

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 - 3.00pm at the Old Courthouse in Holloway Street, Carterton.

Outings are normally organised on the first Saturday of the month.

Committee members

Carolyn Peterson - President
Jenny Dey - Secretary
Krysia Grant - Treasurer, newsletter
Amanda Hall - Library, scholarships
Nao Hampton - Sales table
Cindy Munn - Communications
Christine Volker - EnviroSchools

Contact

waiherbs@gmail.com

Keep connected

Facebook

A note from our President

Greetings to our Herb Whanau near and far

My hope is that your Christmas celebrations were full of happiness and good health, times shared and memories made, wherever you travelled, or if loved ones travelled to you.

Our December WHS gathering at Hattenburn Gardens seems long ago. A small number of us gathered to celebrate with a shared lunch and a leisurely wander around the garden full of sculptures, vibrant "Christmas Red" frilled poppies, and a bevy of tiny bumble bee sized quail that delighted us no end!

Your Committee are working through our annual programme planning for the year. We invite you to share any ideas with us that could be incorporated in our next year of planning. If you have a garden of interest, or know someone who would be willing to have us visit theirs, or if you can suggest a topic or speaker for our Tuesday meetings, we welcome your input. Our Society benefits from your participation. Our membership stands at 64 which is fabulous and we'd love to see more of you attending where and when you can.

The drought has taken its toll on our Community Herb Garden garden, situated in a corner where the Community garden is at Haumanu House, Carterton.

Our monthly garden working bees will resume on Thursday 21 March from 1pm-2.30pm with a cuppa to follow. BYO cup and any treats you'd like to share and a thermos of hot water if you would enjoy a herbal bevy or one of us usually has a coffee thermos. We'd love more of you to join us for this shared time which is social, as well as an educational, particularly if you are new to herbs.

Best wishes for 2024 and the joys of approaching autumn.

Carolyn Peterson

Welcome to new members

A warm, herby welcome to our new members, Ruth Henry, Karen Rees and Nicky Benari.

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

Upcoming meetings

19 March, 1.30pm

Dr. Heidi from Vetcare will talk about Holistic Animal Care - how to care for your pet using natural remedies.

16 April, 1.30pm

Calendula - a practical lesson learning all about this herb and how to make calendula balm.

21 May, 1.30pm

Come along and learn how to make a solid or roll on perfume.

8 June, 11.30am

AGM - details to be advised.

Upcoming outings

6 April, 1.30pm

Waiawa Botanicals. Learn about medical ointments and salves using Rongoā Maori. Approx. 20 mins north of Masterton, SH2, Mt Bruce.

4 May, 1.30pm

A visit to Jenny & Stan Braaksma's garden and a demonstration on rose pruning and how to take rose cuttings. Bennett's Hill, Castlepoint Road, Masterton.

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.

Tribute to the late Bill Edginton

October 1938 - December 2023

Written by Laura Hopkins



Bill joined the Wairarapa Herb Society in 2008 and held posts of Librarian and also Editor of our newsletter, Chamomile, for many years.

Bill was a vital member of the coordinating committee responsible for bringing the highly successful 2015 National Herb Conference to the Wairarapa.

For all that, Bill was a quiet and gentle person; he had a knack of getting his point of view across far more firmly than people realised!

Bill hosted a number of WHS functions including Christmas lunches at his home, firstly at his lovely old lifestyle property, Daysh House, and more recently at his new build home in Carterton. He and Gary made the most perfect hosts.

Over the years of his membership, Bill contributed greatly to the Society and we are very grateful for this.

Bill died on Christmas day and had a quiet family funeral. He is buried at Clareville cemetery.

Christmas get together - December 2023



We had a lovely afternoon in Hattenburn Garden to celebrate the end of the year and share some Christmas festive treats.



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.

Regular working bees are organised on the third Thursday of the month at 1.00pm. If you would like to help please call Carolyn on 027 404 0739.

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 Carolyn 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.

Herb of the month - Yarrow *Achillea millefolium*

Written by Cindy Munn

Our Herb-of-the-Month for February was the fabulous Yarrow. Much has been written about Yarrow, with good reason. It's a herb that has a long history of use, and also of myth. Its namesake, Achilles, was said to be dipped into a Yarrow imbued River Styx by his mother, when he was a small baby. His mother held him by the ankle, and so all of his body was protected except for his 'Achilles heel'. Achilles is also said to have used Yarrow to staunch the bleeding of his soldiers' wounds.

It is said that energetically, Yarrow is a guardian, a heart protector and it helps to create an energetic boundary. North American Indian tribes used Yarrow a lot, to heal wounds and burns, as a tea for colds, fever and headaches. Indeed, these are some of its current uses and science shows us that the active constituents give it these properties.

Yarrow has been used to make beer in England and Europe during the middle ages. A new craft beer idea perhaps? Personally, I'd love to taste a Yarrow beer!

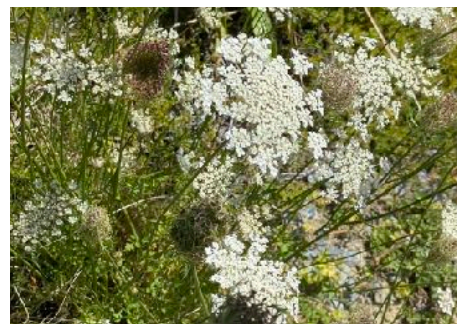
Yarrow has been used in sleep pillows to induce prophetic dreams, and fresh yarrow has been stuffed up nostrils to help with a migraine. I did demonstrate this at our meeting, and it was surprisingly pleasant. I think there were a few people who were keen to try it, and I'd love to know how it goes.

Yarrow is a perennial which self-sows, and can also be grown by division. It grows on rhizomes. The parts used for remedies are the leaves and flowers of the flowering plant. It does flower for quite a few months and in summer it graces our roads and edges of paddocks, vastly improving the look of them. It is popular in bridal bouquets and home flower arrangements as well.

Yarrow can be made into an infusion, using 4 grams of dried herb per cup. Let it steep for a few hours. Yarrow salve is also very helpful for cuts and grazes.

The main actions of Yarrow are that it is astringent, anti-inflammatory, diaphoretic and hypotensive. It can stop wounds bleeding, when fresh plant is crushed up or used in a salve. It is a menstrual regulator and a circulatory tonic. It can also help with colic and dyspepsia.

Pregnant women should not use Yarrow, please do not mistake it for Hemlock, and if in doubt don't use it and get the advice of an expert.





Trading table

We have a Trading Table at our monthly meetings - 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.

2024/25 Subs now due

Our financial year runs from 1 March - end February, which means your annual subscription is now due. This can be paid directly into our bank account, Wairarapa Herb Society, 03-0687-0361573-000. Please ensure you include your name and "2024 Sub".

Local publications

We aim to publish an article in the Carterton Crier and Midweek newspaper each month, usually the week before our monthly meeting. 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

Casual gathering - 27 January 2024

Report by Krysia Grant

We had a small informal gathering at our Community Herb Garden to start off the year. We enjoyed delicious teas and treats, including two different types of crackers. See recipes later in the newsletter.

Nao gave us an introduction to eco printing - the process of transferring the natural colours and shapes of leaves and flowers onto fabric.

We enjoyed the workshop so much that we thought we'd ask Nao to share her process at our first formal meeting of the year.



Nao has since made a number of small pillow slips which will be available for sale on our Trading Table. These are perfect to make into herb pillows by filling an inner with herbs of your choice, and will be available for sale for \$5 each. Pop one under your own pillow to help you sleep at night.



Eco printing - 20 February 2024

Report by Nao Hampton



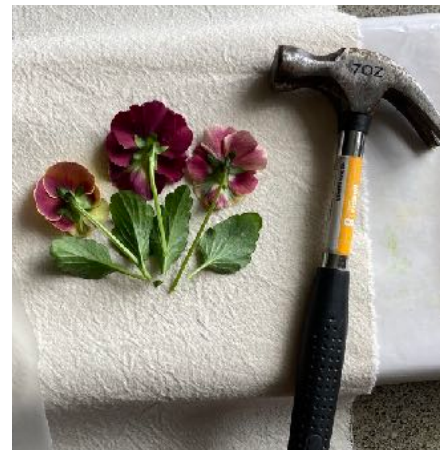
We had a hands-on session learning about eco printing on fabric with herbs, leaves and flowers. Twenty little hammers tapping away at once was fantastic!

Using plants from nature to colour fabric has been used for centuries however this session focused on shifting the pigments from plants to fabric by pounding. Transferring the rich colour pigments from plants onto fabric is improved by prepping the fabric.

The world of google offers up many ideas on using mordants (help pigments adhere to fabric) for fabric and wool prep, some become expensive and technical. The use of Alum is a common mordant (you can buy this online). You don't need to do the fabric prep but pre-washing the fabric is essential.

The cotton fabric we used had been through a simple treatment that's easy to do at home:

1. Wash the fabric in a machine first to remove any fixatives.
2. Fill an aluminium pot (traces of Alum will leach from the pot) with water and about a dessert spoon of cream of tartar (this makes colours brighter) and heat to simmer. General rule is 1 1/4 teaspoons per 100g fabric.
3. Add the fabric to the pot and remove from heat, give the fabric a stir now and then, leave for 6 -8 hours (or overnight).
4. Rinse with fresh water and line dry (do not put in the drier).
5. You can iron your fabric but this is not essential.



Now you're ready to gather your herbs, flowers or leaves and lay them on the fabric in any design you like.

Cover with a second piece of fabric or wax paper or a freezer bag and place on a firm surface (a bread board perfect). You can tape down large flowers to hold them in position if you want to.



Using a small hammer tap/pound (don't bash) the plants until you can see the colour coming through. Be gentle with soft green stems as they tend to be water heavy and end up mashing (test on a scrap of fabric to see how they react). Gently lift the top layer and have a look to see if enough colour has transferred.

If it has, remove the spent plant matter and leave the fabric to rest and dry. If you want to add another leaf or two, or one area needs more colour you can do that now.

Some plants will surprise you, like borage flowers give pink dye, and many herbs will give a brown colour from pounding.

The photo shows pansies on fabric with and without mordant treatment.

Review of previous outing

Lichen Lodge - 2 March 2024

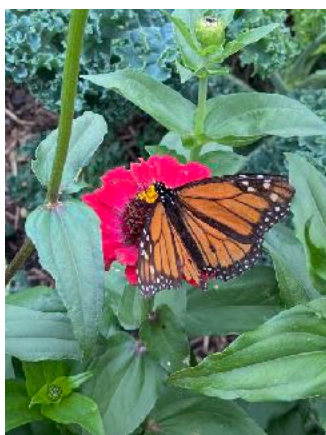
Report by Carolyn Peterson

A small group of herby souls enjoyed a visit to Carolyn & Des's property, now six plus years along from when it all started in 2017.

It was super to have Di and Ian Grant, (longstanding members) and new member Karen Rees visit.

We wandered around the different areas of Caro's garden seeing how different plants had responded to the long, dry summer. The zinnias and monarch butterflies were on cue, and provided a lovely splash of colour.

Caro has very helpfully placed plant labels next to all her precious plants, shrubs and trees - something for us all to aspire to.



Caro's top three gardening tips:

1. Over a hot summer when the sun is intense, shade vege gardens containing sweet basil, coriander, lettuces and seed-raising beds with shade cloth, be it an old sheet, table cloth, shower curtain etc. That will keep the leaves soft and vivid in colour and avoid sunburn.

2. Recycle the twisted paper handles from paper supermarket bags. These are handy for using as ties around bunches of flowers, herbs you hang to dry, staking tomatoes etc.

3. Label your specialty plants that you're not likely to recall names of readily, and those that are sentimental to you.

AGM - 8 June - please diary

If you are keen to join the Committee, or have a person you would like to nominate, please let Jenny know by emailing waiherbs@gmail.com.

We are particularly needing to fill the following two positions:
Secretary - Jenny has exciting travel commitments to juggle this year.

Newsletter Editor - Krysia has her hands full with the Treasurer's position. Our newsletter, Chamomile, is published four times per year.

Marketplace

Roses for sale

4 x Cecile Brunner. The Sweet Heart climbing rose.
3 x Compassion shrub roses. This depends on how you train them.

\$12 each or 2 for \$20.

Contact Carolyn on 3773698 or text 027 4040739.

Strawberry plants for free

Runners available from a lovely juicy strawberry (variety unknown).

Contact Krysia on 027 475 3383 or krysia.grant@gmail.com.

Recipes

Swedish crackers (Knackerbrod) - baked by Ruth Henry for our January meeting.

Ingredients

220g wholemeal stoneground flour (1½ cups)
220g rolled (wholegrain if you prefer) (2 cups)
1 tsp salt
75g sunflower seeds
75g sesame seeds
75g linseed seeds
40g pumpkin seeds
700 ml warm (hand temp) water
1 Tbsp olive oil



Add 1 tsp cumin or fennel seeds, etc, if you like
And sprinkle extra salt after spreading mix on trays before putting in oven.

Method

Preheat oven to 130°C.

Mix all the dry ingredients together in a large bowl and add the water and oil.
Oil a very large oven tray (I use three) and pour the mixture onto the trays.
It should be the consistency of porridge. Spread as thin as possible (the thinner the better).

Important: Bake for 15 minutes, remove and cut squares.
Return to oven and bake for 1-2 hours at 130°C.

Seed crackers - baked by Nao Hampton for our January meeting.

Ingredients

1/3c oats
1/3c linseed or flaxseed or chia seeds (or combination up to 1/3 cup)
1/3c sesame seeds
1/3c pumpkin seeds
2/3c flour (use wholemeal or a combination of flours)
½ - 1 tsp salt
1/3c olive oil
2/3c water (approximate!)



Note: You can add different flavours such as fennel seeds, cumin seeds, paprika, chilli salt etc.

Method

Preheat oven to 180°C (I use the fan bake option).

Mix all ingredients together to form a paste.
Line a baking tray with baking paper and put half the mixture on the paper. Cover with a second piece of baking paper and roll as thin as possible. Then remove top piece of baking paper.
Sprinkle with salt flakes
Score squares ready for breaking apart.

Bake for 15 minutes. Allow to cool slightly before breaking apart.