

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 are normally organised on the first Saturday of the month.

Committee members

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

Contact

waiherbs@gmail.com

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A note from our President

Greetings to our Herb Whanau

Early signs of an approaching spring are everywhere in my garden and while writing to you, I look at a small branch from a wild cherry tree, *Prunus Avium*, in full flower, picked this morning. Wild cherry bark has many medicinal benefits as it eases coughs, is astringent, opens the airways and is used for digestive disorders. I understand that this tree is a bit of a nuisance in New Zealand as it spreads quickly and can be invasive. There are also a lot of weeds which fall into this invasive category, particularly in spring when dandelions, cleavers and chickweed are prolific. In our sessions, we have studied the safe identification and usage of some of these weeds and I hope you are making the most of their abundance using these herbs in smoothies, herbal soups or salads to spring clean your system.

The cherry flowering season is almost here. Hanami is the name of the ceremony in Japan of gazing at Sakura, the flowering cherry tree. The Sakura tree symbolises good fortune, new beginnings and revival. Our outing in September is to Aston Norwood gardens, whose owners traveled to Japan to select trees for the New Zealand climate. Let's hope we have our timing right to see the fleeting beauty of these trees.

We are working on putting the finishing touches to our new Constitution - please join us at our October meeting to vote for the new Constitution.

We have some great sessions and outings coming up, and we will close our year at Maru Manu Garden in Featherston, with a shared Christmas lunch and an exchange of a small eco present.

If you feel inspired to be part of our team please get in touch, we would love to hear from you. We have a vacancy for a committee member after two unforeseen resignations.

With best wishes
Christine

Welcome to new members

A warm, herby welcome to our new member Viv Webster-Jones.

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

Upcoming meetings

17 September, 1.30pm

Herbal teas for spring cleaning the system with Lorraine Erith.

15 October, 1.30pm

Special General Meeting.
Meeting details still to be finalised..

19 November, 1.30pm

Christmas craft with Nao Hampton.

Upcoming outings

21 September, midday

Aston Norwood, Kaitoke. Come and see the cherry blossoms. Book your own ticket and meet at the gardens at midday.

1747 State Highway 2, Kaitoke.

5 October, 1.30pm

Tarata Gardens - a two hectare woodland style garden created over the last 25 years.

139 Tararua Drive, Masterton.

3 November, 9.00am

Annual plant sale, Carterton Square. Please email whsadmin@gmail.com to let us know if you can work on the stall.

7 December, 12.30pm

Christmas shared lunch at Maru Mana Gardens.

951 Remutaka Road, SH1, Featherston.

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.

AGM - 22 June 2024

We had a good turnout for our AGM and mid-winter lunch at the Gladstone Inn. Thank you everyone who came and attended the meeting - the AGM is a compulsory aspect of being an incorporated society. Our 2023/24 Performance Report has been uploaded to the Charities Services website and you can view it on this [page](#).



Changes to the Incorporated Societies Act

At our AGM on 22 June we voted unanimously to continue our status as an incorporated society. The main advantage of being an incorporated society is that we have a separate legal status, i.e. committee members are not personally responsible for any obligations of the Society.

We are now working on a revised constitution to ensure we are compliant with the new Incorporated Societies Act and we will share this with you soon. A new constitution must be accepted at a Special General Meeting (SGM) and then we can apply for registration under the new Act. At this stage, we plan to hold that SGM at the beginning of our October meeting. This is a piece of work that your Committee are undertaking - be assured, it's not the most glamorous of tasks!

Seed saving and potting up seedlings

A reminder to save seeds and pot up any seedlings which are coming up in your garden. We have an annual herb sale later in the year; this is our annual fund raising event, so the more herbs the better.

We have a new stamp for our seed packets, and it would be great to fill them with some of your favourite seeds.





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 held on Saturday, 12 October at 10.00am. 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. 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.

Library news

Our library has a great collection of books covering many aspects of herbs - from propagating, growing and storing herbs to using herbs in the kitchen, in craft and for medicinal purposes. Our catalogue can be found [here](#).

The library is open during our monthly meetings and books are available for members to borrow. We also have a collection of the Herb Federation monthly newsletter, Herbnews, and copies of Dittany - Dittany used to be the annual Herb Federation publication. These publications are full of interesting articles about all things herbs and are a great way to increase your herbal knowledge.

We have recently received donations from past and present members, for which we are very grateful.

We regularly add books to our library, and welcome ideas about new books to buy.

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), 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 each.

19 November Christmas Craft meeting

November is our last Courthouse meeting for 2024 and our plan is to guide you through creating a seasonal table display to take home. There will be more information closer to date.

We encourage you to start looking out for a pot/tin/dish (that could hold a candle), from home or from a second hand shop and put it aside to bring along.

You may want to have a potted aromatic herb as a central element, so a terracotta pot is a great idea. Or you might want to use a vase and have fresh garden flowers. The inspirational picture below has an inverted glass placed in a covered tin elevating a candle. I have put two examples of other central pieces that could be used. Dried herbs or flowers also look great.

See you in November with your creative hats on.





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 50 members.

Six 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](#).

Review of previous meetings

Using herbs in cooking - how to make a Coriander Chutni - 16 July 2024

Report by Krysia Grant

We enjoyed a very informative and tasty session with Nalini Baruch. Nalini has an Indian background and is a passionate foodie; together with her husband Colin, they own Lot 8. In addition to taking us through her recipe below, we learned:

- Seeds should be toasted on the stove top, on the lowest heat possible - never be in a hurry.
- Use your fingers to test when the seeds are ready - you should be able to feel that the seeds are dry.
- Kosher salt has a clean salty taste and has anti-caking agents, however, does not contain iodine. Because of its clean salty taste, it is Nalini's preferred cooking salt.

Ingredients

- 1 bunch coriander – about a cup
- 2 cloves garlic - medium
- 1 whole green chilli - more if you prefer a hotter taste
- ¼ brown onion – medium, peeled
- 2 medium tomatoes
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ tsp freshly toasted and ground coriander seeds - optional

Method

Thoroughly wash the coriander
Remove the roots and freeze for future use
Put the coriander leaves and stems, garlic, chilli, onion, tomatoes, and salt into a blender
Blend on high until a paste like consistency is achieved.
Empty into a glass or ceramic dish
Add lemon juice and extra virgin olive oil
Stir to mix well
Taste for salt
Add a fine dusting of ground coriander if required.

Serve the chutni immediately, or store in an airtight container in the fridge. It will keep for 2-3 days. If storing for later use, hold back the ground seeds until ready for serving.



Nalini's Cook's notes

Coriander roots and stems may have soil in the folds which should be removed before use. Chop and leave in a bowl of water for a few minutes for the soil to settle to the bottom. Scoop out the coriander, instead of draining the water as soil can travel with the solids.

To reduce the heat content of the chilli, remove the seeds. Green chillies give a distinctive taste to the Chutni which red chillies do not. For extra heat, red chillies can also be added to the mix.

Herbs for brain and gut health - 21 May 2024

Report by Cindy Munn

The gut is now commonly understood to be the '2nd brain'; it contains around 100 million neurones, influencing our thoughts and emotions. B12 and serotonin are both made in the gut. It turns out 'gut instinct' is a thing! Looking after our digestive tract is also looking after our brain. 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. It is also felt as headaches, migraines and brain fog, amongst other issues. Reducing inflammation is a good starting point to improving gut and brain health.

There are some very useful herbs for reducing inflammation and easing gut irritation. Plants in the mint family are easy to use and grow. Many mints taste delicious, and contain phytochemicals and nutrients that soothe the digestive tract. Other plants we can grow, and use, include Aloe Vera and Lemon Balm. Both of these are found in supplements used for soothing the digestive tract. Interestingly, herbs that help our gut health are often also good for our moods, and our brains.

Recipes

Simple Sauerkraut Recipe - made by Cindy as she talked to us about gut and brain health.

Ingredients

- 1 small green cabbage or half a large cabbage (approx 600 or 700gms)
- 1 dessertspoon of good quality sea salt (not iodised table salt)

Method

Cut cabbage into fine strips
Put into a bowl with the salt
Massage and squish the cabbage until it is soft and the liquid is able to cover the cabbage
Put it into a sterilised jar (you don't want the wrong bacteria) and weigh it down with either clean stones wrapped in a cabbage leaf, or another jar slightly smaller, and filled with water as a weight, so that it sits inside the main jar and holds the cabbage down under the juice.

Leave at room temperature for a couple of weeks so that it can ferment. Do not leave in the sun. Keep checking all the cabbage is under the liquid. Then put the lid on the jar and store in the fridge.

Start with about 1 teaspoon per day; it's very nice in a sandwich or as part of a salad.



Oatmeal raisin cookies - baked by Krystia Grant for our July meeting.
Recipe from *The Kiwi Country Girl* website.

Ingredients

115g butter softened	¾ cup /105g flour
½ cup brown sugar	1½ cups rolled oats
¼ cup white sugar	½ teaspoon baking soda
1 egg	½ teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon vanilla extract	¼ teaspoon salt
½ cup raisins	

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C and line baking tray with baking paper.
2. Cream butter and sugars using a stand or handheld mixer on high speed until creamy. Add egg and vanilla and beat on medium speed until combined.
3. Add all remaining ingredients and mix on low speed until combined.
4. Using a cookie scoop or spoon, scoop the cookie dough onto the prepared tray.
5. Bake for 12 minutes, until just starting to go golden brown.
6. Remove from the oven and allow to cool on the tray for 15 minutes before transferring to a cooling rack.

Date Coffee Loaf - baked by Nao Hampton for our herb garden clean up

Ingredients

2½ cups chopped dates	1½ cups prepared hot coffee or espresso
1½ teaspoon baking soda	1¾ cup all purpose flour
1 teaspoon cinnamon	⅛ teaspoon nutmeg
¼ teaspoon salt	½ cup butter
¾ cup brown sugar	½ cup granulated sugar
1 large egg	1 tablespoon vanilla
1 cup walnuts toasted and roughly chopped	

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C.
2. In a large bowl, combine the dates, hot coffee or espresso and baking soda. Set aside.
3. In a small bowl, combine the flour, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt.
4. Using a mixer, beat the butter and sugars together.
5. Beat in egg and vanilla.
6. Strain date mixture and set dates aside. Add the liquid from the date mixture alternately with the flour mixture (about three times) to the ingredients in the bowl, ending with the liquid. Scrape bowl well and beat until just smooth.
7. Fold in the dates and toasted walnuts.
8. Grease a regular loaf pan with butter or baking spray. Cut parchment paper to fit the bottom and sides of the pan.
9. Pour the batter into the greased and parchment paper-lined loaf pan.
10. Bake for about 50 minutes and leave in pan until nearly cool. Freezes really well.

When limes are in season, Nao makes a lime drizzle - 4 tablespoons of icing sugar mixed with enough lime juice to make a runny paste and then drizzle this over the loaf.

Herb Garden tidy up - 7 September

We had a lovely time working in our Community Herb Garden, with a cuppa and a chat.

Thanks to everyone who came to help - what a difference several hands can make in a short period of time.

Working bees will be more frequent over the coming months as we keep on top of the weeds and keep the garden looking good.



Member contribution



Carolyn Peterson has been busy preserving her olives. She starts preserving when her lemons are ripe.

Carolyn used lemon, garlic and rosemary to infuse her brine, which works its magic over a few months and up to a year.