



The Connecticut Herbal Thymes

Connecticut Herb Association www.ctherb.org Spring Equinox 2024

Welcome to the Spring Edition of the CHA Newsletter

Spring has arrived. Welcome it with love and light! Wave goodbye to the dark days of winter and welcome the bright days of spring. Enjoy the outdoors as the flowers bloom and the sun shines brightly! What better way to celebrate the season by getting your hands dirty digging in the gardens in the dirt. Wishing you all a happy, healthy, successful growing seasons.



CHA has closed the P.O. Box at the Newington post office. Please use
Gayle Nogas
35 Dale Rd
Enfield CT 06082

Farmers Market
June 22, 2024 8:am to 1:pm
CHA is looking for volunteers to help with set-up, take shifts, staff the table for a few hours, and break down. Please contact Gayle, Terri or Jeanie.

Jeanie Wild
Blessed Creek Organic Skincare
is offering classes
March 27th *Infused Oils*
April 30th *Salve Making*
May 9th *Tincture Making*
For the time and cost of her workshops contact Jeanie at:
www.blessedcreek.com
Email: jeanie@blessedcreek.com

2024 Herb of the Year Yarrow *Achillea millefolium*



Yarrow is best known for its wound healing properties though it has many other gifts. The story of how it got its name comes from Greek mythology. The mother of the Greek warrior Achilles was a sea nymph named Thetis. Thetis wanted to protect her son Achilles so when he was a baby, she picked him up by the heel and dipped him in a vat of Yarrow. The only part of him that didn't get protected by the yarrow was his heel. Hence

the term Achilles heel meaning a vulnerable spot, or weak spot. It is clear from mythology that humans have been using Yarrow through out history.

Yarrow is circumboreal, meaning it can be found around the globe in North America, Europe and Asia, and is a member of the Asteraceae or Composite family. It has a flat umbel of white flowers and blooms from spring to frost in the fall. The leaves are finely cut, feathery and aromatic. It can grow up to 3 ft tall and in poor soils.

Numerous tribes in North America used yarrow for a variety of ailments. The crushed plant was applied to wounds and burns. The leaves were dried for teas to treat colds fevers and headache. Other uses are to treat digestive issues such as abdominal pain, flatulence and dysentery. It's considered a diaphoretic and is used to sweat out fevers. Yarrow was used to brew beer in the Middle Ages in Europe.

In China the plant is considered good luck and the stalks are used for divination in the I Ching, book of changes.

It also has a history of being used to dye textiles.

Yarrow contains chemicals that help stop stomach cramps and fight infections. It is commonly used to treat eczema, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and to treat fevers. The various effects may be due the presence of a broad range of secondary active metabolites such as flavonoids, phenolic acids, coumarins, terpenoids (monoterpenes, sesquiterpenes, diterpenes, and triterpenes) and sterols which have frequently been reported in the Achillea species. A more through look at its chemistry can be found here on the National Library Medicine page.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3232110/>

Yarrow's long history of use through out the world makes it a great addition to your herbal apothecary. It is easy to grow and has been cultivated into many colorful varieties. Often it is found in fields and roadsides but it can make an excellent addition to any garden.

The wild white or pink varieties that are traditionally used for medicine making while the colored varieties make excellent fresh cut flowers and they hold up well as dried flowers.

Please update your information when sending your membership dues

CHA Membership Application 2024

April is Membership Time

Date _____ New Renewal

Please print clearly

Name: _____

Business name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone # (include area code)

Home: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

Website: _____

CHA Member Directory (Available to all members) yes__ no__

CHA online password protected Member Directory yes__ no__

CHA online public access Business Listing yes__ no__

Business offering member to member (M2M) discount yes__ no__

For the CHA Directory of Members, please write a brief description (on back) to be included in the printed directory, including information about yourself, your relationship to herbs, your business and reason for joining (include your focus & intentions, credentials, education, practice, etc.) **Please print clearly** and keep to 70 words or less.

\$35.00 Family membership \$25.00 Adult membership \$15.00 Student membership

Please send this page, along with your annual dues and mail it to:

Make checks payable to CT Herb Association

Send to
Gayle Nogas / CHA
35 Dale Road
Enfield CT 06082

Please consider adding a little extra for the Thea Pastore Scholarship Fund
I have included \$ _____ to my payment for donation to the CHA Scholarship Fund.

=====
 Cash Check # _____ Date Received _____



Book Corner is quiet, however, I did take a little advice from our last newsletter and decluttered a bit. Came across some stashed away Mary Jane's Farm

magazines and of course I saved again !! Lots of fun and informative articles , not a fast thumb through. Pick up an issue for \$6.99 or subscribe for a year.

HAPPY READING,
Pam Brooke, Maddison CT



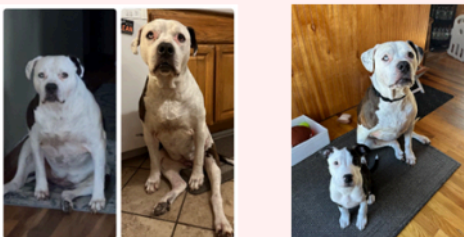
Pet Corner



About a year ago I thought my 10 year old female dog, Bluu, days were numbered. Bluu was lethargic and overweight. Previously she had 2 knee surgeries and thru the healing process she gained a lot of weight. I read about the good results people were getting after feeding their dogs raw and human grade food.

I decided to try people food. After researching Bluu's allergies, I came up with a plan of turkey, vegetables, rice and fruit. I cook the ground turkey and vegetables without oils or seasonings. Some foods I use are; green beans, peas, spinach, sweet potato, butternut squash, brown rice and once a week sardines or cooked egg. Fruits like blueberry, strawberries, and pineapple are served with her morning breakfast. Meals are prepared weekly and frozen in portions. Included in Bluu's regiment is the addition of different vitamins and supplements.

Slowly I started to notice Bluu's coat becoming soft and shiny. After a few months it looked like she was losing some weight. Today one year later Bluu has lost about 20 pounds and has a new spring in her step and keeping up with our new puppy, Finn. She is now back to a normal weight for her size dog. I'm sure I added 5 more years to her life!

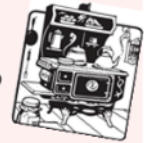


If you choose to change your fur baby's diet, always check with your veterinarian first.

Submitted by Melissa Miner

From the kitchen of Michelle MacLure

The name za'atar alone mostly applies to *Origanum syriacum*, or *Satureja thymbra*, an aromatic herb that grows through the Mediterranean to the Middle East.



Za'atar is a culinary herb or mixture of herbs to make a spice blend that includes toasted

sesame seeds, dried sumac, salt, as well as other spices. The blends of these plants are usually made up of dried thyme, oregano, marjoram, sumac, toasted sesame seeds.

Forager **Monica Wilde** has her own version of the blend using local weeds. *Yarrow leaves and florets, ground ivy, toasted sesame seeds, dried sorrel and salt to taste.*

Use olive oil for dipping. Mix equal parts of the blend with ¼ cup olive oil and marinate. Use pita bread for dipping.



Tea Time

Yarrow tea is a powerful home remedy that eases stomach issues, fever, headaches, and more. It is also used use it to heal wounds.



Place one tablespoon of fresh yarrow blossoms and leaves or 2 teaspoons of the dried herb into a pot and pour one cup of boiling water over. Allow the yarrow to steep for 8-10 minutes or longer to it release its medicinal properties. Strain and add honey and a slice of lemon to taste enjoy every sip.

Tea made of dried yarrow flowers and leaves is darker in color and has a more robust flavor than fresh ones.

Bob and Terri Cusson welcomed a new addition to their family,
Grand daughter
Róisín Maribel O'Brien Cusson
Congratulation

Our condolences to:
Robin Henrie on the passing of her Mother, Leona Radack
Jeanie Wild passing of son-in law Dale Tuczinski

“Spring Fling” by Catherine Sherwood

The Spring season is quickly approaching. However, be cognizant of the weather patterns. March can be cold regardless of what the almanac says. While March and April are still cold and rainy with frosts still happening, they are great months to get prepared for the encroaching growing season. It may be too early to start planting outdoors, but it's perfect to be pro-active and start planning and organizing for the upcoming season.



Get your seed orders in if you haven't already done so. Collect all your seed starting equipment, trays, pots, grow lights etc. so you are ready to go. Start some of your first seeds indoors now. Many of the perennial seedlings can be started at the beginning of March. Especially the slower growers and those that take a long time to germinate. Some seeds take approximately six weeks prior to the last frost. By the end of March re-pot your seeds. Make sure you again label them. During a cold spring it's better to delay sowing outdoors until the soil temperature is warm enough starting in the month of April.

By the middle of March, you want to trim back your berry bushes, prune back fruit and woody bushes while they are still dormant. Also trim back ornamental grasses and remove burlap from any evergreens that were covered.

Toward the end of March, you can uncover some of the perennials so they can push up easier if spring comes early. It's also a good time to get potatoes, onions, asparagus, and those plants that require a few weeks of cold temperatures planted to so they can germinate. Label where they are planted. Popsicle sticks, or old blind slats work well. Make sure to use non fade markers.

If we get a few warm days turn your compost piles if you have them. Check on garden mulch. If winter frost heaves have exposed plant crowns and the temperature remain cold mulch should be left in place.

Collect all your garden tools and clean and disinfect from the prior season. Repair, sharpen and replace any items that have been damaged, lost or worn. Check sprinkler heads, hoses and fencing for repairs. Organize your tools. Don't forget to get the power equipment (if you use power equipment) fixed to avoid the spring rush. You don't want to have to wait four to six weeks for that tune up or a part that is on backorder due to supply chain issues

Living in New England is tricky. The Spring season is very inconsistent and has a mind of its own. However, no matter what the days bring cool and rainy, or sun kissed, the plant world and its power are pushing forward into spring mode. Don't forget to clean out your birdhouses.



April and all its glory is right around the corner



How I Use Yarrow by Pat Bramley

Common Yarrow, *Achillea millefolium* is a pretty and useful perennial to grow as a soil fertilizer and companion plant. Its deep fibrous roots make a great border where erosion control is needed, and are effective at accumulating potassium, calcium and magnesium. Similar to Comfrey, the chopped down plant stalks in the Fall can be added to beds as a mulch or to enrich the compost pile.

The white common Yarrow is particularly useful as a pollinator in the garden, as it attracts a multitude of beneficial insects. My personal uses of Yarrow include drying the flowers upside down for my herbal wreaths, or sometimes, I make wreaths with fresh herbs and flowers. I also like to include them in flower arrangements.

This past year I have used white Yarrow plant tops along with Tansy and Marigolds to create wonder yellow dyes. I turned the greenhouse into a dye workshop in the Fall and had a grand time dyeing cottons and linens with not only herbs, flowers and tree nuts on our farm, but also carefully utilizing invasives such as Barberry and Japanese Knotweed. Yarrow alone produces a clear yellow dye and with an iron modifier, gives soft olive-greens.

Anyone interested in learning this craft, I suggest the practical guide book *Wild Color* by Jenny Dean.

Buck Mountain Herbs is an USDA Certified Organic herb farm growing herb and pollinating plant starts. Selling both wholesale, and retail at the Cornwall Farm Market on Pine Street, Cornwall CT. in Litchfield County. This year we celebrate our 10th year in business.

Find us at www.buckmountainherbs.com, Facebook or Instagram.



Achille millefolium commonly known as yarrow contains ray and disc flowers which are white, yellow, red, and pink and blooms from April to the end of October in New England. I love this plant in my hillside garden. The plant prefers well drained soil in full sun but does well with 6 hours of sunlight in shadier areas. It's a pretty hardy plant and does well in the rocky red clay soil of my butterfly and tea garden. It spreads if left alone and can be easily divided in Spring. It's a pretty impressive plant.



As well as producing a pretty background mix to the garden, it has a multitude of therapeutic uses. It can be used as a tea, a tincture, and as an essential oil. It has long been used as a treatment for fever, colds, flu, toothaches, digestive problems, blood clotting, muscle cramps, flatulence, irregular menses, inflammation and to improve blood circulation.

Some studies state that yarrow has a diuretic effect so staying hydrated is important. It has been used for feverish conditions. Yarrow induces sweat to help break high fevers. Due to its antibacterial and astringent properties, it is used in toothpaste and as a dental rinse to combat receding gums and periodontal disease. It helps with tightening of the gum tissues and its styptic properties stops bleeding.

Yarrow contains an essential oil component azulene. The alkaloid *achilleine* acts as a stimulation to the belly and is known to relieve stomach and gallbladder issues. It also helps slow heavy bleeding. It can also be used to strengthen weak veins, and minor inflammation of varicose veins.

I harvest and dry mine from the garden and add it to a tea blend for its blood regulating effect. For medicinal use mix equal parts of dried yarrow flowers, calendula, and hawthorn flowers. Steep in 1 cup boiling water for 3-5 minutes and it is suggested to drink 3 cups daily.

In the Spring months when I am on my feet for prolonged periods of time preparing my gardens for the growing season, I will make up a pitcher of the tea iced and put it in a thermos to drink. Sometimes I add a cinnamon stick, dried peppermint or blueberries for increased energy and flavor. I have also added a little pomegranate juice to the mixture which may help widen blood vessels and facilitate blood flow.

Yarrow may cause an allergic reaction for some folks that are allergic to ragweed and sensitive to the Asteraceae/Compositae family.

If you have allergies, health issues or are taking medications, be sure to check with your healthcare provider who can best assess your individual needs before taking yarrow or any of the ingredients in the tea blend.

by Catherine Sherwood


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|| If anyone has a good book that they read and would like to put a review in the CHA newsletter, or any
|| special and local events, classes, workshops or places to visit for day trips please forward it to me.
|| Gayle Nogas
||
|| Sagewand2@aol.com
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The CHA Medical Herbalism Study Group

Our study group has new changes and will meet every Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm on zoom. It is open to all members and topics will vary. If interested in joining please contact.

Terri Cusson 860-870-1681
terriscusson@gmail.com,
She will add you to the list.

* **Robin McLaurin Williams** *
* (July 21, 1951 – August 11, 2014) *
* was an American actor and comedian. *
*  *
* **Spring is nature's way** *
* **of saying, 'Let's Party!'** *
