HERB SOCIETY OF MANITOBA NEWS

Mission Statement: The Herb Society of Manitoba is dedicated to promoting knowledge, use and enjoyment of herbs through education, programs, research and sharing the experience of its members with the community.

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Common Sense Warning:

Any information in the HSM News is not intended to prescribe or diagnose in any way or meant to substitute for professional help in any way. The intent is to offer general information and historical use of herbs.

Editor's Message



Are we there yet?

What a journey we've had through this past cold winter but with how it's looking like outside today, perhaps spring is around the corner? I know another big blast of snow is predicted for this week but after then, maybe spring will be sprung?

How are you doing with your gardening plans? I bet many of you have started seeds indoors for your garden beds or pots. It's always an exciting time of year to dream of the growing season ahead of us, deciding what to plant and to experience that first robin sighting! While I'm waiting to see the first one, I did see a junco sitting on the backyard fence today! They are always the first new birds to arrive in my backyard in the spring. With hearing the darling chickadees singing again and seeing more birds, I feel hopeful that we are getting there!

There's more good news ahead with the announcement that HerbFest 2022 will return in June! Please check out Shelley W.'s article in this issue with all the details and what to expect this year. It's always been such a fun event, both in attending and in helping out at so please



Herb Society of Manitoba Scholarship

Our scholarship applications are now available on our website for students and/or educational institutes to apply for a scholarship. We will continue to have two scholarships of $200.00 each. The Student scholarship will go directly to a qualified individual to assist in their education, while the Education Institute scholarship will be available for specific herb/ gardening/agricultural programs. Scholarships will be awarded on a point system established by the HSM Board and will be coordinated by the Education Committee.

If you know of a student or education institute's program that is deserving of a scholarship, please ask the student or teacher to apply. All application information is on our website: **www.herbsocietymb.com**

consider volunteering a few hours of your time this June if you can. The first time I volunteered at HerbFest several years ago is what convinced me this was a wonderful organization to be a member of and where I met my first HSM friends!

There is also another great speaker lined up for the April monthly Zoom meeting and Karen S. will be sending reminders and a link to all to join in and learn something new. It sounds like there'll be a few timely tips on getting the old bod stretched and ready for gardening and when I say old bod, I'm not talking about you - I'm talking about me!

Inside this issue you'll find summaries of our inspiring February and March speakers provided by Cindy L., as well as a great write-up of our Herb of the Month by Karen S. I didn't realize that the Broadleaf Plantain that pops up in our lawns was such an edible backyard weed! We've also got some great springtime recipes to enjoy plus a fascinating look into the many sides of one of my favourite herbs - thyme - written by HSM member Christine W. Thank you Christine for your article and for the bonus recipes! Please review our President's Report and consider her request for taking on one of the positions available now or in the fall. You can volunteer for a job as an individual or as a duo with a friend. You won't regret it!

In the meanwhile, take care, keep dreaming of spring and enjoying the outdoors again. I hope you too spot your first robin soon!

Thanks again for reading the HSM News and I'll see you one more time for the June issue,

Sandra Holmberg

Editor, HSM News

President's Report

April 3, 2022

Hello Everyone,



I hope this newsletter finds you all getting excited for spring, even though it looks like a slow start to garden time. This week I saw a post from New Brunswick on a new way to keep small hand tools dry and sharp. If you want to give it a try, start by mixing sand with a small amount of lubricating oil, fill clay pots with the mixture and place the tool's sharp edge into the sand. The sand keeps the tools dry and free of rust while the movement of taking the tools in and out of the sand helps to keep them sharp.

As everyone is aware, HSM has undergone a great deal of change over the past couple of years, and we can certainly expect more change to come. How many times in life have we heard that change is the only constant in life?

For the months of April to June we will continue to hold Zoom meetings and presentations while people are beginning to become more comfortable with in-person meetings. With that said, we are planning to start meeting at CMU again in September 2022, depending on the state of the world.

Do you want to learn something new, meet new people, make lifelong friends, and make a difference in your community while having fun? Then consider volunteering for one of the following positions, you will never be sorry. The positions awaiting your energy and ideas are:

- Vice-President
- Treasurer
- Newsletter Editor
- Membership Chair
- Fundraising Convenors
- Hospitality Convenors

These positions are not big-time commitments. Do you have a buddy that you enjoy working on projects with? Each of the positions may be held by two people, who can alternate the job or work together as a team. The job is as big or as small as you make it. If you have an interest in a position, contact me and we can discuss the position and provide you with a description of the job. My email address is **DebraHSM@gmail.com** Please remember that without a slate of Directors to assist in running HSM, we will cease to exist and HSM will be no more.

In the spirit of change, the HSM Board is currently updating our HSM Constitution and Bylaws. The document will be presented to the membership for a vote at the AGM in November.

HerbFest 2022 is a go for this year! It will be **held on Sunday, June 12th** (with a rain date of Sunday, June 19th). The location has changed, it will be at Picnic Site 12 which is the space beside the Herb Garden. **Save the date!** There will be herbs, HSM merchandise and books for sale, as well as demonstration tables to learn new ways to use your herbs.

If you have new ideas and a desire to breathe some life into HSM please feel free to share your ideas, remember spring is the time for rebirth, change and growth. Please email me to discuss your suggestions at **DebraHSM@gmail.com**

Until we can chat in person, have a wonderful spring!

Respectfully,

Debra Barrett,

President

For more information on the Herb Society or to contact us:

Write: Herb Society of Manitoba, PO Box 61004 RPO Grant Park, Winnipeg R3M 3X8

Website: www.herbsocietymb.com

Email: herbs@herbsocietymb.com

Committee Summary Reports

During the C0VID-19 pandemic period, Committee Summary reports will be provided here when relevant Committee information is available.

Communication

The April 2022 HSM Member Meeting will be held on Monday, April 18, 2022, via Zoom. Look for your invite soon!

Karen S.
Communication Chair

Herb Garden





A picture is worth a thousand words! Here are a couple of lovely photos provided by Shelley W. of the HSM Herb Garden, asleep under its blanket of winter snow.

Programming

Please see the Speaker of the Month section of the newsletter for summaries of the presentations made in February and March, and information about our upcoming April speaker.

Cindy L.
Programming Chair

Treasurer's Report

Here are the January 2022 Monthly Revenue and Expenses amounts:

January

Revenue $ 0 .94
Expenses $262.06

Shelley W.

HerbFest 2022 - A New Format!

by Shelley W., HerbFest Chair

HerbFest is getting a new look in 2022 - The Year of the Garden!

We will be changing the date from the month of May to **Sunday, June 12, 2022** with hours from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (a rain date is scheduled for Sunday, June 19, 2022). This new date makes **HerbFest** part of the events across Canada celebrating National Garden Days, occurring June 11th to June 19th.

This is the first Herb Society of Manitoba in-person get together in over two years and we are planning to be cautious in several ways. It will be held outdoors at the picnic site close to the Herb Garden in Assiniboine Park, and there will be no bake sale or food samples offered this year. The focus will be on herbs - using them and growing them.

Many things we love about **HerbFest** will remain the same: there will be a variety of plants for sale, herb demonstrations to watch, Herb Society merchandise and gardening book bargains to purchase, plus tours of our wonderful Herb Garden in the Park!

HerbFest is a fun event but we need your help to make it happen. If you can work as a **volunteer** for a three hour shift or even for the duration, please contact Shelley at **shelleywalker46@gmail.com** Thank you!

Be sure to mark **Sunday, June 12** (alternate date of June 19 if weather interferes) on your calendar and come out to **HerbFest 2022!!**

Speaker of the Month Information

by Cindy Louër, Programming Chair

Our monthly meetings are being well attended. We are averaging about 20 people per meeting. I would like to see more members at our online meetings but hopefully once we are able to open up more and return to more normal activities, our numbers will improve.

1) February 2022 meeting: **The Plight of the Monarch Butterflies and How We Can Attract More to Our Gardens. presented by Yan Cong**

   Yan told us of her own experiences with Monarchs and how she and her family created a Monarch friendly garden, as well as how they were able to help breed them. She gave us tips on what plants these incredible creatures like to eat and at what times during their lifecycles. There are the milkweed plants, on which the Monarch lays her eggs and where the caterpillars will hatch, feed and grow, and also plants that are a good source of nectar for their long migration south.

   Yan showed us their migration patterns, where they overwinter and talked about her experiences tagging the butterflies so that they can be tracked on their journey south. Monarchs that are tagged in the south can also be tracked as they migrate northward to their summer grounds here.

   Yan also offered to help anyone who would like to start their own Monarch friendly garden and offered seeds or the plants themselves that Monarchs like. She was so knowledgeable about the plight of these amazing creatures and has been able to help increase their numbers through her own efforts in her own garden. She has inspired me to increase their numbers in my own garden here. Thanks to Agnes L. for putting me in touch with her as a presenter!

2) March 2022 meeting: **Cold Frame Gardening presented by Bev Eert**.

   Bev has been cold frame gardening for many years here and in British Columbia. She gave us a list of what vegetables and herbs are best suited to cold frame gardening. Bev has grown many varieties of lettuce, cilantro and parsley.

   Bev showed us where the best location is for a cold frame garden and what supplies we would need to make one. She also gave us tips on how to build your own cold

frame rather than buying one pre-made as they can get expensive. Bev suggested to use old insulated window or door frames for the garden box sides and to get poly bicarbonate for the lid. The poly bicarbonate is stronger than glass so it is less likely to break. The poly bicarbonate does provide some insulation for the lid. She did advise that it is expensive but well worth it.

She advised that you will want to prepare the soil first with compost and other nutrients. After preparing the soil and spreading it in the cold frame frames, you will need to let it sit without any plants in the box for a few days to kill off any remaining weeds, etc. Bev suggested watering the soil to provide enough moisture to help start the plants after planting. The seal on the cold frame lid and the insulated box sides help maintain moisture and the condensation that accumulates are enough to keep the plants hydrated.

Once you have started your gardens in your cold frame boxes, Bev advised that we should cover the cold frame garden with a blanket for warmth and a tarp to keep it dry overnight. During the day it can be uncovered to allow sunlight and, when it's warm enough, the lid can be opened slightly for air circulation. Once you have established a good crop of plants, you can maintain that throughout the winter. She and her family rarely have to buy lettuce at the store. Bev added that you have to make sure that the top of the plants do not touch the lid of the cold frame. If the plants do touch the poly bicarbonate, that part of the plant can freeze and die. She hopes to expand the types of plants that she grows in her cold frame once she can alter her frame to make it higher to accommodate taller plants.

Bev welcomed anyone interested in pursuing starting a cold frame garden of their own to contact her for help and suggestions. Karen Smith has forwarded Bev's contact information to all members. I have started building a cold frame with the hopes of starting my own cold frame garden next winter.

A Sneak Peek for Next Month - Monday, April 18:

Our Speaker for our April meeting will be **Rachel Wu**, Physiotherapist. Rachel's presentation will provide us with some stretches and exercises that we can do before we get out into the garden this spring. A very timely presentation! Look for your email from Karen Smith for information and a Zoom link to the April monthly meeting.

Herbs of the Month

Here are the **Herbs of the Month** for 2021/2022! The theme for this fiscal year is **Wild Herbs Foraged in Manitoba**

September 2021	**Yarrow**	**October 2021**	**Pineapple Weed**
November 2021	**Kinnikinnick**	**January 2022**	**Wild Sarsaparilla**
February 2022	**Wild Sage**	**March 2022**	**Licorice Mint**
April 2022	**Broadleaf Plantain**	**May 2022**	**Senega Snakeroot**
June 2022	**Fireweed**	**July 2022**	**Bergamot**

Herb of the Month for February - Broadleaf Plantain

by Karen Smith, Communication Chair



Broadleaf Plantain (*plantago major*) *(aka common plantain)* is one of the most common edible backyard weeds that has been used for centuries for its medicinal properties. This European plant that has naturalized in North America has slender flower spikes and broadly oval leaves with leafstalks which are green to the base.

Broadleaf Plantain is a perennial broadleaf plant that grows in many locations from spring to autumn. Not only is this a vital wild edible plant for overall good health, but this wild weed can also be used to treat chronic diarrhea as well as digestive tract disorders. Broadleaf plantain is packed with nutrients and is safe to ingest. For example, If a person chomps on some fresh leaves, these can be applied to the skin to treat minor burns, insect bites or open wounds.

Distinguishing Features

This plantain can grow to a heigh of 12 cm. Broadleaf plantain has green, oval to egg-shaped leaves that grow in a basal rosette. These leaves have thick stems that meet at a

base. When these stems are broken, they reveal string-like veins that resemble those in celery. Long-pointed, green, petite flowers grow from the base; these also contain a small pod housing dark seed.

Plantain flowers occur in compact spikes on erect, leafless stalks from among the basal leaves. Each spike is about the size and shape of a pencil but consists of many, tiny, stalkless, greenish flowers giving it a coarsely granular texture. Each flower measures 2 to 3 mm (1/12- 1/8") across. Each flower has four petals, two stamens, and one pistil. Egg-shaped seedpods develop beneath the withering flower. This plant flowers from spring until late autumn.

The leaves grow in a rosette and can range from 5 to 30 cm in length. Plantain leaves have stems that contain string-like veins and these veins are seen on the leaf. There are five to seven prominent parallel veins from the base. Leaves are generally broadly lance-shaped to egg-shaped, are hairless or sparsely short haired.

Habitat

This wonderful plant can be found growing throughout most of North America as well as in Europe and Asia in meadows, pastures, lawns, roadsides, gardens, and waste places.

Edible Parts

The entire plant is edible. Young leaves can be eaten raw or cooked. They are somewhat bitter and tedious to prepare because it's generally preferable (though not required) to remove the fibrous strands before use. Many people blanch the leaves in boiling water before using them in salads to make them more tender. Once blanched, plantain can be frozen then used later in a sauté, soup or stew. Seeds can be eaten raw or cooked and can be tedious to harvest. The seed can be ground into a meal and mixed with flour. Dried leaves make a healthy herbal tea.

Information Source

https://www.ediblewildfood.com/broadleaf-plantain.aspx

As always, please check with your health care provider for any medical advice.

Bev Lloyd Library News

Submitted by Agnes Leung, Bev Lloyd Library Librarian

For the library, I have nothing to report as nothing has changed, no books in or out. But I can mention that presently there is ongoing discussion at the Board level about whether to keep the library going. I must confess that my physical condition is not allowing me to haul books to and from meetings anymore. All the books fit on a 6' high by 26.5" wide bookcase but I am not in a hurry to move the books out of my basement. The library does need to be culled though and I am asking for volunteers for a short-term special project to cull books from the library that can then be used by other members, as available to buy at bargain prices at HerbFest and at member meetings next year.

Send me an email at **library@herbsocietymb.com** if you'd like to help out. Thank you.

Kitchen Corner: *Sharing our favourite recipes with herbs*



by Sandra Holmberg

This month we're featuring a springtime lineup of vegetable, herb and flower blossom recipes! We've got an Asparagus recipe that's one of my favourites to make, a springtime Carrot and Leeks with Tarragon side dish and a couple of recipes using Lilac blossoms if you're lucky enough to have these beautiful blossoms in your garden. Bring on spring!

1) Spanish Asparagus Revuelto

Source: David Tanis

Submitted by Sandra H.
Yield: 4 - 6 servings

This is a delicious brunch, lunch or dinner dish and I've made it with both Spanish chorizo and Italian sausages. It's another great way to enjoy those first spears of Asparagus showing up now in our grocery stores!



Ingredients:

Olive oil

2 peeled garlic cloves, plus an additional 1/2 tsp minced garlic
2 cups bread cubes, made with day-old bread, cut in 1/2 inch cubes
Salt and pepper
2 to 3 oz diced Spanish chorizo (or use Italian sausage)
1 bunch thin asparagus, about 1 1/2 lbs, cut in 2 inch lengths
1 bunch green onions, chopped
8 large eggs, beaten
1/2 tsp smoked paprika (or use regular paprika)
2 Tbsp roughly chopped Italian parsley

Preparation:

Put 3 tablespoons olive oil in a cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add peeled garlic cloves and let them sizzle until lightly browned, then remove. Add bread cubes, season with salt and pepper, lower heat to medium and gently fry until lightly browned and crisp, about 2 minutes. Remove bread and set aside to cool.

Add chorizo and fry lightly. Add asparagus, season with salt and pepper, and stir-fry until cooked through but firm, 3 to 5 minutes, depending how thin your asparagus is. Add green onions and minced garlic and cook another 1 to 2 minutes more.

Season eggs with salt, pepper and smoked paprika. Pour into pan and cook, stirring with a wooden spoon, just until soft and creamy, 3 to 4 minutes. Add parsley and serve immediately, topped with the fried bread cubes.

2) Braised Spring Carrots and Leeks with Tarragon

Submitted by Sandra H. **Source: Martha Rose Shulman**
Yield: 4 - 6 servings



Here's a lovely springtime vegetable dish to have as a starter or side dish. I'm just waiting for my Tarragon to start peeking through the last of the snow so that I can start using it again!

Ingredients:

2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil

1 pound leeks, white and light green part only, root ends cut away, halved lengthwise, cleaned and sliced
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 pound carrots, peeled, halved or quartered lengthwise if thick, then cut in 2 inch lengths
1/2 cup water
Salt to taste
2 tsp fresh lemon juice
1 Tbsp chopped fresh tarragon, plus more for serving as needed

Preparation:

Heat the olive oil in a medium saucepan or lidded skillet over medium heat. Add the leeks and a generous pinch of salt. Cook gently until just about tender, about 3 to 4 minutes. Do not allow the leeks to brown.

Add the garlic, and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 30 seconds to a minute. Add the carrots, water and salt to taste, and bring to a simmer. Cover and simmer 10 to 15 minutes until the carrots are tender when pierced with a knife. Stir in the lemon juice and tarragon. Taste and adjust salt.

Transfer to a platter if desired, making sure to scrape out the tasty residue from the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon or spatula. Serve hot, or allow to cool and serve at room temperature. If serving at room temperature, sprinkle with additional fresh tarragon just before serving. You can also make this a day ahead and reheat gently, adding more tarragon before serving.

3) Lilac Blossom Lemonade

Submitted by Debra B.
Source: The Internet

What a beautiful take on lemonade that Debra sent in!



Ingredients:

A couple bunches of Lilac flower heads
Lemonade

Preparation:

Make sure to pick pink Lilacs that have not been sprayed with any chemicals. Wash them to remove any dust and insects and gently pull off the Lilac blossoms from the stems to make about 2 cups. Submerge the blossoms in your prepared lemonade for at least a few hours and preferably overnight. Strain and serve. A simple way to celebrate spring!

4) Lilac Simple Syrup

Submitted by Sandra H.
(inspired by Debra B's Lilac Blossom Lemonade!)

Source: Colleen Graham, The Spruce Eats website

Ingredients:



4 cups fresh lilac florets
2 cups sugar
2 cups water

Preparation:

Prepare the florets from the lilac flower bunches gathered:
Make sure the flowers are fresh and in full bloom. You'll need to gather more blooms than you think you'll need; three large branches of flowers will yield around 4 cups of florets. (Purple varieties are more flavourful than white lilacs)

Remove the tiny florets from each bunch, don't use the tiny green stems as they can make the syrup bitter. Place the florets in a fine-mesh strainer. Rinse under cold water to remove dust and debris.

Make the Lilac Syrup:
Gather the three ingredients listed above. In a small saucepan, combine the sugar and water over medium heat. Bring to a boil while stirring until all of the sugar has dissolved. Add the lilac florets, stir gently and cover. Reduce the heat and simmer for about 5 minutes.

Remove the pan from the heat, keep it covered and wait. As it cools and rests, the lilacs will add their sweet flavour to the syrup. The time it takes to steep will depend on the

variety of lilacs and how intense you want the flavour. Since it is a delicate flower, it will take from 3 to 8 hours to fully infuse.

Pour the syrup into a fine-mesh strainer that's resting on a large bowl. Allow it to sit for a few minutes and shake it occasionally so that more of the syrup filters through the flowers and drips into the bowl.

After straining, pour the finished lilac syrup into a clean glass container with a tight-sealing lid. Store it in the refrigerator where it should keep for a week or two. You can also store it longer in an airtight container in the freezer (leave plenty of headspace to allow for expansion if using glass) or for individual servings, you can also put it in ice cube trays and freeze. The frozen syrup will be good for up to 6 months.

Use the lilac syrup in your favourite drinks and enjoy!

Tip: Taste your syrup regularly while steeping. After 3 hours, it will develop a soft flavour; if you let it steep for 8 hours, it will be perfect. The syrup should have a floral intensity that will become balanced once it's added to drinks, neither overpowering nor disappearing against the other ingredients.

If you have a favourite recipe, gardening tips, or other suitable content using herbs that you'd like to share with Members, please submit them to the Editor at **newsletter@herbsocietymb.com** *Thank you!*

Meet Your Members

by Sandra Holmberg, Editor (Ed.)

Meet Your Members will return next time.

Another Treasure Called Thyme!

by Christine Wollmann, RN, Healthy Lifestyle Consultant



Originally I was going to write about the star herb oregano, but decided to turn the attention to one similar in health benefits, different to taste and just as worthy of praise. I hope you enjoy this general overview of **another treasure called thyme**.

Thyme or *Thymus vulgaris* is an aromatic herb related to the mint family. There are approximately sixty varieties. The better known are: French, lemon, common, creeping, orange and silver thyme. This small evergreen, low growing sub-shrub with typically tiny curly minty/tea flavoured leaves gives off a strong, fresh fragrance. They also produce tiny flowers from early summer. The leaves range in color from vivid green to grey to whitish green.







History

Native to the Mediterranean region since ancient times, it has been used for culinary, cosmetic, religious, aromatic and medicinal purposes. It was also associated with courage and bravery in medieval times. It was used by the Greeks and Romans who introduced it to Britain. Today this herb is used in a variety of ways, still in the Mediterranean and to a great degree in Europe, Asia, North America and the Caribbean.

Health and Medicinal Benefits

Thyme has many health benefits. But first, the following are highlighted words of caution:

- Individuals with oxalate-containing kidney stones should avoid over-consuming this herb, and
- herbs used as medicine must be done in a responsible, informed manner. Please consult your health care practitioner before using as medicine, especially for younger persons and older adults.

You may find the following information interesting to learn about thyme. Nutritionally, thyme is a source of iron, Vitamin C, manganese and potassium. Thyme has similar benefits as other mints due to its volatile oil which contains carvacrol (food aromatic, flavouring, preservative), borneol (stimulates gastric juices which improve digestion), geraniol (a type of alcohol which has been used in mosquito repellant) and most importantly, Thymol, which is one of the main compounds in oil of thyme. It is used for its antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, anti-fungal, antispasmodic and antibacterial properties. The fresh whole plant in tea form has long been used in traditional medicine to help calm coughs or as an expectorant.

Growing Tips

As long as there is sun, thyme will thrive. It can grow in rich, poor, or stony soil or in cement cracks. Depending on the species, it can grow in Zones 3 to 9. Generally, it needs protection from severe winter. Mild to moderate cold will be tolerated and for species like the woody creeping thyme. I have experienced consecutive years with this variety coming up in the spring each year.

As mentioned earlier, because of repellant properties, pests and disease are not a threat to this plant and therefore it makes an excellent companion plant throughout a kitchen garden. If soil drainage is poor, the primary problem experienced will be root rot. If healthy, this herb will keep flourishing and can be harvested even after a first snow fall. Thyme remains evergreen in milder regions of the world.





Culinary Uses

Fresh thyme is always superior in flavour and aroma and can also be used frozen or dried. It is typically used to season foods. A few sprigs add great flavour to a pot of beans, lentils, fish, meats, olive oil infusions, soups, stir fries, baking, etc. Thyme can be combined nicely with other herbs and spices; for example, in a famous blend of herbs originating from the south of France know as "*Herbs de Provence*". This multi-purpose blend of thyme, rosemary, savoury, marjoram, fennel, basil and oregano is used in many French dishes such as chicken or stews.

Cosmetics

Thyme as a main ingredient in masks, baths, soaps, lotions, oils, creams and makes effective astringents, conditioners, cleansers and treatments including massage oils to ease aches and pains, to improve the quality and suppleness of skin and more.

Storage

It can be stored fresh in the fridge for 1 to 2 weeks if placed in an airtight, plastic bag, container or wrapped in a damp paper towel. Fresh thyme can be washed and left to air dry for 1 to 2 days, then placed ideally in an air tight glass jar, but can be kept in a plastic bag or container in the fridge for a week or more. To preserve and keep it longer, the simplest way is dried. The flavour is still present. It can be stored in a dark, dry cool place for up to 6 months to one year.

Closing Thoughts

Some highlights for this multi-purposed, time-honoured herb include being able to grow it in a number of zones, used as a seasoning for foods and baking, as an aromatic, for cosmetic purposes and for its healthy benefits. It may also give opportunity to evaluate how thyme could offer assistance or open a new awareness for use in enhancing one's own culinary skills, as well as for health and wellbeing. If you are not familiar with this herb, it's worth investigating how it may benefit you. I hope this information has given you a greater appreciation and awareness of this treasure called thyme.

This article is for information and does not take the place of your health care provider's advice in using thyme for any medicinal purposes.

Written by: Christine Wollmann, RN, Healthy Lifestyle consultant, and herb enthusiast

Sources:

1. Main source of information acquired through writer's previous study, research and trials
2. V. H. Ferrel, H.M. Cherne, MD, 2010, The Natural Remedies Encyclopedia (7th Edition)
3. C. Foley, Jill Nice and Marcus A. Webb, 2002, New Herb Bible
4. Harris Publication, 2015, Herbal Remedies Magazine
5. HGTV - How to Grow Thyme, 2022

(Ed note: Christine has also provided the following thyme recipes as well - bonus!)

Recipes:

Fresh Thyme Tea for Two (even when you are well)

Source: Christine Wollmann

1 small handful of fresh thyme (washed)
3 cups of filtered or spring water (if possible)

Boil water in a stainless steel pan, add thyme and cover immediately then remove from heat. Let it steep for 15 - 30 minutes. Strain and pour liquid into cups. Enjoy plain or with some honey to taste or preferred sweetener.

Thyme and Ginger Lemonade Infusion

Source: foodaciously.com

1/4 cup fresh Ginger Root, peeled and sliced (50 g)
2 Tbsps raw Honey
4 sprigs of Thyme
2 large Lemons
1/2 tsp Almond or Vanilla Extract (optional)
3 1/2 cups Filtered Water (850 mL)

1. Prepare the ginger root and honey thyme syrup: In a saucepan, add 1 cup (250 mL) of water along with sliced ginger root, raw honey, and thyme sprigs. Bring the mixture to a soft boil, then lower the heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Next, remove the pot from the heat and leave the infusion to steep and cool down for 10 minutes.

2. While the thyme syrup cools down, squeeze the lemons with the help of an orange juicer or lemon squeezer. Make sure you don't drop in any lemon seeds or you'll have to filter the juice later on. Then, transfer the lemon juice to a jug or pitcher and add the almond or vanilla extract and the remaining 2 1/2 cups (600 mL) of water. Pour in the prepared tea, filtering the thyme sprigs and ginger root slices with a strainer.

3. Finally, leave the lemonade to infuse for at least two hours in the fridge. For an even deeper flavour, leave all ingredients and refrigerate it overnight. Enjoy it cold or at room temperature with some lemon slices or thyme sprigs.

Lemon Bars with Honey and Fresh Thyme (gluten free)

Source: Colleen Codekas

These extra lemony lemon bars are gluten free and made without refined sugar.
Prep time 20 minutes , cook time 45 minutes, cooling time 2 hours, serves 9

Ingredients

Crust

1/2 cup butter or coconut oil softened, plus more for greasing the pan
1/4 cup honey
1 1/4 cup almond flour
1/2 cup arrowroot powder
1/4 tsp salt

Lemon Bars

4 eggs
1 egg yolk
1/3 cup honey
1 to 2 Tbsp lemon zest

3/4 cup fresh lemon juice
3 Tbsp arrowroot powder
2 Tbsp fresh thyme leaves
(Powdered sugar, coconut sugar or fresh thyme sprigs for garnish, optional)

Instructions

Crust

Preheat oven to 350°F and grease an 8x8 or 9x9 square pan with butter or coconut oil.

1. Stir together the butter or coconut oil and honey until smooth.
2. Add the almond flour, arrowroot powder, and salt and stir until well combined.
3. Spread the mixture in an even layer in the bottom of the prepared pan and bake for 12 to 15 minutes or until just barely set and beginning to slightly brown.
4. Remove the crust from the oven and set aside to cool while you prepare the rest of the ingredients.

Lemon Bars

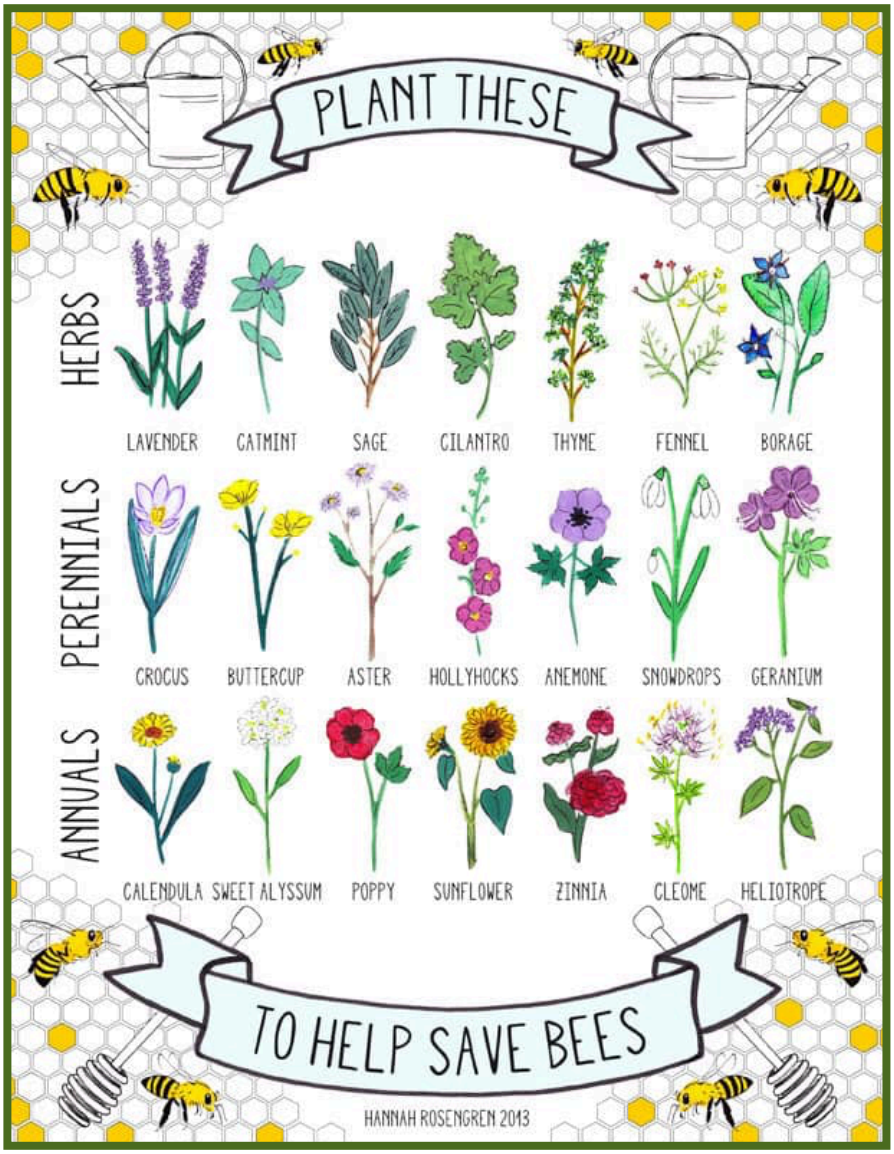
Turn oven down to 325°F

1. Whisk together the eggs, egg yolk, honey and lemon, then stir in the lemon juice.
2. Whisk in the arrowroot powder and fresh thyme leaves.
3. Pour the mixture on top of the cooled crust, then bake for 30 minutes or until the lemon bars are just set and only very slightly jiggly in the middle.
4. Remove from the oven and let cool completely, then refrigerate for at least an hour (a few hours is best) before cutting.

Note: If you don't have fresh thyme or do not like the taste, you can try other herbs that would work well like rosemary or lavender. Garnish with a sprinkle of powdered sugar or coconut sugar, a sprig or sprinkle of fresh thyme if desired. Enjoy!

The Last Page … We are abuzz!

This honey of a poster featured on The Last Page displays Herbs, Perennials and Annuals that will attract those sweet bees to your garden or deck pots. Something to consider when planting this spring! Thanks to Debra B. for sending the link.



April showers bring May flowers!…or…is it April snow melt brings May flowers? Either way, you can rest in the knowledge that HSM News will return in June!