



HERBAL THOUGHTS

HerbFest 2002

Well, it's finally here, not just cooler weather that gives our gardens that wonderful last flush before winter comes, but our very own HerbFest at Zilker Botanical Gardens. Austin Herb Society's involvement began at the '6th Annual Herb Market' in October of 1993. Cary Fisher was President and an active ingredient in achieving a successful event. Names like Vee Fowler, Anna Prothro, Kathryn LeBlanc and Cathy Slaughter pop up in the old notes. Many of those working on the 1993 event are members that are still involved with our current festival. In 1994 we took it over as the AHS Herb Festival to benefit the Austin Area Garden Council and Zilker Botanical Gardens.

Each year the Austin Herb Society puts on this terrific festival for our community and Central Texas. It is a day filled with beautiful herbs, flowering plants, and wonderful fall vegetables. Music is provided to lighten your steps as you visit booths filled to capacity with artisan made goods of all kinds, for you and your home, and to tempt your palate with herbal bites. Thanks go out to Joyce Billings and Cathy Slaughter, co-chairs of this year's festival and to all of our wonderful volunteers who in the end make this festival come alive year after year. So please join us again on this delightful day to benefit our lovely gardens and to enjoy a 'gardener's paradise' right here in Austin, Texas. October 5, 2002.

Looking forward to seeing you all there and happy gardening,

Michelle Chaput,
President, Austin Herb Society

DATES TO REMEMBER

Tuesday, October 1

General Meeting, 9:30 am at Zilker Botanical Garden. Landon Lockett will speak on "Native Texas Palms".

Lifelong conservationist Landon Lockett began investigating native palms in an effort to protect a small Brazoria county population of palms known no other place in the world. The effort was successful. In the process he and Smithsonian palm expert Robert Read discovered native Texas palms far north of their assumed range. They also identified a previously unknown hybrid palm. His slide show and talk will acquaint you with his research and familiarize you with the species and landscaping possibilities for this unique plant.

Saturday, October 5

HerbFest 2002 at Zilker Botanical Garden.

Volunteers are always welcome, Call Vee Fowler at 345-0719 or Jan Bland at 338-9815. Remember to bring baked goods for sale in the AHS booth! (see page 2)

Thursday, October 10

Study Group, 7:00 pm at Zilker Botanical Garden. Vee Fowler & Eloise Doherty present "Banish the Blahs - Herbs for Energy!"

Monday, October 21

Zilker Herb Garden Work Day, 9:30. Bring your garden tools and join the fun. Call Mary Ann Somers, 494-9372 or Sandra Holland, 258-4643.

Thursday, October 24 Field Trip

Join us for a private tour of **West Cave Preserve**. The tour will focus on the edible and medicinal plants in the area. Good walking shoes and a \$2.00 donation are required. We'll have BBQ in the area afterwards. Contact Ellen Zimmermann at 301-5838 or ellenzimm@earthlink.net for more information.

Saturday, October 25

'Joys of the Garden' series at Zilker Botanical Garden, 9:00 am. Maggie Blound will demonstrate designs for fall and holiday decorating using local natural materials. Call 477-8672 for more information.

Tuesday, November 5

General meeting, 9:30 am, Zilker Botanical Garden. **Cindy Burrows** will discuss "Health and Herbal Properties of Green Tea".

Thursday, November 14

Study Group, 7:00 pm at Zilker Botanical Garden. "Preparing for the Spring Garden"

HerbFest Baking

Remember to do a little baking for The Austin Herb Society Booth at HerbFest. Items should be wrapped individually in clear plastic wrap. Contact Cindy at Phillips at cindyphillips@imagicmail.com or 264-2779, if you have questions. She would also appreciate knowing what type of item you will be bringing.

Herbal muffins, cookies, slices of cake, flavored nuts and small loaves of bread always do well...don't know what to bring...check out the *AHS Cooks with Rosemary* or the *Austin Herb Society Cooks*



cookbooks for some yummy herbal recipes. Suitable recipes from these cookbooks include: Rosemary Bourbon Almonds, Rosemary Olive Bread, Sweet Rosemary Rolls, Rosemary White Chocolate Candy (sure to sell out quickly!), Rosemary Cranberry Bars, Apricot Thyme Cake, Ginger Pound Cake, Lemon Rose Geranium Cake, Rosemary Orange Pound Cake, Biscotti with Fennel Seed, Biscotti with Lavender & Orange, Ginger Cookies, Lavender Tea Cookies, Nutty Ginger Caramel Corn, Crispy Rosemary Cheese Wafers, and Herb Cheese Cracker Delights.

MEMBER NEWS

Where has longtime member **Wendy Clark** been??? Many of you may have noticed that the smiling face of this faithful member has not been around as much as in the past. She has had something other than herbs to keep her busy! Congratulations to Wendy on the adoption of her new baby, **Justin**. Wendy plans to attend HerbFest with the sweet one so be sure to welcome him to his first herbal event!

AHS members **Madalene Hill** and **Gwen Barclay** will be conducting a series of herbal seminars and workshops at Festival Hill in Round Top, Texas. For a schedule of events or more information about this classical music facility surrounded by beautiful gardens, visit festivalhill.org or contact Gwen at 979-249-5283 or hill.barclay@juno.com.

E-Mail address changes:

Cindy Burrows is now at Dburrows1@austin.rr.com
Eloise Doherty is now at engdesign@grandecom.net
Kim Lehman is now at kim.lehman@sbcglobal.net

OPPORTUNITIES

Keep Cookin'

Volunteer to bring goodies to one of our meetings. Contact Roberta Showerman, 442-8018 or Judith Craft, 451-2064.

Study Group

If you wish to help with presenting a program please call Vee Fowler at 345-0719 or Eloise Doherty at 927-8478, email engdesign@grandecom.net

Mayfield Magic

Mayfield Park is one of the hidden gems of Austin. Come and work in the herb garden we maintain at this historic site. Call Anna Prothro at 476-8025.

Celebrating the Holidays

Zilker Botanical Garden always celebrates the holidays with the 'Walk of Lights' and also a very festive Garden Center filled with trees decorated by the various clubs. Austin Herb Society has been doing this for several years. We have some wonderful ornaments in storage but we need mussie tussies (dried flower & herbs wrapped in paper lace & tied with ribbon) to spruce up our offering this year. If you're interested in crafts and helping out the Botanical Garden call Michelle Chaput at 343-7677 or email at michellechaput@yahoo.com.

Look & Learn Table

If you would enjoy preparing an educational display on herbs or gardening for an AHS general meeting, please contact Ann Wilson at e.l.wilson@ieee.org. The topic and format are your choice.

Study Group Change

The February and April meeting topics listed in the September newsletter have changed. On February 13th Vee Fowler & Eloise Doherty will present "No Bites - Herbal Insect Repellants". On April 10th Michelle Chaput will discuss "Herb Gardening in Containers".

What if all of Austin reads the same book?

Join other Austinites in reading *Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya. This book, about a young boy growing up in New Mexico, is especially interesting for members of The Austin Herb Society. Ultima, the elderly woman who comes to live with young Antonios family, has a strong influence on his views and role in life. Ultima is a cuerandera. The book is full of herbs and spells, used by Ultima to cure illness and fight evils in the village. There are discussion groups meeting throughout October at our public libraries. Visit www.cityofaustin.org/library for locations and a resource guide for *Bless Me, Ultima*.

Herb of the Year: Echinacea or Purple Coneflower

Michelle Chaput

The International Herb Association has named this wonderful native American plant Herb of the Year for 2002. You might recognize it as a tall, pink 'daisy' growing in local gardens. It is a perennial that is native to prairies from Texas to southern Canada. Native Americans used the healing power of echinacea for snake and poisonous insect bites and during purification rights during traditional 'sweats'. During the 1880's it was widely used as an anti-infective or antibiotic. Native Americans knew that it was from the roots that the powerful medicine was obtained. Today many herbalists still use this wonderful plant as an immuno-stimulant.



It is also a beautiful plant to use in the cutting garden or in a wild field. Seed can be started in the spring when the temperatures reach 70 degrees and sown out of doors in the garden. They like to be spaced about 1.5 feet apart. Roots can be divided in the fall and planted as can individual plants. They will winter over easily too. Once established echinaceas require little additional water unless Austin has an extended dry spell. If the winter is exceptionally dry and cold a mulch of straw or leaves will help them. You can divide the roots every four to five years and replant in good garden soil. To learn more on herbs try reading books such as *Rodale's Illustrated Encyclopedia of Herbs*.

Echinaceae plants will be available from HerbFest vendors!

An eye on Zilker Herb Garden

Salvia miltorhyzzia is now blooming in the southeast curve of the cloverleaf garden. Commonly known as red root sage or *dan shen*, it is a member of the Lamiaceae family and grows naturally in Asia. Hardy in Austin, this sage grows as a rosette of toothed leaves having spikes of blue purple flowers during the summer and fall. The roots are reddish purple and are used in traditional Chinese medicine for heart and circulatory disorders.

HERBFEST 2002 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Zilker Botanical Garden, Saturday,
October 5. Shopping and fun from 9:00
am to 5:00 pm.

Lectures in the main building

- 10:30 – 11:20 *Planting a Fall Garden NOW*
Ellen Zimmermann
- 11:30 – 12:20 *Herbs In a Texas Landscape*
Cheryl McGlaughlin
- 12:30 – 2:00 *Potpourri – A Gift of Memory*
Lucia Ferrara Bettler
- 2:00 – 2:50 *Nature's Growth Aids*
Steve Manion
- 3:00 – 3:50 *Culinary Herbs/Medicinal Uses*
Carlos Hernandez Calderoni
- 4:00 – 4:50 *Healthy Pet Food, Healthy Pets*
Marti Miller

Live Music in the Garden

- 10:30 – 1:00 Studebakers
- 2:00 – 4:30 Too Blue

Demonstration in the main building

2:30 – 3:30 *Designs for "Living" Spaces Inside & Out* with Paula Middleton

Sponsor News

Welcome El Interior! After publication of the last newsletter El Interior renewed their sponsorship. You can visit them at 1009 West Lynn in Austin, phone 474-8680, or website www.elinteriormex.com.

EZ Herbs phone number correction:
301-0959

EZ Herbs/Austin School of Herbal Studies

EZHerbs is offering a number of classes this fall, some taught by AHS members. Topics include making your own cosmetics, herbal medicines, cooking and aromatherapy. For registration or information call 301-0959 or visit their website at www.ezherbs.net.

Native Plants as Teas

Cindy Phillips

As I sat in my overgrown meadow with friends one evening the question arose “What wild things are growing here that are useful as food and medicine?” To my surprise as we began naming them, there were over 20 useful native plants growing within sight of us.

Native plants are all around us. They are our earliest food and medicine. Today plant material still provides the basis for most of our medicines, and herbal medicine is making a steady comeback.

One of the easiest methods for using plants for medicines is as a tea. Teas are easy to digest and carry the beneficial elements of plants to your system quickly and gently.

To make teas properly, bring water to a near boil; pour it into a glass or pottery teapot. Add fresh or dried plant material. Steep for about 10 minutes. Use 1-3 T. dried material to 1 cup water or 4-8 T. per quart, depending on the strength of the herbs. Dried herbs are stronger than fresh. Herbal tea will store in the refrigerator for 3 or 4 days. To dry plants of your own, hang the whole plant upside down in a cool dry place.

Here are a few suitable native plants and their properties:

- Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*): one of the herbs Johnny Appleseed carried to trade with native Americans, dandelion is a tonic for stomach and liver problems.
- Sweet Goldenrod (*Solidago odora*): promotes perspiration, stimulates the system, dispels flatulence and sweetens the taste of teas.
- Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*): young leaves make a soothing tea for colds, sore throats and coughs.
- Horsemint, Beebalm, Bergamot (*Monarda* sp.): used by the Cherokees to treat fever and

sleeplessness, and by the Shakers for sore throats.

- Passion Flower (*Passiflora incarnata*): bears an edible fruit high in vitamin A and niacin.
- Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*): High in vitamins A and C, relaxing and soothing.

There are any number of other natives that can be used for teas. These include Yaupon, Sorrell, Agarita, Blackberry, Sumac, Prairie Tea, Mock Pennyroyal, Spicebush, Nettle, and Burdock. Get a good book and investigate this wealth of plants.

If you are interested in trying native plants as herbal teas, there are some guidelines you should follow.

If purchasing plants, please do not purchase plants that have been taken from the wild without a permit. Today our valuable native plants are threatened with extinction. Native Ginseng, for instance is routinely poached from public lands. In some instances all plants are removed from a site. Our ginseng (95% of which is exported to Hong Kong for huge profits) doesn't produce mature seed until the 7th or 8th year. Other plants threatened include Black and Blue Cohoshes, Echinacea, Eyebright, Cota or Navajo Tea, Goldenseal, Spicebush, and Wild Yam. For the future of these valuable plants, know where they originated when you purchase them.

If wildcrafting yourself, BE SURE OF THE IDENTITY OF YOUR PLANTS. Never dig plants from the wild without permission. Never dig ALL the plants at one site. Make sure no pesticides or poisons were used on the plants, and don't pick near a highway. Step cautiously to minimize impact on the land. Take from a plant only once a season, and throw seeds back into the area harvested.

Consider growing your own bounty of native plants. Natives are well suited to our climate, attractive, useful and easy to grow. What more could you ask?

For more information about native plants contact the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center. Founded in 1982, this non-profit organization is devoted to educating people about the environmental necessity, economic value and natural beauty of native plants. Their annual fall festival and plant sale is October 5th & 6th. They are also offering a number of classes this fall. Topics include Macro Photography, Container Gardening, Native Grasses, and Trees, Shrubs and Vines of the Hill Country. Visit www.wildflower.org or call 512- 292-4200 for registration information.

Go Bake a Cake ...

Rosemary-Orange Pound Cake

Recipe taken from *Austin Herb Society Cooks*
(Purchase this delightful cookbook at the AHS booth at
HerbFest 2002)

1 ½ cups flour
¼ teaspoon baking powder
1/8 teaspoon baking soda
½ cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
3 large eggs
½ cup sour cream
2 teaspoons grated orange peel

1 teaspoon chopped fresh rosemary

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Grease and flour a 9 x 5-inch loaf pan. Combine flour, baking powder and baking soda. Set aside. In a mixing bowl, beat butter until fluffy, gradually adding sugar and vanilla. Beat in each egg, beating a minute for each egg, then alternately add dry ingredients and sour cream until combined. Stir in orange peel and rosemary. Pour batter into pan and bake for 60 minutes, or until toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool pan on wire rack for 10 minutes. Remove from pan to cool completely before slicing.

Austin Herb Society 2002/2003 Sponsors

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** 10% Discount for AHS members

Be sure to thank our sponsors when you visit their establishments this year, check www.austinherbsociety.org for news and updates in our sponsor listings

The Austin Herb Society, Inc. has been organized exclusively for the purposes of providing education regarding the benefits of cultivating and using herbs to promote better health and well-being, encouraging the growth and use of herbs for many beneficial purposes, and providing charitable and volunteer support to community gardens, libraries and/or other community projects.

Disclaimer: The information in this newsletter is for educational purposes only. It is not meant to diagnose, treat, or replace the advice of a health professional

HERBFEST 2002

Zilker Botanical Garden

Saturday, October 5, 2002 from 9AM to 5 PM

AN AUSTIN TRADITION!!!

Admission at the Gate is \$5.00 per person with children under 12 yrs. free. Advanced tickets may be purchased at the gift shop at Zilker Botanical Gardens (2220 Barton Springs Road, Austin, TX) for \$3.00 each. This family event features lectures, herbal plants and products for sale, fantastic food, Austin music and a children's corner. Bring the whole family, but please, keep all dogs on leashes. Visit www.austinherbsociety.org for more information.



The Austin Herb Society, Inc
Zilker Botanical Garden
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