February 2024

Newsletter

Seaside Herb Society Meets on the third Saturday of every month, September through May. Our Next meeting is on February 17, 2024, at 9:30.

Usually, friends and family are welcome to join our meetings as guests, but this meeting is closed to guests. Members only

Please "Like" our Seaside Herb Society page

EDITORS NOTE

Dear Herbies,

It is official! Spring is just around the corner. Punxsutawney Phil did not see his shadow Friday morning at Gobbler's Knob in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. This annual Groundhog Day tradition is celebrated in the U.S. and Canada. According to the legend, we are in for an early spring. This is the time to get cool weather crops, allowing time to mature before the hot days of summer arrive.

On another note, during this month's meeting, Lari Knochenmus will present the second part of our Citrus Program. Lemoncello, Lari will be demonstrating and instructing us on how to make Lemoncello. Those wanting to participate will need to bring their own ingredients:

- **Fresh Lemons** - 5 lemons for 1 quart of the final product / ten lemons for 2 quarts (Perrine's is a good source; also, Love's on Williamson Str if looking for organic)
- **Vodka** – 16 oz per 1 quart
- **Wide Mouth Glass Jar** - 1 or 2 quart-size jars
- **Peeler and Spoon f**or scraping

The herb presentation this month will be horseradish. I'm Looking forward to both presentations.

-Rebekah

Mission Statement: We gather in the spirit of friendship and cooperation to learn more about herbs and to use this knowledge to educate and benefit others.

Meet Our Members

Kirsten Vignati

"If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always gotten."

Growing up in Chicago, Illinois, Kirsten has fond memories of swimming in Lake Michigan. Nonetheless, she and her mother moved to Ormond Beach when COVID-19 hit. They bought a house on an auction site unseen, and "Just Left!"

Her friend Donna Fresquez introduced Kirsten to Seaside Herb Society two years ago, and she joined us because she enjoys learning about herbs and all the great food tastings.

Kirsten is always full of interesting and useful information, which she shares with much enthusiasm. Chives, parsley, basil, rosemary, oregano, and thyme grow in her garden. One thing she learned since moving to Florida is "not to supplement soil."

What on Your Bookshelf?

Doris Hynes shared this article from The Daytona Beach News-Journal Pets section:

These herbs can help congested pets

Mitsie Vargas
Special to The Ledger

Canine infectious respiratory disease complex is a highly contagious illness affecting the respiratory tract in dogs that is making media headlines lately.

Several different types of bacteria and viruses can contribute to CIRDC, and dogs can be infected by multiple organisms at the same time. While most dogs recover in seven to 14 days, some develop bronchitis or pneumonia.

When it comes to dealing with the discomfort of cold and flu symptoms, expectorant herbs can be a valuable natural remedy for humans. These herbs possess properties that help loosen and expel mucus from the respiratory system.

Here are some important expectorant herbs and their possible use as a holistic treatment for the CIRDC.

Tulsi (Ocimum sanctum)

Tulsi, also known as holy basil, is a revered herb in Ayurvedic medicine. It possesses expectorant properties that help relieve coughs and congestion. Tulsi contains compounds like eugenol and camphene, which have antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory effects. It can also support the immune system, making it beneficial for overall respiratory health. Basil leaves or dry basil can be easily added to your pet's food.

Snake root (Polygala senega)

Polygala, also known as senega root, has been used traditionally as an expectorant herb.

It contains saponins, which help break down mucus and facilitate its expulsion from the respiratory system. The root is ground into powder and used in various patent medicines, particularly cough medicine, as a stimulant expectorant to help relieve chest congestion, coughs and bronchial spasms. A holistic veterinarian could prepare syrups or extracts that could be customized.

Licorice root (Glycyrrhiza glabra)

Licorice root is a well-known expectorant herb that has been used for centuries in traditional medicine. It contains glycyrrhizin, which has mucolytic properties that help thin and loosen mucus. Licorice root can soothe sore throats, reduce coughing and provide relief from respiratory congestion.

Clove (Syzugium aromaticum)

Clove is a spice with expectorant properties that can help alleviate respiratory symptoms. It contains eugenol, a compound with antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory effects. Clove can be very toxic to dogs when used in large quantities and essential oil diffusers. However, a small amount in conjunction with other herbs could be used under the direction of a holistic veterinarian.

Slippery Elm (Ulmus rubra)

Slippery elm is a tree native to North America, and its inner bark has been used as an expectorant herb. It contains mucilage, a gel-like substance that coats and soothes the respiratory tract. Slippery elm can help relieve coughs, reduce throat irritation and promote the expulsion of mucus.

Marshmallow (Althaea officinalis)

Marshmallow is a herb known for its soothing and expectorant properties. It contains mucilage, which helps soothe irritated mucous membranes and promote the expulsion of mucus. Marshmallow can help relieve coughs, reduce throat inflammation, and alleviate respiratory congestion.

Most of these plants could be added or compounded into safe formulas by veterinary herbalists. Always ask your veterinarian for advice before trying any herbal supplements.

Mitsie Vargas of Orchid Springs Animal Hospital in Winter Haven is a fellow of the American Academy of Veterinary Acupuncture. www.osahvets.com.

Dehydrating Herbs

By Rebekah Mead

In the past, I have tried to dehydrate my herbs in the oven, in the sun, and hanging on a string. None of these methods worked as well as my Ninja Air Fryer, which has a dehydrator setting.

Turmeric

French Tarragon

Ginger

Mustard

Presentation by Sue Fowler & Dee Yeater

Yarrow (Achillea millefolium) is a fragrant flowering perennial that grows in North America, Asia, Europe, and Australia. Belonging to the Asteraceae family, other common names are plumajillo, or "little feather", for the shape of the leaves, green arrow, noble yarrow, nosebleed plant, and soldier's woundwort.

The International Herb Society selects one herb to be honored as the "Herb of the Year " each year. In 2024, this distinction went to the Common Yarrow (achillea millefolium)." Historically, yarrow has been known as woundwort due to its use as an herbal medicine to stop bleeding. Its aromatic leaves, when crushed, release tannins. Tannins assist in blood clotting as well as blood vessel constriction. It was also used as an antiseptic to treat infections. (Heyden's Garden, 2024).

Beyond its historical medical value, yarrow offers much to gardens:

- Drought resistant
- Deet resistant
- Attracts beneficial pollinators, including butterflies
- Long blooming

This hardy perennial herb, with its dome-shaped clusters of tiny white flowers, can be found in the wild as well as in home gardens. It will thrive in poor soil during dry periods and still produce blooms. It was introduced to America during colonial times and is considered a naturalized native plant. (Penn State Extension, 2024).

History

Yarrow has a rich history as one of the oldest plants used medicinally, with reports dating back 60,000 years. Yarrow pollen was found in 60,000-year-old burial caves in Europe, indicating that humans have used it since prehistoric times. The genus *Achillea* refers to the Greek mythological hero of the Trojan Wars, Achilles, who used an extract from the plant to staunch the bleeding of warrior wounds. *Millefolium* comes from the Latin word for "thousand-leaved" in reference to the feathery-cut foliage. Common yarrow has many other names, such as soldier's woundwort, devil's nettle, and milfoil. (Penn State Extension, 2024).

Environment Benefits & Growing

The plant is a member of the Aster (*Asteraceae*) family. There are many yarrow species and hybrids with a variety of traits that make it popular in ornamental flower and butterfly gardens. Yarrow blooms between June and September. Flowers are typically white but come in pink, pale purple, cream, and yellow. Plants can have foliage as low as six inches or grow as tall as six feet, while others are medium height with strong, erect stems suitable for containers.

The common yarrow is a perennial in USDA Hardiness Zones 3-9 and thrives in the sun but can tolerate shaded areas. This plant spreads rapidly, making it a choice plant to combat erosion due to its drought resistance.

The flowers grow upward in clusters to form a densely flowered bloom at the top of the plant, blooming from April to October. The foliage is green, with deep-cut leaves that extend to the ground and may become weedy. Growing upright 2-3 feet tall and spreading to 3 feet, it is best placed

near the back of ornamental gardens and may need to be staked in windy areas. Cutting back plant stems before flowering in late spring can help control the height of the plant. It reproduces from both seeds and horizontal, underground stems (rhizomes). It can be aggressive and is best divided every two to three years to control its growth.

It attracts pollinators and can be used to control erosion on hillsides. It can be used as a ground cover when mowed regularly in sunny, naturalized, or unused areas. The remaining cut stems make walking difficult. As cut flowers, they have an excellent vase life, and when dried, they fade to a cream color and work well for everlasting bouquets. The spicy-scented green foliage and the dried flowers add color and fragrance to potpourri.

You should harvest the flowers and leaves for use but do not take more than 1/3rd of the leaves from any one plant. The plant needs these remaining leaves to feed the root system and store food for winter.

This plant's flowers and leaves are toxic to dogs, cats, and horses and should be kept out of pastures.

Health & Dietary Benefits

Yarrow has had a significant role in combatting disease since early civilization. Many research studies agree with its diverse pharmacological activity spectrum. Traditional indications include digestive problems, liver and gallbladder conditions, menstrual irregularities, cramps, fever, and wound healing. (Nemeth, 2008).

"Its use in food and medicine is ancient, dating back to the Trojan War, around 1200 BC. In legend, Achilles used it on the Centaur's advice, hence the name. In classical times, yarrow was used to stop bleeding wounds received in war. Yarrow leaves have been used for tea, and young leaves and flowers have been used in salads. Infusions of yarrow have served as cosmetic cleansers and medicines. Sneezewort leaves have been used in sneezing powder, while those of A. millefolium have been used for snuff. Yarrow has been used therapeutically as a "strengthening bitter tonic" and astringent. Chewing fresh leaves has been suggested to relieve toothache. Yarrow oil has been used in shampoos for a topical "healing" effect." (Drugs.com, 2024).

Numerous studies found positive results in its antioxidant, anti-inflammatory analgesic, and anti-ulcer choleretic effects. More recent studies demonstrated therapeutic results for hypertension, diabetes, and slowing tumor growth. (Lakshmi, 2011).

A randomized control trial reduced attacks in people with multiple sclerosis who consumed 250 – 500 mg daily. In this study, yarrow was offered in addition to maintenance medicines. Also, these people showed improvements in cognitive tests. (Nunn, 2022).

It can also be used externally in the form of a sitz bath or compress against skin inflammation, slow-healing wounds, and bacterial and fungal infections. Yarrow can also be used as an insect repellent. (Nemeth, 2008).

Yarrow's diverse compounds explain its broad spectrum of activity. The flowers, leaves, and stems of the Yarrow plant are used for medicinal purposes. It is collected while in bloom. Phytochemical constituents of Yarrow: (Lakshmi, 2011), (Nunn, 2022).

- Alkaloids (betonicine, stachydrine, trigonelline)
- Coumarins
- Flavonoids (apigenin, luteolin, quercitin)
- Salicylic acid
- Sesquiterpene lactones (achillin, achillicin)
- Polyacetylenes
- Volatile oil with variable content (linalool, camphor, sabinene, chamazulene)
- Triterpenes
- Tannins
- Sterols and plant acids.

Contraindications:

"Yarrow is not recommended for use during pregnancy or breastfeeding. An ingredient of yarrow called thujone could put you at risk for miscarriage if you take it while pregnant. So far, not enough is known about the risk of yarrow during breastfeeding, so it's safest to avoid using it until after your baby is weaned." (Nunn, 2022)

Cooking with Yarrow

While yarrow is known for its remedy uses, both internally and externally, it's also a tasty culinary herb. Like many other culinary herbs (thyme, sage, rosemary, etc.), yarrow can be potent when consumed in large, condensed volumes but is generally safe in recipes.

Yarrow has a strong licorice-like scent and a mildly sweet flavor that's similar to tarragon. This entire plant is edible, but its leaves and flowers are especially popular to use in recipes. They can be dried and used as a spice. Its fresh flowers and leaves are great for salads, soups, and stews.

Yarrow (tarragon) Chicken Salad

- 2 cups finely chopped cooked chicken
- ¼ cup dried cranberries, finely chopped
- 1 rib celery, chopped fine
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 1 – 2 tsp dried or 1-2 Tbsp fresh chopped yarrow (or tarragon)
- Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper to taste

Instructions

Make dressing in a bowl: mix mayonnaise, lemon juice, and yarrow or tarragon.

Add remaining ingredients

Serve on lettuce, stuffed in tomato, or as a chicken salad sandwich

Penne Aglio Olio w/ Yarrow

8 oz dried penne finest quality
4 tablespoons fresh garlic finely chopped
Kosher salt
3 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
3 Tbsp grapeseed or canola oil
1 teaspoon crushed red pepper or more to taste
A large handful of yarrow leaves picked from the stem and chopped to yield 2 tsp
¼ cup dry white wine
4 anchovy filets in oil rinsed and chopped (optional, but I recommend it)

Instructions

Make a pile of the yarrow and crushed red pepper flakes, then mince them together finely. Bring a pot of water to a boil and season it with salt until the water tastes like the sea. Add the penne and cook until al dente. High-quality Italian dried pasta will take longer to cook than something like Creamette.

While the pasta is cooking, heat the garlic in the pan with the oils and chop anchovy on low heat until the garlic is fragrant and lightly browned. Do not allow the garlic to burn. Remove the pan from the heat and swirl it for a minute to cool the pan so that the wine doesn't explode grease all over your face. Add the wine to the pan. When the pasta is done, drain and add to the pan. Toss the pasta to coat with the oil and cook for a minute to evaporate any raw wine flavor. To finish the dish, add the yarrow-chili mixture and toss just to heat through. Transfer the pasta to each of 4 bowls, garnish with some parmesan and an extra drizzle of extra virgin oil if desired, then serve immediately with a big green salad.

Tomato, Yarrow, Ricotta cheese

Ingredients

Roma Organic Tomatoes sliced
Mozzarella cheese
Fresh basil leaves
Fresh oregano leaves
Sprinkle with Italian herbs
Keep chilled

Olive oil, Lemon juice, & yarrow leaves- blend & chill
Layer the tomato, mozzarella cheese and seasonings
Pour dressing over top

Strawberries, Cream, and Tarragon

3 cups strawberries chopped and hulled
1.5 Tbsp sugar
1.5 tsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
2 tsp fresh yarrow or Tarragon leaves chipped
1 cup heavy cream
1 Tbsp confectioner sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract

1. Preheat oven 375 degrees. Combine strawberries, sugar, and lemon juice in a baking dish. Roast strawberries for 8 – 10 minutes until soft. Remove and let cool.
2. Combine Yarrow /tarragon and cream and refrigerate for a half hour. Strain out leaves.
3. Combine cream, confectioner sugar and vanilla in a stand mixer. Whip to just past soft peaks, but not firm.
4. Carefully fold strawberries into cream. Divide among small dessert glasses and serve.

Other Uses

Yarrow styptic powder for minor abrasions

Apply a pinch of the dried powder directly to the wound. A strong scab will form mixed with the yarrow, which will drop off when new skin forms under the scab. The yarrow will staunch the bleeding, numb the pain, and act as an antiseptic.

Use it to stop a nosebleed. Just put a pinch in the nostril where the bleeding is and blow it out after the bleeding has stopped fully. Yarrow has an analgesic action, also.

Yarrow Natural Insect Repellent

Gather enough yarrow leaves and flowers to fit snugly in a jar. Chop them up and put them in the jar.

Pour in vodka to the top of the jar.
Shake it every day for the first week.
Strain after 2 to 6 weeks.
Pour the desired amount into a spray bottle and add catnip and lavender essential oils.

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Brittany from the Volusia County Department of Agriculture- Master Gardener

Part I: Growing Citrus Plants in Florida

Multiple handouts were provided by Brittany. Below are a few tips I collected from her lecture.

Mulch plants to protect from frost during cold nights.

Do not fertilize when transplanting.

Rodents in my attic

Back in December, I heard rodents crawling in my attic. I called a local rodent control company to give me an estimate to remove them and prevent future invasions. The estimate to cover entrance places and trap the ones up there now was $1700 and $30 a month for maintenance.

This is more than I was willing to spend! Hence, further research brought me to this product- **MIGHTY MINT RODENT REPELLENT**, purchased on Amazon. I sprayed all areas they could enter and into my attic. I also sprayed my greenhouse and shed. I have not heard any critters since, and I have not seen any signs of rodents for months.