



## HERBAL GREETINGS

### Explore the Wonderful World of Herbs:

February is the month to dream about your garden. What to add and what to move (rarely what to take out!) probably too rare in fact, and to look back over last year's lists and plans and while checking over your supplies and saved seed from falls bounty. It's a great month to make up new lists and plans. Be sure to take out all of those reference books and refresh your mind with our vast selection of herbs that we can grow so beautifully in Austin. And there are so many aspects of herbs that can be considered when planning an herb garden such as medicinal use, cooking, floral arrangements, and landscaping. When planning your additions to the garden, look at all of these that may interest you. Don't forget that herbs come in all shapes from trees to ground covers. Quince is a beautiful flowering tree. You can cook the fruit in a variety of ways but the fruit was originally used to treat sore throat and it is considered the oldest of cultivated plants. The Magnolia is originally from China and we can see from its shape that it's virtually unchanged for over 100 million years. It has been used for its aromatic, stimulant and tonic properties for centuries. The unpretentious Boxwood that we use as an edging plant has been used to treat rheumatism, expel worms, as a narcotic and the distilled oil is used to treat toothache and other problems. It is now considered too toxic use in the home and is poisonous to animals. And would you believe that Tomatoes are considered an herb. The acidic fruit pulp cleanses acne, refines pores and restores the ph of the skin. And of course, Oregano is wonderful to cook with but is a fine ground cover in Austin and does equally well in containers. When you're out looking at the herbs available to you be sure to bring that list you're making up and take a little time to read and explore the wonderful world of herbs.

Herbally yours, Michelle Chaput, President

## DATES TO REMEMBER

### Tuesday, February 4th

**General Meeting, 9:30 AM, Zilker Botanical Garden** Dr. Molly Ogorzaly will present "Gardens in Monet's Light" using a double slide show and music to illuminate Monet's palette of plants and color in the gardens of Giverny, France. Using slides of her own trips, the program will begin with an exploration of nature and the psychology of color.

### Thursday, February 13

**Study Group, 7 PM at Zilker Botanical Gardens** Lynda Noble & Gwen Sederholm "Herb Gardening with Children"

### Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>

**Executive Committee Meeting at 9:30 AM** is held at Zilker Botanical Garden. Executive Meetings are held each 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month. Contact Michelle Chaput, 343-7677 or [president@austinherbsociety.org](mailto:president@austinherbsociety.org)

### Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup>

An **Herbal Cooking Demo** by Cindy Phillips and Vee Fowler will be held at 6 pm at the home of Jan Bland. Space is limited. Call Ellen Zimmerman at 301-5838 for reservations. \$10.00 Fee.

### Tuesday February 25

**Mayfield Park Gardening Day is the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month starting at 9:30 AM.** Bring your trowel and gloves and come enjoy this wonderful home and garden. Contact Anna Prothro at 476-8025. Next gardening day is in February.

### Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup>

Our March field trip heads to **Bamberger Ranch** for a tour of this remarkable 5500-acre Hill Country paradise. We will learn more of the history of our Hill Country, see a bat cave, a wild herd of Antelope and discover many native plants along the way. There is a \$10.00 charge for the tour. Call Ellen Zimmerman at 301-5838 for information.

# OPPORTUNITIES

## **AHS at Texas Home & Garden Show**

**February 28 – March 2, 2003**

Along with just a handful of local nonprofit groups, the Austin Herb Society has been invited to participate in Lone Star Settings, a fundraising opportunity at the Spring Texas Home & Garden Show in Austin. Thousands of visitors at the show will be able to learn about AHS and see the wonderful table vignette designed with herbs and herbal products. Attendees will “cast their votes” for their favorite vignette by placing donation dollars in the collection box in each vignette. At the end of the show on Sunday all the contributions will be counted up and the group with the most money will be awarded a matching contribution (up to \$500) from the show's organizers.

The show will be held at the Austin Convention Center. For more information (including a discount coupon) go to <http://www.texashomeandgarden.com>. If you would like to help with the vignette or volunteer to work during the show, please contact Paula Middleton at [pcm@redbirdesign.com](mailto:pcm@redbirdesign.com) or 301-7100.

## **Get Growing Keep Going Symposium**

AHS is participating in the "Get Growing and Keep Going" Youth Gardening Symposium which is being held on **February 15**, 2003, Saturday afternoon at Martin Middle School, 1601 Haskell Lane. If you'd like to participate or help contact Lydia Noble at 266-7174 or Gwen Sederholm at 345-0720.

## **Fun in the Garden**

Treat a case of Spring Fever with a little dirt under your fingernails. Join the fun at a Zilker Botanical Garden Work Day. Work Days at Zilker Botanical Gardens:

**AAGC Horticultural Workdays** are Thursday mornings at Zilker Botanical Gardens.

For information call Sarah St. Laurent at 481-8256 (hit \*3) or [tjcgrc@swbell.net](mailto:tjcgrc@swbell.net)

**Hartman Prehistoric Garden Workdays** are

Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings. Call Craig Nazor at 836-5087 for more information.

## **Keep Our Society Strong and Active,**

We have many new volunteers for our committees but we still need chairpersons too. The following positions are open:

**Chairperson(s)** for both Mayfield Park and Zilker Herb Garden. Two positions are open. This person(s) will create a volunteer committee to work the herb garden. You don't need to have a lot of gardening experience just a willing spirit to do this job and two or three hours each month. It is a lovely experience and lots of fun. These positions can both be co-chaired.

**Vice President for Sponsors** also needs a chairperson. This person will send out letters to our current Sponsors and potential Sponsors and follow them up with a phone call. You will get lots of assistance in this position. Having a computer and typing skills makes this job easy. Also, this position is often a shared position or 'co-chaired' making it much easier. You'll get to know more about our club and sponsors in this position. If you'd like to serve on the Board of Directors or on one of the various committees please contact Michelle Chaput at 343-7677 or [president@austinherbsociety.org](mailto:president@austinherbsociety.org)

## **Many Thanks To our Committee Volunteers...**

### **Action Committee**

Cindy Burrows, Paula Middleton, Julie Crouch, Jan Bland, Joyce Billings, Michelle Chaput, Ellen Zimmermann

### **Zilker Herb Garden**

Susie Thomas, Julie Crouch, Sue Kothman, Peter Berry, Jean Bazar, Barbara Broering, Carie McGinnis, Michael Zitz-Evancih, Flora King, Karen Hayward, Kay Edwards, Nancy Wackerbarth, Sandra Holland, Betty Stahley.

### **Mayfield Park Herb Garden**

Judith Craft, Vee Fowler, Anna Prothro, Peter Berry, Julie Crouch, Michael Zitz-Evancih, Barbara Broering, Jean Bazar, Daphne Lambert, Peggy Stewart.

### **Outreach/Education Program**

Lydia Noble, Gwen Sederholm, Karen Hayward, Kay Edwards

## SPONSOR NEWS

**Barton Springs Nursery** now has e-mail. If you would like to be on their list please contact them at [bsnjennifer@austin.rr.com](mailto:bsnjennifer@austin.rr.com) and let them know your email address, and that you're a member of the AHS. They will send you a listing of their plants on sale; they currently have a wide variety of plants available.

### **AHS is a 501(c)(3)**

*Lydia Cates*

Good news for tax time - Membership dues and contributions paid to The Austin Herb Society, Inc. are tax-deductible under IRC 501(c)(3). As an educational organization, The Austin Herb Society, Inc. is a qualified non-profit organization according to the IRS. This means that membership dues and donations are tax deductible on your tax return in the year paid. This does not include payments for the luncheon, seminars, or books and merchandise. Membership dues and contributions paid to The Austin Herb Society, Inc. are tax-deductible under IRC 501(c)(3). Consult your tax preparer for advice.

### **Sweet Bay (*Laurus nobilis*)**

*Michelle Chaput*

The Sweet Bay or Bay Laurel is a lovely evergreen tree/shrub that does well in the Central Texas garden with a little care. This lovely tree is originally from the Mediterranean. It has small pale yellow flowers, shiny black berries and glossy, aromatic foliage and does well in containers or in the ground with protection during the coldest part of a Texas winter. It's a slow grower so be prepared to wait for it to mature or get a larger specimen to start with. The fresh or dried leaves are wonderful to add to soups, stews and marinades. The wood can be used to smoke food for an aromatic tang. A decoction of the leaves in a warm water bath relieves aching limbs and a diluted essential oil from the leaves can be used to treat sprains and rheumatic joints but be careful if you use it on skin because it may cause irritation. The leaves of this wonderful plant have been used as a mild insecticide. Be careful to choose the correct plant species, *Laurus nobilis*, because all other 'laurels' are poisonous. If you want to see a specimen then go out to the herb garden at Zilker and take a look. We currently have two large specimens for you to observe.

References:

Eyewitness Handbooks: Herbs by Lesley Bremness

The Herb Bible by P. McHoy and P. Westland

Herbs by E. Tolley and C. Mead

## Herbal Forum in Round Top

The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Herbal Forum at Round Top, Texas will be held on **Saturday, March 22** with optional workshops on Friday. Featured speakers are herb experts Madalene Hill and Gwen Barclay, author Ethne Clarke and author and botanist Barney Lipscomb. There will also be a plant sale and over a dozen demonstrations on a wide range of subjects including basil, herbal spa treatments and herbal beverages. Contact Gwen Barclay at 1-979-249-5283 or [gwenbarclay\\_herbs@hotmail.com](mailto:gwenbarclay_herbs@hotmail.com) if you are not already on the mailing list.

### **Zilker Garden Festival Tickets Available!**

Don't forget to purchase **tickets** to the Zilker Garden Festival! Although this fun event isn't until March 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, tickets are already for sale. Anna Prothro will have them at our January meeting or call her at 476-8025 to arrange to pick up some tickets. The advance price is \$3.00. Tickets at the gate are \$5.00!

#### Rosemary Sorbet

*Michelle Chaput*

¼ cup rosemary                    2 cups sugar  
5 cups water                      2 cups dry white wine  
6 Tablespoons fresh lemon juice

Add rosemary to sugar & water in saucepan. Bring to boil, stirring occasionally to dissolve the sugar. When sugar reaches boiling point, reduce heat to low and simmer for 5 minutes. Let it cool to room temp. and refrigerate over night. Strain the syrup & discard herb for use.\*

In a bowl blend 2 ½ cups of the syrup with the wine & lemon juice. Freeze in an ice-cream machine or in a container placed in your freezer. If you are using your freezer then occasionally break up the ice crystals by hand and stir. Then refreeze. Stirring and refreezing produces a smoother sorbet.

(Ice-cube trays make great containers to freeze sorbets in) Serve in small ice cream sized bowl with a sprig of rosemary.

\*This is a basic syrup for sorbets. Any herb can be substituted, makes 1 quart

## Know Your Soil

The February meeting of the Austin Organic Gardeners will feature K. Chandler from Texas Plant and Soil Lab in Edinburg, Texas. This soil testing lab is internationally known, and provides extensive soil analysis including micronutrients, at a nominal fee. All recommendations utilize organic approaches. Their web site states they are "an international leader in soil fertility and plant nutrition since 1938." The meeting is at 7:30 pm on Monday, February 10, 2003 at Zilker Botanical Garden. Now is the time to prepare your soil for spring planting!

### LIBRARY BLUES

The Following Books are **missing** from The AHS Library. Please return them immediately!

*Back to Eden*

*Herb Book by John Lust*

*Complete Guide to Herbal Medicines*

*Taylor's 50 Best Herbs and Edible Flowers*

*Successful Gardening A to Z Perennials*

There are also a number of members with overdue books; if you have one of the following you **MUST** contact Dorothea Mims immediately at 258-9364 or [drmmims@sbcglobal.net](mailto:drmmims@sbcglobal.net) for a lending extension:

*Neil Sperry's Complete Guide to Texas Gardening*

*Landscaping with Herbs*

*Herbal Medicines by Charles W. Fetrow*

*Dr. Pitearrn's Complete Guide*

*Butterflies (Peterson's Field Guide)*

*Herbs for Texas*

*The Herbarist*

## *Silk Road Cooking: A Vegetarian Journey*

By Najmieh Batmanglik

Marge Publishers, Washington, DC 2002

Reviewed by Madalene Hill

The writer explains 150 dishes that trace a fascinating culinary linkage. All have their origins along the ancient network of trade route know as the Silk Road, stretching from China in the east westward to the Mediterranean. On this road moved not just trade goods but ideas, customs, tastes and basic cooking ingredients including herbs. Najmieh Batmanglik was born in Iran and received her education in this country

and France. For the past 25 years she has traveled the Silk Road working with both chefs and home cooks along the way. I have not heard Miss Batmanglik speak but a friend heard her recently in Houston and was impressed with her knowledge of Silk Road Food as well as "seasonings." The book outlines not only the Silk Road and the Spice and Trade routes, but adds also the Sea and Incense Routes. Travel on the Persian Royal Road and other Ancient Roads might be lost to time were it not for the foods and the ingredients that made them the hallmark of the peoples who traveled the roads and enjoyed the foods. Cooking traditions often define geographic terms. To speak of Silk Road cooking is to take a look back in time. Along these ancient routes, vegetables, fruits, grains, herbs and cooking techniques passed from one civilization to another all the while becoming local specialties. The author describes this process as a "mutual enrichment that shaped the cuisines of far flung cultures in a profound way, especially their vegetarian dishes." She further states, "It is one of the great stories of cooking – yet one of the least known."

Cheese, fruit, grains, fresh herbs and vegetables welcome guests. To these, would be added a variety of little dishes, ancestors of Turkish meze, Greek mezdes, Indian samosas or Spanish tapas. Mint is one of the most important herbs along the Silk Road. A symbol of hospitality in all cuisines, it is usually the first herb offered, often in a hot tea. Garlic, leek, onion, arugula, coriander, watercress, nigella seeds, tumeric, ginger, saffron and dill, star anise, cloves, cinnamon, many varieties of basil, chiles, curry leaf, fenugreek, together with curry powder are just a partial listing of herbs and spices that have been used for thousands of years. Yes, and you thought the use of herbs was a new, modern, trendy addition to the fine ark of cookery.

The photography is beautiful and you will probably want to turn to the soup or salad section if the weather is dark, cold and windy. Cut those fresh herbs if you can, but if dried herbs are to be used, reduce the measurements by one third and enjoy. Who knows, you may find you will need to add some additional herbs to your garden come spring.

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## Permaculture

Sharon Crowe

Permaculture is a complete, practical system and philosophy for sustainable living. It shows us how to start small in our daily lives, gaining skills for everyone from apartment and urban dwellers to those in rural lifestyles. It incorporates methods for resource and energy conservation, while taking care of the earth and ourselves, with no negative impact on our world.

The concept of Permaculture was developed in the 60's by Bill Mollison, a university professor and natural scientist from Tasmania who grew increasingly dismayed at the destruction of the natural resources around him. He set out to offer an alternative to protest movements, to create a positive form of living that respected the earth and preserved resources. His first book was published in the 70's; a comprehensive design course and certification followed. The concept has spread worldwide, and there are now hundreds of thousands of graduates, certified teachers, and numerous permaculture systems operating in "ecovillages" around the world.

Free, introductory classes on permaculture are held twice monthly at Habitat Suites Hotel, 500 East Highland Mall Boulevard. Upcoming classes will be February 11 & 25<sup>th</sup> from 7:30 to 9:00 pm.

There is also a 10-day intensive course on the Fundamentals of Permaculture to be held April 4-13; at Oasis Gardens; participants will stay on-site throughout the course; healthy vegetarian meals will be provided.

The instructor is Patricia Allison from Earthaven, an ecovillage near Black Mountain, North Carolina. Patricia has practiced and taught Permaculture concepts and sustainable living for many years, along with teaching experience in organic gardening, off-the-grid living, home birthing, home schooling, grass-root politics, and homegrown spirituality. There is a fee for this event and registration is required.

Questions and registration information can be directed to Sharon Crowe, 442-3959, or 431-6475; scrow@austin.rr.com

## Website Watch for Basil, Herb of the Year, 2003!

Herb Society of America Basil Fact Sheet:

<http://www.herbsociety.org/factsheets/basil.pdf>

Medicinal information about Basil:

<http://www.herbmed.org/Herbs/Herb55.htm>

Children's Gardening with Basil:

<http://www.kidsgardening.com/Basil/>

Purdue University Basil Fact Sheet:

<http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/CropFactSheets/basil.html>

Basil in a Home Garden:

<http://www.io.com/~wilsonone/beautifulbasil.htm>



*Ocimum basilicum* – Herb of The Year, 2003

*The Austin Herb Society, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to 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

## **Austin Herb Society 2002/2003 Sponsors**

### **Acupuncture Medical & Research Centre\*\***

371-1121 [www.AcupunctureAustin.com](http://www.AcupunctureAustin.com)

### **Balcones Acupuncture Clinic\*\***

890-0288

### **Barton Springs Nursery Company**

328-6655

### **Big Red Sun**

480-9749

### **Chez Zee Restaurant**

454-2666 [www.chezzee.com](http://www.chezzee.com)

### **El Interior**

474-8680 [www.elinteriormex.com](http://www.elinteriormex.com)

### **EZ Herbs\*\***

301-0959 [www.ezherbs.net](http://www.ezherbs.net)

### **Gabriel Valley Farms\*\***

930-0923 (wholesale only)

### **Gardens**

451-5490 [www.gardens-austin.com](http://www.gardens-austin.com)

### **Ginger Webb, Certified Herbalist**

476-8422

### **The Great Outdoors Nursery**

488-2992 [www.gardenadventures.com](http://www.gardenadventures.com)

### **Howard Nursery**

453-3150

### **It's About Thyme\*\***

280-1192 [www.itsaboutthyme.com](http://www.itsaboutthyme.com)

### **The Natural Gardener**

288-6113 [www.naturalgardeneraustin.com](http://www.naturalgardeneraustin.com)

### **Cindy Phillips Painting and Clay Studio**

264-2779

### **Jennifer Phillips, Dog Obedience Trainer**

288-3271

### **ScentGarden**

280-3544 [scentgarden.com](http://scentgarden.com)

### **Wheatsville Co-op**

478-2667

\*\* 10% Discount for AHS members

*Be sure to thank our sponsors when you visit their establishments this year, check [www.austinherbsociety.org](http://www.austinherbsociety.org) for news and updates in our sponsor listings*



### ***The Austin Herb Society, Inc***

Zilker Botanical Garden

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