

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

Seasons Greeting to our Herb Whanau

2023 is fast drawing nigh and to me it has felt akin to a roller-coaster! As we plummet towards the end of this year, a busy family time awaits with two significant celebrations in mid-December.

With our bounty of lemons this year, I experimented with Limoncello; an Italian liqueur best served cold following a hearty meal. Being a carminative, it aids digestion. Patiently, as gardeners are, I await the celebrations ahead and the sampling!

I am now enjoying harvesting both Anzac and Californian poppy petals which I dry for use as sleepy-time tea. If you have enjoyed herbal experiments this year, I invite you to share these with us, for our next newsletter.

A big thank you to all who contributed plants and time to our successful herb sales at the Carterton Plant Market. It's a fun event! More plants were sold the following week at the Masterton Community Garden which was part of the Pukaha Mt Bruce fundraiser garden tour.

We have our WHS Christmas 🎄 lunch on Saturday, 2 December at Hattenburn. I do hope you are free to join us at this private residence for a shared lunch & bubbles. It's a very special property.

Two thoughts to leave you with:

"Are we trying to save the planet with renewables, or are we just trying to save our current lifestyle?" Mike Joy, Victoria University Professor, WTA Nov.16

And ... Tea to the English is really a picnic indoors.

Nga mihi nui kia koutou katoa
Carolyn/Caro

Welcome to new members

A warm, herby welcome to our new members:

Elisabeth Creevey
Julia Day
Nikki Haabjoern
Indra Keinzely
Helen Mathewson
David Niznik
Odette Rowe
Sarah Webster
Kylie Wheelman
Jo Woodcock

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

Upcoming meeting

27 January, 1.30pm

Casual meeting at the Community Herb Garden, Haumanu House, behind the Police Station in Carterton. Bring a small plate to share, and your favourite garden tool if you'd like to do some weeding!

.....
We're working on our schedule for 2024 and topics may include:

- the use of herbs for animal health,
- foraging to supplement our daily vitamin intake,
- visit a experienced Māori healer in her Rongoā garden,
- garden visits,
- a report on the Herb Conference including the workshop on herbs for diabetes, and
- our scholarship students will report on their progress and present some of their work.

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

Herb Federation Conference 2023

Report by Christine Volker

The Taranaki Herb Society hosted the biennial Herb Federation conference from 6 - 8 November, and as the Programme looked interesting Krysia and I decided to set out to travel to Taranaki.

We arrived on Sunday, the last day of the well known Taranaki Garden Festival, and we managed to see two gardens on the way. The sunny afternoon let us fully enjoy Waiongana Gardens, close to New Plymouth - the gardens were truly stunning.



On Monday we started with an early walk along the waterfront to the conference venue, where on arrival quickly stocked up at the sales table which was filled to the brim.

In the morning we listened to two lectures; one by Phil Rasmussen, a well known herbalist and pharmacist, followed by Pounamu Skelton, who talked about her work and love of rongoā plants.

In the afternoon we had the opportunity to attend workshops on herbal tea making, herbs for diabetes, herbs for digestion and tonics and elixirs.

And on our way home we visited the Stratford Herb Society garden, at [Pioneer Village](#), and then had a wonderful walk around [Hollard Gardens](#) - put both on your list if you visit Taranaki!

We will report on the content of the lectures during one of our WHS afternoon sessions.

Carterton Library Display

From time to time, the Carterton Library asks us to prepare a display.

Our most recent display coincided with the Daffodil Festival and we selected books from the library and provided some herbs to accompany the books.

Thanks to Jenny and Christine for organising the display.





Herb garden tidy up

The Society's herb garden is located in the Community Herb 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.

Carterton Plant Sale



The Carterton Plant Sale was held on Sunday, 29 October and was another great success for us. We raised \$343.90, about the same amount as last year.

Many thanks to everyone that propagated seedlings and saved seed. It's great to think that our herbs will be finding new homes across the Wairarapa and beyond.

WHS Scholarships

Our 2023 WHS scholarship programme was positively received by the community. We had a good level of interest, and received some strong applications. As a result, we are very happy to announce that we have awarded five scholarships.

Congratulations to this years scholarship recipients: Indra Gaile, Nikki Haabjoern, Dave Niznik, Odette Rowe and Sarah Webster. We wish you all the best for your studies and look forward to following your herbal journey.

A reminder that we also support our members to do individual papers of the [Certificate Course](#). Please let Amanda know if you are keen, then 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 \$45 each.

Winning Rose

Thanks to Theresa Binning who picked a bunch of roses from our community herb garden and entered them in a recent Carterton Rose Society competition. Theresa entered the roses on behalf of the Wairarapa Herb Society, and we came second! Thanks also to Laura and Mike Hopkins for planting the rose ... if only we knew what its name was!



Library news

We have purchased Jane Wrigglesworth's new book *The Everyday Herbalist: The Essential Guide to Growing & Using Herbs in Aotearoa*. As the title suggests, Jane is a NZ author and this is a great general guide to growing and using herbs.



Kryisia has had a good read of this book, and will introduce it at one of our meetings.

Our library catalogue is available via the Herb Federation of NZ website and you can find it on our [information page](#). If you see a book that you'd like to borrow please get in touch with Amanda via waiherbs@gmail.com.



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 (though probably not nettles!).

Wairarapa Herb Society page

We have a dedicated page on the Herb Federation of New Zealand website where you can view back copies of our newsletter and find our library catalogue. Click [here](#) to get to the page.

Local publications

We aim to publish an article in the Carterton Crier and Midweek newspaper each month, usually the wee 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](#).

Up close with nettles

Written by Cindy Munn

Nettles (*Urtica dioica*) and spring go hand in hand. Nettles make a fantastic spring tonic. If you don't grow them, see if you can find a patch in a paddock. Once you've harvested your nettles, hopefully without being stung, lay them out on kitchen paper, or newspaper in a dry shady spot. Turn them once a day. They will take about a week to dry, and then you can break them up a bit and put them in very dry jars to store. Unlike some commercially produced herbs, they shouldn't be like crumbs as a lot of the goodness is lost. Now you have your material for nourishing infusions. The sting disappears once they are dry. Fresh nettles can be put into soup or stir fries for a nutritious hit. If you can't find a patch of fresh nettle, it is possible to buy dried nettle.

Nettle infusion has fantastic nutritional value. It can be drunk on a daily basis to help reduce inflammation, protect the urinary tract, help with hay fever, and with lowering blood pressure. Nettles are also an excellent blood purifier and have antibacterial and anti-fungal properties. Nettles are a good source of many minerals, and vitamins A, B, C and K. It's no surprise they have been used extensively, through time, for their nutritive value.

To make your tonic infusion, put a small handful of dried nettles into a glass jar that holds about 3 cups. Don't worry, a bit too much or too little won't be a problem. Pour boiling water over the nettles, and leave to infuse for at least 4 hours. Your infusion will be a lovely dark green colour, which means the active constituents have been extracted. Strain and keep in the fridge for up to 3 days. Drink 1 or 2 cups a day, either hot or cold. Nettles can be drunk regularly without any problem. Remember to put the leftover strained material onto your garden or into your compost.

Nettle fibres have been used to make cloth, and are a bit like hemp fibres in their nature. Celtic folklore likens the nourishment of nettles to that of mother's milk. Folklore also tells us that nettles can turn a hard and unloving situation into one of fertility and richness. Nettles do this literally in the ground as well. If you have unwanted nettles in your garden, and your friends don't want them, just chop them at the base and leave them on the ground as compost.



Review of previous meetings

Making plant labels - 19 September 2023

Report by Christine Volker

There is that sinking feeling when, at the end of the season, you've cut back your precious dahlia and there is no label to identify it. So, for our September afternoon meeting we took a practical approach and set out to make plant labels.

It makes sense to mark plant locations and to have labels. Looking online gets the creative juices flowing and some of us went to charity shops to stock up on cooking utensils, looking for wooden spoons in particular. The aim was to use less or no plastic as the material deteriorates in the sun.

We all had fun and took some Inspirations home, and we placed some of the creations in our community herb garden.



Enviroschools and Garden to Table - 17 October 2023

Report by Krysia Grant



We invited Gill Stewart to our meeting to talk to us about Enviroschools. Gill brought along some students from Carterton School and also Rohan Cahill-Fleury, the Wairarapa co-ordinator for the Garden to Table project.

Enviroschools has a kaupapa of creating a healthy, peaceful, sustainable world through learning and taking action together. We learned about how this happens in practice, and the students shared with us what they love about their garden to table experience. We expressed our support for the programmes and will work on providing practical support to ensure there are herbs in school gardens.

Herbal teas, infusions and decoctions - 21 November 2023

Report by Cindy Munn

Herbal tea is something many of us enjoy, and there are many delicious types.

Infusions and decoctions are much stronger than teas. Infusions are made by pouring boiling water over the herbs and leaving them for at least four hours, and up to twelve hours. One example, amongst many great options, is red clover infusion, which can be prepared in the evening, left overnight and then strained the next morning for drinking. You can happily make enough for a few days, and keep it in the fridge once its cooled down.



A decoction is made by simmering herbs for about 15 minutes. This is done to extract minerals, and other properties, from barks, dried fruit, citrus peel, and harder, woody herbs. Oatstraw comes into this category. By simmering it, the silica, iron, manganese, and other minerals, are released into the water. This method isn't useful for soft, leafy herbs. Other herbs you could experiment with decocting are dandelion root, ginger, dried berries, rose hips and citrus peels.

Some of my favourite herbs to infuse are nettles, red clover, dandelion leaf, and lemon balm. They can be drunk hot or cold, with honey or stevia if desired. Adding in small amounts of peppermint or lemon verbena can be tasty. Have fun experimenting.

Review of previous outing

A visit to Dursley Garden - 16 September 2023

Report by Christine Volker

A small group of us ventured out on a cool but sunny spring day to visit Dursley Garden, located at 1899 Te Ore Ore - Bideford Road, 20 minutes north east of Masterton.

Dursley Garden was laid out by landscaper Alfred Buxton in 1917 and the framework of the garden and house is much the same now as he envisaged it. Lovely mature trees tower over woodlands, and meadows were awash with hundreds of daffodils and bluebells; rhododendrons added splashes of colour everywhere.

Our host, Judith Callaghan, owner and head gardener, gave us a tour of the property and chatted to us while we enjoyed her home made scones and jamwe will be back!



Recipes

Blitzed Orange Cake - baked by Carolyn Peterson for our September meeting.

Recipe by Annabel Langbein, and a variation can be found [here](#).

This is fabulously quick recipe, and being that oranges are in season, enjoy! I added fresh chopped thyme to this recipe, or you can add Orange Balm. Thyme is my preference as it's far more flavourful. Or chopped, pre-soaked dates work well, and scatter poppy seeds on top.

It is so versatile. Bake as a slice or a cake. I sometimes divide between two loaf tins and pop one in the freezer.

Heat oven to 180°C

125g butter - melted
1 orange cut into chunks - skin on
2 medium eggs
175g caster sugar
175g self raising flour
1/4 cup milk
1/2 tsp vanilla essence

Whizz all ingredients in a food processor and bake for 45 minutes in the middle of the oven.

Ginger crunch - baked by Krysia Grant for our October meeting.

Ingredients

Base

150g butter
2 tablespoons honey
3/4 cup brown sugar

3/4 cup coconut
1 1/2 cups rolled oats
3/4 cup flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1 1/2 teaspoons ground ginger

Icing

110g butter
1 tablespoon golden syrup
2 teaspoons ground ginger
190g icing sugar (maybe a bit more)
Sliced naked ginger on top

Ginger crunch recipe continued

Method

Preheat oven to 180°C.

Melt butter, honey and brown sugar in a saucepan; remove from heat. Mix the dry ingredients together in a bowl; stir into the pot and mix thoroughly. Press mixture into a non-stick or lightly greased 20 x 30cm slice pan; bake for 15-20 minutes.

When cool, ice with hot ginger icing:

Heat all icing ingredients in saucepan until melted; beat until smooth and pour over the cool base. Sprinkle with naked ginger pieces. When completely cold cut through icing and separate squares.

Enjoy with a cuppa!



Cheese and herb muffins - baked by Jenny Dey for our November meeting

Jenny has been making these muffins for 10,000 years and the original recipe came from her mum-in-law!

1 and half cups of self-rising flour, 1 tsp dry mustard powder, quarter to half teaspoon sweet paprika depending on your taste.

Half cup of cheese (I use tasty or a strong cheddar)

Half to full cup of preferred herb, chopped. I generally use parsley or chives.

1 egg, 3/4 cup of milk

Beat egg and milk together add small amount of salt to your taste.

Sift flour, mustard and paprika, add cheese and herbs, mix in milk and egg into a dough.

Roll out on a floured surface, cut into rounds or preferred shape and put into a 200°C oven for 10 minutes.

Make some herb butter to spread on them.

Afternoon tea roster

If you'd like to make afternoon tea for one of our meetings, please get in touch with us at waiherbs@gmail.com. We'd love to try your tasty treats and publish your recipe in our newsletter.

Rose plants for sale, grown from cuttings.

Two years old; they'll take off once they're in the ground.

Cecile Brunner x 6

This Sweetheart Rose is a vigorous climber. Thumb sized Hybrid Tea buds, pale pink and sweetly fragrant.

Compassion x 3

A fragrant pink blend climbing hybrid tea rose developed by Jack Harkness. Strongly perfumed. Can be grown as a shrub & is fabulous for cut flowers. It starts with a beautiful pink bud and evolves through to a pinkish yellow. Disease resistant.

\$15 each or 2 for \$25. Contact Carolyn on 027 404 0739 or 377 3698.