

# Chamomile



## Objectives

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

Charities Act No. C.C. 29074

## Meetings and outings

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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 are normally organised on the first Saturday of the month.

## Committee members

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Christine Volker - President  
Nao Hampton - Secretary  
Krysia Grant - Treasurer, Newsletter  
Amanda Hall - Scholarships Co-ordinator, Library  
Jenny Dey  
Cindy Munn

## Contact

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

## Keep connected

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### Facebook

## A note from our President

### Greetings to our Herb Whanau

As we approach the end of another year, I extend my warmest seasons greetings to all of you, the wonderful creative, attentive, joyful group of herbal enthusiasts.

This time of year invites us to reflect, to celebrate with family and find moments of rest.

As I look back at our 2024 meeting and outing agenda, I would like to congratulate and express my appreciation to our hard working committee for their efforts in bringing our programme together and finding new meeting themes and speakers. Our garden visits were a treat and I seem to always work harder in my own patch once I have been inspired by these beautiful landscapes.

We very much appreciate input from you, our members, so we can carry on with a smorgasbord of different ideas relating to our herbal themes and studies.

Please note that the WHS is still continuing to support the herb study course offered by the Herb Federation. This is not only for members but extends to the community as well.

From next year we will publish our newsletter 2-3 times (rather than the current 4 times). If you are interested in being involved in the production, please get in touch.

We look forward to welcoming you back to our first meeting for 2025 on Tuesday, 21 January at 1.30pm for an informal shared picnic at our community herb garden, next to Haumanu house in Carterton. If you have never visited the garden, this is a good opportunity to come and see the inviting herb space we have created.

Enjoy the holidays.  
With best wishes  
Christine

## Welcome to new members

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A warm, herby welcome to our new members Yvonne Wilkins Jenny O'Donnell and Susanne Skuce.

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

## Upcoming meetings

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### 21 January, 1.30pm

An informal gathering our Community Garden - some tidying up followed by a cuppa and chat.

### 18 February, 1.30pm

Summer herbal drinks - a practical session using seasonal herbs.

### 18 March, 6.30pm

Note, this is an evening meeting. Scholarship students will make presentations.

## Upcoming outings

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### 1 February, time to be confirmed

Mangaroa Farms, 108 Whitemans Valley, Upper Hutt; a living laboratory for transitioning dairy and pine into regenerative agriculture and native forests. Car pooling and cost to be confirmed.

### 15 March, 1.30pm

Krysia Grant's garden, 1839B Longbush Road, Gladstone. Krysia has owned the property since 1999 and has planted hundreds of natives, an orchard, vegetable and herb garden. Come and see the Herb Spiral that Krysia made as part of her herb studies.

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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.

## Updated Constitution

Following our Special General Meeting in October, where we voted unanimously to adopt the proposed Constitution, we are pleased to let you know that we have successfully re-registered our Society with the Companies Office.

You can read our new Constitution [here](#).

## Annual Plant sale - 3 November 2024

We had a very chilly day at the Wairarapa Plant Sale in Carterton. Looking up to the hills with their dusting of snow did not help us feel any warmer! However, many hardy plant lovers attended and we had a super selection of herbs for sale.



The sales day allows us to raise funds to go toward the monthly rent of the courthouse meeting area, payment on each member's behalf to HFNZ, books for the library, to subsidise next year's summer field trips and help our scholarship students. Once again we were asked for basil but it is just too early for that heat loving herb outside a glasshouse!

Thanks to those who gave plants and to all our volunteers.

## 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 ([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.

## 2025 Herb Awareness

Each year the "International Herb Association" selects a herb to be the International Herb of the Year, and the Herb Federation of New Zealand selects a further three herbs. Together with the International Herb of the Year, these herbs become the subject of study. The herbs selected for 2025 are:

- Chamomile *Matricaria chamomilla* (International Herb of the Year)
- Indigenous Herb - Karamu (*Coprosma* species)
- Greater Celandine - *Chelidonium majus*
- Globe Artichoke - *Cynara scolymus*

You can read more about the herbs [here](#).



### 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 at the start of our January informal meeting. 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. 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.

## Christmas gathering - 7 December 2024

Report by Krysia Grant

It has been some years since the Herb Society visited Manu Mara, the gardens of Miles and Maria Fairburn in Featherston, and it was the perfect place for our Christmas gathering.

We had a lovely shady spot under well established trees to enjoy our shared lunch. From here, we had a vista of the extensive gardens which we are able to explore both before and after our lunch.



Miles and Maria have owned the property for about 50 years and have worked tirelessly to develop and re develop the gardens. The gardens have a mix of native trees and shrubs, perennials and annuals, as well as vegetable gardens and plenty of birds.





## Trading table

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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

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Our membership currently sits at five life members and 53 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

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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](#).

## Review of previous meetings Herbal teas - 17 September 2024

Report by Christine Volker

Lorraine Erith, a herbalist and homeopath (UK), educated in many other holistic body treatments, talked us through mixing different herbs to make tea. The main focus was on making a cleansing brew which can be enjoyed during spring to refresh body and mind.

Lorraine forages for plants in season and so dandelion leaves and flowers and leaves of stinging nettles were chosen as both are high in minerals and helpful for spring cleaning the system.

Other herbs that were talked about included:

- Elderflower - an active virus fighting plant
- Calendula petals - give tea a nice lift
- Blackberry leaves - a substitute for black tea and rich in minerals
- Dried Hawthorn leaves - a good blood pressure balancer
- Milk thistle - helps the liver to do its work.

Lorraine mixes her own teas under her label La Faye herbs and always considers taste and look; for that, she includes petals like cornflower. Rose hips have a high vitamin C content and can be added for look, taste and medicinal benefit.

We sampled Lorraine's teas and also took some sachets home to enjoy.



## Visit by Hutt Valley Herb Society to Community Herb Garden - 6 December 2024



A very unusual bus contained 15 people from the Hutt Valley Herb Society who visited our herb garden and other sites in the Wairarapa.

They were positively impressed by our garden, and perhaps even a little bit envious!

## Good Lives Wairarapa - 15 October 2024

Report by Pauline Coy

Chris is a geologist and paleontologist with over 30 years' experience as a research scientist. He worked for GNS Science for most of his career and led or promoted GNS initiatives in field-based geoscience education and community engagement.

As a parent of two sons with intellectual disabilities, Chris has a special interest in making science accessible and relevant to people who have struggled with conventional learning approaches. In 2021, Chris Hollis and his wife founded Good Lives Wairarapa, a collective of Wairarapa-based disabled people and their families. Their aim is to improve services and long-term life outcomes for disabled people in our region.

One of the projects is based in the Carterton Community Garden.

The Good Lives team coordinates the maintenance and development of the Carterton Community Garden; produce from the garden is used to supplement food distributed by the Carterton Foodbank.

Recently, the team received a grant for the Carterton District Council's waste minimisation fund to collect organic waste from the local community and turn it into compost at the garden. Waste is collected from local cafes, businesses and residential properties and includes lawn clippings and coffee grounds. They are hoping to expand this initiative to include a wide area of Carterton. This seems a great initiative and hopefully it will become successful. They also appreciate donations of seeds, seedlings and plants. Garden working bees are held on Thursday afternoons from 1 to 3pm.

If you'd like to help with this enterprise or have some organic waste that needs repurposing please do contact Chris at Good Lives Wairarapa - email - [goodliveswairarapa@gmail.com](mailto:goodliveswairarapa@gmail.com)  
This does seem to be a win-win initiative and if you / we / the Herb society can help in anyway it should be successful.

You can read more [here](#). See also [article](#) in Times Age on the background for the establishment of the group.

## Christmas Craft - 19 November 2024

Report by Krysia Grant

We had a lovely afternoon creating our own centrepiece for our Christmas tables. For some (me!), there was more chatter than action, and it was a lovely way to round up the year. Nao gave us plenty of inspiration with the different centrepieces that she had prepared for our meeting, together with the things she had gathered from her own garden for us to use.



## Review of previous outings

### Ashton Norwood - 21 September 2024

Report by Jenny Dey

In September our Herb Society trip was to the Aston Norwood Gardens located at the bottom of the Remutaka hill on the Kaitoki side.

Called "Blossom Valley", and deservedly so, with hundreds of cherry trees all bursting into blossom. Walking the trails it was sometimes hard to know where to look next as there was so much colour to grab your attention. There were also other species in blossom or flowering, kowhai, rhododendrons etc and new spring green in between it all.

The area was very picturesque; it was busy and everyone took advantage of the delightful photo opportunities.

If you missed out on this opportunity then make a date in your diary to visit next September, but remember to book via their [website](#). Ashton Norwood have a fabulous nursery which you can visit any time of the year, and of course their café.



## Tarata Garden - 5 October 2024

Report by Nao Hampton

We had a super day for the visit and were warmly welcomed by Grant and Adrienne to their 2 hectare property. They have been there for over 20 years and told us their first priority was to save the remnants of a Totara forest which they have gradually developed into a walking area. It was interesting how the temperature dropped under the canopy of trees and it was easy to see how the ecosystem is changing as undergrowth returns.

They have added various areas around the property as whims took them. The result is a peaceful, interesting garden with paths to ramble along. Pieces of recycled art are placed as Grant found them and there are some lovely sculptures with meaning for the family. Areas developed with help from their children add good memories. Extensive plantings of Japanese maples add a soft feeling to the side of a grassed area.

The working fountain has a lovely story of its origins and development as a focal point. While there is a formal feel to much of the garden there are also areas of 'cottage garden' with cuttings from friends and family. There are well developed vegetable gardens close to the house that include berries and fruit trees. Walking back toward the front of the property are a line of tea plants which lead to much discussion.

We sat under trees in a new area developed as a cool retreat from the summer heat and had a tasty shared afternoon tea. It was great to see partners joining in for a weekend outing and the drive there was just as interesting especially for those of us who didn't know the area. I wonder who else left with ideas of grandeur for our own gardens?

## Pictures from Tarata Garden visit - 5 October 2024



## Recipes

**Lemon Yogurt Cake** - baked by Jenny Dey for our November meeting

### Ingredients

Zest and juice of 2 lemons  
1½ cups sugar (can be reduced a lot)  
2 eggs  
1 cup oil (can be reduced a little)  
½ tsp salt  
1 cup yoghurt  
2 cups self-raising flour

### Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C.
2. Grate lemon zest into a large bowl.
3. Add sugar, eggs and oil, then whisk together.
4. Mix in salt, yoghurt and lemon juice.
5. Fold in sifted flour until just combined.
6. Pour into a floured ring cake tin and bake 40 minutes.



**Rhubarb Cordial** - made by Krysia Grant for our Christmas lunch



Makes about 1 litre.

10 stalks rhubarb, chopped  
3 cups water or a bit more  
peel of 1 lemon, removed with a vegetable peeler  
1 cup sugar  
juice of 1 lemon

Simmer the rhubarb, water and lemon peel together for 20 minutes, skimming off any foam. Strain, discarding the pulp, then add the sugar and lemon juice and stir to dissolve the sugar. Bring to the boil for 1 minute, skim again and cool. Keep refrigerated and use to make cordial or cocktails.