a teacher Rongoā.

Rongoā is traditional Māori medicine – a system of healing that was passed on orally. It comprised diverse practices and an emphasis on the spiritual dimension of

health.

Rongoā includes herbal remedies, physical therapies such as massage and manipulation, and spiritual healing. \*

Edith also has a favorite tree and it's the NZ Kūmarahou. It has medicinal properties and particular helps the lung function. Edith also uses eucalyptus to make salves which resemble commercial products but are more pure with no



side effects. Our wonderful Manuka tree gets used a lot in her tinctures and salves.

Here is what some of us remembered

“ I liked the fact that no alcohol is used but that the leaves naturally ferment “

“ I made a note with regard to Tataramoa, calming the mind and helping a restful sleep. Blueberries were added to the mix. Edith also mentioned that it was good as a tincture for ADHD in place of Ritalin”





" I was pleased to learn how to harvest kawakawa properly by taking the parent leaf it comes off easily without harming / scaring the plant and allows more leaves to be produced ." It was an absolute pleasure to have Edith teaching and giving freely of her incredible knowledge.

We will see her again . Hopefully within this year and we will do some weaving with Harakeke.



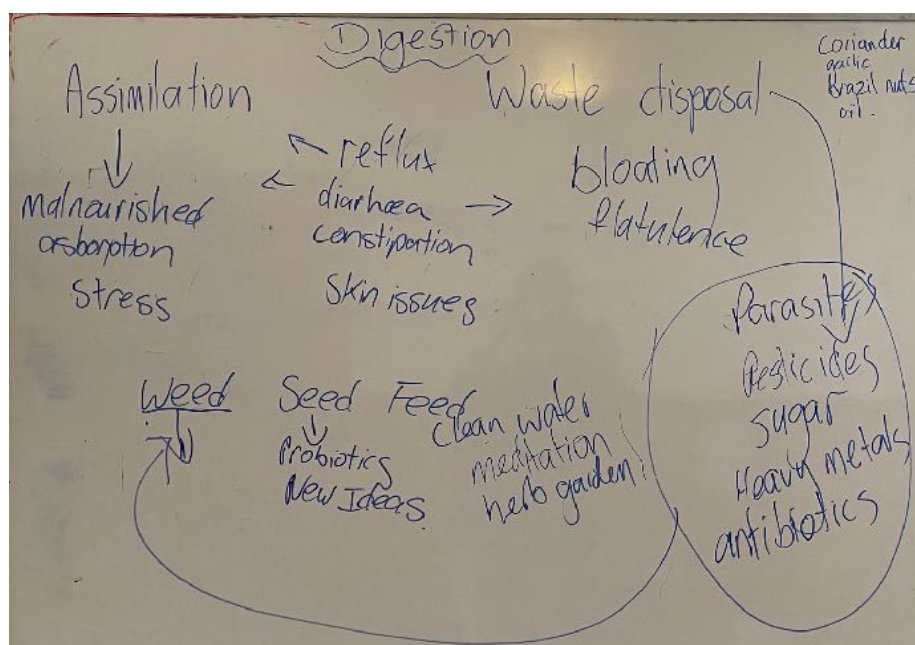


## Herbs and Digestion

The July meeting of The Wairarapa Herb Society focused on herbs and digestion. Cindy led the session by discussing assimilation of nutrients, waste disposal of the digestive system; what aids these functions and what hinders them; and the role of herbs in supporting these functions.

Herbs and digestion have a strong relationship, recognised and explored for centuries. Herbs are both nutrition and medicine, often at the same time. Our bodies are always striving for homeostasis, to be balanced and well, and herbs have an amazing ability to assist. We can think of Dandelion, Parsley, the mint family and Aloe vera. These are plants we all can grow and use. They contain phytochemicals and nutrients that can soothe and heal the digestive tract. There are also the more specialist herbs such as Burdock, Meadowsweet and Yellow Dock. These are strong medicines that can be very useful, but usually in small doses and with great care.

Having a healthy gut optimises the breakdown and absorption of nutrients, ensuring that the body gets the essential vitamins and minerals it needs for overall health and functioning. Inflammation is the precursor to many ailments and diseases, and is often felt in the gut as indigestion, bloating, nausea, IBS and other gut disturbances. As we age our digestive juices can become a bit weak, and we find ourselves having difficulty breaking down our food, in particular proteins. Herbs can help with this. They can reduce inflammation, increase digestive juices, stimulate and cleanse the liver, and supply concentrated nutrition.



The August session of WHS will be a deep dive into the functions of the liver, and herbs that support this vital organ to do the incredible job it does to support our health, day in and day out. As Cindy says, "They don't call it the LIVER for nothing"!

## Recipes

### Feijoa Spice Cake

Baked by Krysia Grant for our May meeting

## Ingredients

500g Feijoas peeled/scooped and chopped. (I use up to 500g of actual chopped fruit for taste and texture)

125g melted butter

3/4c sugar

1 egg beaten

1 1/2 c flour (any flour - spelt /wholemeal ok)

1 tsp baking powder

1 tsp baking soda

1 tsp cinnamon

1/2 tsp allspice

1 tsp ground ginger

2 Tbsp chopped crystallised ginger

## Method

Set oven to 180c.

Combine all wet ingredients with fruit until the sugar is dissolved.

Sift dry ingredients and fold gently until mixed and turn into prepared 20-22cm tin.

Hi all, a last minute addition for Marketplace. Sheira, our Secretary has this to offer.

NZ Farm to Yarn - Gotland and Corriedale sheep yarn grown and produced right here in Tinui at Rewa Rewa Station.

A variety of hand spun and Mill Spun natural coloured yarn ranging from dark grey to light grey and to every shade of brown. Also available are natural dyed yarns in a rainbow of colours. See the range on our website -

[www.rewarewastation.co.nz](http://www.rewarewastation.co.nz)

