



La Yerba Buena

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SAN ANTONIO HERB SOCIETY

NUMBER 229, April 2009

The San Antonio Herb Society is organized to bring together those who are interested in using, growing and to promoting general knowledge of herbs to the membership and the public at large.

Program Thursday, April 9, 2009

Organic Gardening by Bob Webster

Ah, spring is in the air and our yards and gardens are calling us.

Come join us on Thursday April 9th to welcome Bob Webster as he talks about the latest techniques in organic gardening. Bob has owned and operated Shades of Green since 1991. An advocate of organic gardening, he has generously shared his experience with anyone who's asked. He comes to SAHS to do that sharing one again.

This presentation will cover some latest techniques on organic gardening. Bob Webster has hosted the KTSA Garden Show on KTSA since 1991. His goal is for everyone to understand how easy it is to create colorful landscapes all twelve months of the year. Professionally, he has managed and owned retail nurseries since his college days at SMU. He ranches in Boerne and grows orchids, which he sells wholesale through his own company, Texas Orchid Company. Bob also owns and manages the Shades of Green Nursery in San Antonio. He is the author of Gardening in South Texas, available in most area book stores and garden centers, and enjoys taking the KTSA Garden Show on remotes where he can meet listeners and answers their questions in person.



Hospitality begins at 6:30 pm (names beginning T-Z bring a snack and its recipe), the meeting at 7 pm, concluding at 9 pm.. We're at the San Antonio Garden Center, located on the corner of Funston and N. New Braunfels.

For more information, check out our website at www.sanantonioherbs.org



SA BOTANICAL GARDEN'S WALK ACROSS TEXAS PLANT SALE DAYS

April 18 & 19. SAHS participates in the annual SA Botanical Garden "Walk Across Texas" and plant sale days. Contact Janet Miller to help. (210) 492-7684. This is an absolutely terrific opportunity to promote the SAHS. It's also a huge event for us for fundraising. Remember its funds from events like this that allow us to continue to meet in the Garden Center and to bring in knowledgeable speakers like Bob Webster and Shari Kilman among others. It's FUN to work together and accomplish the job and to meet all kinds of folks. You work and play and learn and teach all at the same time. Do call Janet today (210) 492-7684 to volunteer.

KING WILLIAM PARADE!!

April 25, SAHS will again participate in the King William parade. This is a crazy fun thing since the point of this parade is to be crazy fun. We wear the hats presented during our general meeting on April 9th and decorate the float that morning before time to step out (starting about 8 am). We ride and wave and walk and wave and carry that banner and promote the Herb Society to everyone along the way. Afterwards, the "royal court" adjourns for lunch at Azuca (terrific food!). Details will be handed out at the general meeting April 9th. Contact Adrienne Hacker for information.



In Memoriam

Madalene Hill, botanist, breeder, grower, author, international herb garden lecturer and designer, teacher, mentor, former President of the Herb Society of America, and reference source for all things herbal in the plant world, passed away March 4, 2009. Madalene Hill was the resident designer and Garden Director of the McAshan Gardens at the International Festival-Institute at Round Top.

Resource Guides

Have you picked up your copy?

This is a great book, developed, written and published by our own membership. Check out the book table or a Board Member to get a copy or two.

Hospitality Table Schedule:

May: Everyone see p. 6 for details
June: A-D
July: E-M
August: N-S
September: T-Z

Inside this issue:

Member Recipes	2
Report of February program	2
Report on Strategy Sessions	3
Over the Fence	4
Treasurer's Report	5
February meeting minutes	5
Brian's To-Do List	6
Report from the Herb Forum, 2009	7
At the Botanical Garden	7



Be sure to view the unabridged version of this newsletter @ www.sanantonioherbs.org
If you would like to receive the SAHS newsletter electronically, please contact Lyn: belisle@satx.rr.com

Member Recipes

No recipes were left with us for the goodies brought to the March meeting. So here's something a little different: some goodies for your 4-footed friends at home.

Herbal Coat Toner

Preheat oven to 400°F

- 2 C all-purpose flour
- 1 ¼ C shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- ¼ C oil
- 4 T water

Process 1st 4 items in food processor until the consistency of coarse meal. With machine on, slowly add water until mixture forms a ball.

Divide into manageable pieces and roll out to ¼ - ½ inch thick. Cut into bones. Put on ungreased cookie sheet. Cook 10-15 minutes or until bottoms are lightly browned. Transfer to wire rack & cools completely.

Store in a tin container.

Fresh Breath Dog Treats

Preheat oven to 325°F

- 4 C whole wheat flour
- 1 C cornmeal
- 2/3 C fresh mint, chopped
- 1 C parsley, chopped
- 12 T safflower oil
- 1 ¼ C water

Combine flour, cornmeal & herbs. Add oil & water and mix thoroughly. Roll out to ¼ inch thickness and cut with bone-shaped cutter. Bake 40 minutes – watch out for burning! – on ungreased cookie sheets.

Turn off oven and let biscuits dry in over for several hours or overnight.

Store in a tin container.

Makes over 100 1 ½ inch bones.



Just Plain Good

Preheat oven to 300°F

- ¼ C hot tap water
- 8 chicken bouillon cubes.
- 1 pkg dry yeast (2 ¼ tsp loose)
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 ½ C tomato juice
- 2 C all purpose flour
- 2 C wheat germ
- 1 ½ C whole wheat flour

Combine water, bouillon, yeast and sugar. Mix and let stand 5 minutes.

Add tomato juice, 1 C all purpose flour and wheat germ. Stir to make a smooth batter. Stir in remaining flours. Dough will be very stiff & dry. Mix with hands if necessary.

On floured board, work small portions until smooth. Roll to ¼ inch thick. Cut out bones & transfer to dry cookie sheets.

Bake for 1 hour. Turn off oven and let bones remain inside for 4-5 hours. Store in a tin container.



Kitty Catnip Cookies

Preheat oven to 300°F

- 1 C whole wheat flour
- 2 T wheat germ
- ¼ C soy flour
- 1/3 C powdered milk
- 1 T kelp
- ½ tsp bonemeal

- 1 tsp crushed dried catnip
- 1 T unsulfured molasses
- 1 egg
- 2 T oil
- 1/3 C milk or water

Mix the dry ingredients together.

Add the wet ingredients and mix well. Roll out flat on an oiled cookie sheet and cut into narrow strips or ribbons. Bake for 20 minutes or until lightly toasted. Break into pea-sized pieces suitable for cats.



Report on the March Meeting

Shari Kilman and the Immune System

Shari never ceases to amaze us with her extensive knowledge of how herbs in their various forms are a wonderful form of health aids available to us even in these modern times.

Borrowing information from around the world, she has amassed a personal library of both proven and anecdotal uses for herbs—fresh, dried, infused, tinctured, the list goes on. Shari commented on both American, European and Asian herbs.

We were reminded that it's not always good to suppress symptoms of an illness or ailment since the symptom can be a direct indication of the underlying problem. We were also reminded that keeping things clean around the home and sticking to fresh foods can be the best preventive. Remember, too, that sleep is known by all cultures to be the greatest restorative and healer of all.

There was a brief discussion of the need for warming or cooling herbs and/or compounds. Those types of characteristics are determined against the ailment being treated.

Shari cited a recent spate of news stories touting the wonders of a new treatment called (get ready for this) "homeopathy". Of course, the herbalists and whole health students in the audience that evening did a collective rolling of the eyes. When will the rest of the western world get the message?

A short handout was distributed listing some of her favorite herbs, the useful form of same and the target uses. One impression here is that, as health aids/immune system aids, tinctures work best. They contain the applicable constituents needed in a bit more concentrated and immediately absorbed form than teas or capsules of dried herbal matter.

Shari always graciously takes questions and had a full plate with them. We learn sometimes as much from those sessions as from the presentation itself.

Thanks, Shari. Hope to see you soon.





San Antonio Herb Society February Strategy Day



As a follow up to the January Strategy Day meeting several current and former board members met on Saturday February 28th to develop the blueprint we will use to plan our activities. After reviewing the notes from the January session several themes emerged.

The areas of discussion were around our VISION – How do we see ourselves? How do we want to be known in the community? MARKETING – How do we go about marketing ourselves in light of our Vision? MEMBERSHIP – What do our members like and dislike about us? How do we foster the main interests that our members have? PROGRAMMING – What is the true purpose that our programs serve? How do we achieve a balance knowing the diverse interests and experience of our membership? SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS – What is their essential purpose? How do we encourage that? FINANCIAL – Are we spending our money where it meets the greatest need? What costs can be lowered or cut?

There were approximately 245 items/ ideas/ comments that we reviewed and prioritized in the themes mentioned above. Taking each theme, we developed a goal statement and captured a few actions that we can take to support each goal. This is what was decided:

VISION:

Goal Statement: The San Antonio Herb Society is to be known as the premier group in San Antonio that focuses on all things herbal. We want to be the recognized resource for community fulfillment in environmental, organic, good living, and educational herbal knowledge.

Action List:

Monthly programs are to link back to Herbal related topics only.

Monthly programs are to be informational and educational.

Support community programs that tie into organic and “green” philosophy such as the SAWS Spring Bloom event

MARKETING:

Goal Statement: The San Antonio Herb Society needs to be more visible to the community that we serve. We need to be in the forefront of the public eye for herb related activities.

Action List:

Ensure inclusion in public service announcements such as those found on public radio

Revive recruiting campaign of “Each One Bring One” to our meetings

Send our newsletters to local nurseries

Publish calendar on our website to include all local herb related activities or activities that support our vision.

Develop Speakers Bureau within Herb Society

MEMBERSHIP:

Goal Statement: The San Antonio Herb Society is to be known as a warm and welcoming community.

Action List:

Promote the 6:30 – 7:00 social time

Have greeters at each meeting to welcome and introduce visitors and newer members

Revise the New Member Packet to include:

Constitution

List of Contacts

Welcome letter

List of Special Interest Groups and Contacts

List of 10 Best Herbs for San Antonio

List of publications and websites

Board Members and Contact Information

Copy of most current newsletter

Program list for the year

Calendar of Events

Make sure we include an educational section in each newsletter

PROGRAMMING:

Goal Statement: The San Antonio Herb Society will strive to promote community programs that focus on gardening with herbs, culinary and medicinal uses of herbs as well as organic and green living. The programs should inspire the desire to help and volunteer in our community.

Action List:

Maintain high level of professionalism in program and meetings

Enlist support of tenured members who have contacts in the community to help recruit the more highly respected program speakers in the areas of Gardening, Culinary and Medicinal.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS:

Goal Statement: The Special Interest Groups are to tie back to the larger Herb Society group. They are to foster the same vision and mission as the San Antonio Herb Society.

Action List:

We will start new SIGs when needed

SIGs are to share their accomplishments and programs with the SAHS members. This can be accomplished in several ways, one is to give a brief report on a monthly basis to the Newsletter Editor

FINANCIAL:

Goal Statement: To maintain sufficient funds to support our community and membership goals. To be good stewards to the finances with the goal of giving back to our membership through offering better programs.

Action List:

Decrease discretionary spending. One way is by cutting down on banquet expenses

Increase Sales. We can bundle the Resource Guide and Cookbook for \$35.00

Revisit Blazing Laser as our exclusive nametag vendor; revisit their pricing.

There were MANY ideas discussed in both strategy sessions as well as board meetings. The actions listed here are the top 2-3 in each category that we felt could easily be accomplished beginning now. There are many more that were captured that we will undertake and build on over the next several months and years. It was exciting to get so much input and to see the process develop. What you will see will be a more focused direction for our Herb Society. If you have any questions or concerns about what was discussed, please contact me or any board member.

--Submitted by Evelyn Penrod



Over the Fence...



2009 Program Line-up

April Bob Webster—see page 1.
Hat Contest. The theme for 2009, Mission Bells.
(Remember that the hat must be worn during the meeting in order to be a contestant.) Note: The SA Express-News has a Fiesta Medal contest. Bring your entry to show off that night, too!

May: Ice Cream Social. All members are asked to bring either an herbal-based ice-cream, frozen yogurt, sorbet, topping or other accompaniment or a fingerfood. We're opening the patio doors and letting the outside in! Come enjoy the treats AND the lovely gardens.

June Bay Laurel, Herb of the Year.
Presentation by SAHS membership including the first issue of our new Bay Laurel booklet.

July: Tentative: Herbal Landscaping—Your Edible Yard.

August: Annual "Share, Swap, Show Us What You Got" session. Bring your favorite tool, recipe, book, herb, memory, photograph, magazine, hat—whatever.

Bay Laurel Herbal Booklet *almost ready*

Look for the preliminary of this new book at the May general meeting.

Next Board Meeting

April 27, 6:30 pm. These meetings are open to the general membership. Please contact one of the Board for location or other details prior to the meeting day.

Nominating Committee Making Final List

This committee is still making calls & requests to our membership, looking for people to **co-office** on our Board. Being a co-officer gives us backup and continuity from term to term for both current projects as well as future planning and budgeting. Contact Sally Ann Hnaituk.

an Herb Affair...

May 9, 9-1 at the Antique Rose Emporium. Theme - Herbs in the Home. Activities: ethnic herbs; herb of the year (by me); drying herbs; paper making; aromatherapy; herbal nature printing; vinegars; herbal home cleansers; herbal pest control; landscaping with herbs; breads, butters, spreads and grilling.

— Sally Ann

SAHS and Other Events

Clear your calendars now and be ready to have some SAHS **FUN**draising

April Fiesta! April 16-26

April 18 & 19. SAHS participates in the annual SA Botanical Garden "Walk Across Texas" and plant sale days. Contact Janet Miller to help. (210) 492-7684.

April 25: King William Parade. Contact Adrienne Hacker to help (210) 779-2598, (210) 829-8433.

May 2: Solar Fest @ Maverick Park

May 3: SAWS Garden Jazz party & Plant Sale at SA Botanical Garden. 10am.

May 9: Birdathon @ Mitchell Lake Audubon Ctr.

May has the Becker Lavender Festival in Stonewall.

May 23: 12th Annual Festival of Flowers, Joe-Beth Kirkpatrick to help (phone #s on page 5).

June 3-6: Shakespeare in the Park (SA Botanical)

June 11 & July 9: Concert Under the Stars (SA Botanical)

June 18-20 Blanco Lavender Festival.

May: Coming Labor Day to the SA Botanical Garden: monster-size bug sculptures.

SA Botanical Garden's Art in the Garden series lists Susan Budge sculptures "Myths, Magic and Mysteries"

SAWS Watersaver Landscape Contest

The 2009 contest is here and open to all Bexar County neighborhoods. Winning landscapes will be featured in a public tour Saturday, May 9.

For judging criteria and details on how to enter, call the Gardening Volunteers of South Texas at 210-251-8101. Entries due by April 10.

SAHS, remember one of the 2008 winners was one of our own. Let's make this a trend!

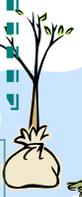
Olive Olé! at Sandy Oaks Olive Orchard

On Saturday, March 28th, SAHS participated in the first International Olive Olé Festival at Sandy Oaks Olive Orchard in Elmendorf. The day dawned cold but still and the tent got set up without incident. As the day went on and the winds increased, we were increasingly glad for the water bucket ballasts Joe-Beth provided. Members volunteering for the event were Eileen Achorn, Sandra Lyssy, Jackie Compere, Sally Ann Hnaituk, Joe-Beth Kirkpatrick, Adrienne Hacker, Rose Mary Michel, Gayle Morris and Linda Barker. Special thanks to Mark Compere and Dave for helping with the tear-down & setup times.

This festival centers around all things related to olives: their growing, different aspects of usage, and even the use of the old, pruned wood! Sandy Oaks is a lovely venue for such events and is just off I37 at exit 120. Their web site is www.sandyoaks.com/

We sold Resource Guides, cookbooks, herb pamphlets, aprons, totes and t-shirts and talked about herbs and the herb society. While there, we saw Mary Dunford and her crew from Nature's Herb Farm busy selling plants and our old friends Camille and Lou of Camille's Teas and Gifts doing a brisk business, too. In all, it was a good day and we got a lot of good will, free publicity, free tastings and samples!

Submitted by Eileen Achorn



San Antonio Herb Society Minutes Meeting

March 19, 2009

Call to order: Eileen Achorn

Welcome to visitors

Thanks to Sandra Lyssy and Sheila McNeil for hospitality set-up.

Minutes from Feb. 12 meeting accepted.

Business discussed:

Follow-up meeting (to January's Vision, Membership, and Finances session); prioritizing goals by "payback per input" order; input still needed. [see separate report]

SIG leaders encouraged to address meetings concerning their SIG activities.

Craft SIG: Beverly Tibbs invited members to come learn about aromatherapy, and recipes for body/skin/general health.

Updates and Upcoming Events:

Carol Lee Fischer reported on SAWS plant sale: it was a great success!

Eileen reminded members that Qualifications for Membership in charter requires volunteer participation.

Upcoming opportunities for volunteering include:

Sandy Winokur's "Olive Olé" (sandyoaks.com); Sandy Oaks Olive Orchard, March 28 in Elmendorf; Discussion on setup/tables/chairs for SAHS booth; Eileen to coordinate.

SA Botanical Gardens/Walk Across Texas Plant Sale—April 18/19; Janet Miller, contact; Please wear name tags & SAHS t-shirts; Still need volunteers for Sunday the 19th.

Milberger's Herb Day—April 25th; Answer questions, table, we can sell SAHS merchandise.

King Williams Parade—April 25th; Adrienne reported that King/Queen/Court will be chosen at 9 April meeting – hat/shoe competition; Need waivers for members who plan to participate

May Banquet—May 14; Evelyn reported the banquet is to be an Ice Cream Social; pot-luck style, bring herbal ice cream, toppings or finger foods

Festival of Flowers—May 23; Joe-Beth to chair; Plan to sell lots of cookbooks

Sally Ann reported for the Nominating Committee - Need the following officers: Co-chair for VP of programs (co-officers for others would be extremely good); Joe-Beth spoke to emphasize the very serious need for a Co-Editor and co-officers; Life interrupts the best of plans and efforts; Please apply to help, either as Editor or Co-Editor!; (Also need member-written newsletter articles or book reviews).

Program: Shari Anderson Kilman of Omni Star Farms on The Immune System.

Handout presented w/ outline of herbs and principles to be discussed in this presentation.

Discussed everything from the skin, our first line of defense, to the critical need for sleep as the primary time for body healing and cleansing; explored various immune system herbs, the best forms to take (i.e. tinctures, teas, etc.); cautioned about overstimulation of auto-immune disorders; Compared the needs for cooling vs. warming herbs in given situations; A thorough question and answer session followed the lesson (including a must-try recipe for Rosemary Wine...); Shari spoke individually after the meeting to those w/ specific concerns.

Meeting adjourned, more food, visiting, and then home.

Submitted by Jan Conwell, co-secretary

DISCLAIMER

Information presented in this newsletter and at the SAHS meetings is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to diagnose, treat, or replace the advice of a health professional. Herbal formulas are given for reference purposes only and a person may have a reaction to any herbal product even though it is not a toxic substance.

Treasurer's Report / February 2009

Submitted by Don Crites

Income

Membership Dues	\$290.00
Book Sales	
Resource Guides	\$120.00
Total Income	\$410.00

Expenses

Newsletter	
SA Garden Center	
Leasing Fee	(\$85.00)
Attendant Fee	(\$36.00)
Programs	
Speaker Honorarium	
Total Expenses	(\$121.00)

Account Balances

Certificate of Deposit	
Int \$95.29 Dep'd 2/24/09	\$1,154.09
Savings Account	\$2,384.71
Checking Account	\$1,939.92
Accounts Total	\$5,478.72

May Newsletter Deadline

Wednesday following the regular meeting. I.e., April 17th.
The editor welcomes your contributions & photos. Thanks!

'08 - '09 SAHS Board Officers

Eileen Achorn - President

207-712-1903 (cel), Eileen.Achorn@utsa.edu

Evelyn Penrod - Vice President Programs

830-438-2290 (cel), epenrod@gvtc.com

Rebecca Kary - Secretary / Membership

210-200-8512, karyrebecca@yahoo.com

Jan Conwell - Co-Secretary / Membership

575-439-7522 C,

Don Crites - Treasurer

210-846-9019 or 671-0989, drcrites@msn.com

Lyn Belisle - Publicity / PR / Webmaster

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CONTACTS

Joe-Beth Kirkpatrick – Newsletter

210-590-9744, joby53@gmail.com

Sandra Lyssy – Hospitality (needs assist)

210-659-5561, slyssy123@yahoo.com

Patty Wilson - T-shirts, Cookbooks

210-647-0838, dwilson@satx.rr.com

jan_storyteller@yahoo.com

Board meetings are typically the last Monday of the month. Contact us if you have an item for the agenda or wish to attend.

Brian's April To-Do List for The Garden

Compiled by MG Brian D. Townsend



In Our Herb Garden:

It's not too late to plant transplants of perennial herbs.

From now and throughout the summer, plant basil, which likes the warm weather.

Cool weather annuals planted late this month will go to seed near the end of June (examples are dill, cilantro, parsley). Weed and water as necessary.

1st WEEK:

Our latest spring freezes have occurred during this week.

Rake and compost oak leaves or mow them and let decompose on the lawn.

Plant beans, sweet corn, summer squash, radishes, carrots and beets in the vegetable garden. Recommended tomato varieties are Merced, Celebrity, Carnival, Surefire, Jackpot, Whirlaway, Sun Master or Heatwave. Mulch them with leaves, cocoa shells, lawn clippings or other material to avoid blossom end rot.

Select and plant water-saving ornamental grasses to add height, texture and color to landscape.

Direct seed warm-season flowers such as marigold, zinnia, larkspur and moss rose in well-prepared beds.

Watch for aphids on new growth. Use general insecticides. For organic control, try insecticidal soap or neem oil.

To keep your everblooming roses flowering longer than any other in town, try this terrific tonic: Dissolve 3 tbsp. of brewer's yeast in 2 gal. water, and soak the roots of each bush after their first blooming.

2nd Week:

It is time to put bougainvillea, plumeria, hibiscus and other tropical plants outside. (This would be a good time to take all your potted plants outside and either repot with fresh soil or with a garden hose flush all those mineral salts from old fertilizers out of the potting soil and start a new feeding program with them, maybe even give their leaves a little bath.)

Keep Easter lilies moist and in a bright room for long, indoor life. After the flowers decline, plant them outside in a location with morning sun.

Wisteria must be pruned after their flowering season, even in years when they fail to bloom. To prune them significantly at any other season would reduce or prevent their bloom the next spring. Apply iron/sulfur material to wisteria to combat iron deficiency caused by South Texas soils.

Sow seeds for sunflowers and gomphrena (bachelor button).

Plant okra and pumpkin seeds and sweet potato transplants (slips).

Plant tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, peas and beans.

Cut back frost-damaged foliage on annuals and perennials. Prune spring-blooming trees and shrubs after they bloom.

3rd Week

Plant basil, begonia, caladium and impatiens in prepared beds.

Warm-weather annuals such as zinnias, lantana and purslane can be planted now.

Turn your compost pile to speed decomposition.

It is time to plant okra, Southern peas and ornamental cotton.

Do not trim oak trees. Pruning now could encourage the spread of the oak wilt disease.

4th Week:

Plant heat-tolerant perennials like China Doll, Firebush, Gingers, Lantana and Mex. Bird-of-Paradise.

Prune spring-blooming plants as the last blooms fade. An exception is Texas mountain laurels, which don't respond well to pruning. Just remove dead wood on mountain laurels.

Harvest columbine seeds before pods open. Put the stalks in a brown paper bag so the seeds will collect in the sack when they open.

It is time to fertilize tomatoes when the first fruits set. Spread a half-cup of slow-release lawn fertilizer around the drip line. Check stems of tomato plants just below the soil line in search of cutworms. Remove the cutworms by hand.

When onion tops fall over, it's time to harvest. Put the bulbs on the surface of the garden for a day to harden off, then store them in mesh bags in a dry room.

Plant watermelon and cantaloupe.

Plant English or Algerian ivy, Asian jasmine or mondograss in deep shade where lawn grass does poorly.

**In updating this collections of useful tips, I have come across several comments, instructions and chemicals that are being replaced with newer techniques and materials. In some cases, I do not want to change what others have written, but I need to bring "them" up-to-date by putting a "(?)" right behind the point in question and maybe adding my own two-cents worth. - me
Many thanks to my contributors for sharing their wisdom so I can learn and share it with you.*

Garden For Butterflies

When we gaze upon the beautiful butterflies flitting from flower to flower, we think about their beauty and how relaxed they make us feel. What we don't realize is that they are busy doing a very important job.

Butterflies are second only to bees as important pollinators whose hard work pays off in the production of seeds and fruits for our enjoyment, wildlife, and future plants. By providing space in our landscapes for the plants and habitat they need, we can do a lot to help protect our native butterflies.

Most butterflies feed on the nectar of flowers. Some of the larger swallowtail butterflies can feed from tubular flowers. Incorporate plants that bloom throughout the season and feature a variety of flower shapes, sizes and colors to attract the most butterflies. Some butterflies prefer rotten fruit. Integrate native plants that drop fruit such as the Mexican plum, Texas persimmon, and Blanco crabapple.

Many people forget that butterflies develop from caterpillars. To help increase butterfly populations, plant some larval food plants in the landscape.

Other things to consider are water and shelter. Place water in a shallow dish with sand and pebbles, and plant evergreen trees and shrubs — cedar, evergreen sumac, mountain laurel, Arizona cypress, live oak, and yaupon holly — to provide shelter from wind and inclement weather.

Finally, place decorative rocks or logs in the garden as butterflies need a place to warm up before they can fly.

By Janis Merritt as published in the SAWS e-newsletter "conserve".

Ed. note: to attract Hummers & Butterflies: The following are attractive plants to hummingbirds and butterflies, experts say, and are well-suited to S. Texas landscapes because they are drought-resistant. A) For Hummingbirds: Autumn sage, Carolina jessamine, ceniza, coral honeysuckle, lantana, red yucca and Turk's cap. B) For Butterflies: Agarita, butterfly bush, Indian blanket, mealy cup sage, purple coneflower, summer phlox and Texas bluebonnet.

Herb Garden at the SA Botanical Garden

aiming for Star of the Garden Award

So much of the work done by SAHS members is done on the quiet. When our Weed and Gloat team arrived at the SA Botanical Garden this morning to tend the Herb Garden we found that the fairies has been there a week earlier: Our plot of parsleys, lavenders, comfrey, dill, fennel, sages, oreganos and thyme had been weeded and fresh mulch spread amongst the plants. Members Jan Conwell and Jeannie Hackett had done the work. In spite of that, there still was a certain amount to do, so Jan, Sally Ann and I topped the parsleys, which are threatening to bolt, and planted some cleomes along the back, while Helga quietly pruned the oregano at the end of the bed. The herb bed is a mass of healthy, mounded plants, and those which we planted in February are thriving and growing. Set amongst the Cottage Garden, which is a riot of columbines, poppies, snapdragons, allysum, and various alliums, the Herb Garden, with its wide, wooden bench, is an inviting place to stay and rest. Next month we will put in basil.

The Garden was filled with visitors when we were there this morning, and indeed, a couple of employees with whom we spoke told us that this is the most popular time for people to visit the SA Botanical Garden. As well they might.

Labors done, we repaired to Van's Thai Kitchen on Broadway, to Teriyaki Chicken and Shrimp with Broccoli and Fried Rice. (That in capital letters because that's how it tasted: Good.) The Weed and Gloat team today: Sally Ann Hnatiuk, Jan Connell, Helga Anderson and myself.

Submitted by Jane McDaniel

Book Review:

Culpeper's Color Herbal

Edited by David Potterton

ISBN 0-8069-8568-2

This herbal is an interesting addition to any herb-lover's book shelf, but it appealed to me mostly as a sort translation of the famous astrologer-physician's historical use of herbs. A few of Culpeper's applications might set a modern local Poison Control Center on standby — but the Forward warns the reader not to take the seventeenth century descriptions — or prescriptions — as medical treatment.

With an alphabetical list of almost 400 herbs, there is plenty to explore, along with beautiful color illustrations. Each herb is shown with Culpeper's interesting comments, identified by location, flowering time, astrological significance, medicinal virtues, and lastly, modern uses. Two more sections follow; "Illnesses and Their Herbal Treatments According to Culpeper"; and "Illnesses and Their Modern Herbal Treatments". Both are indexed lists referring back to herbs mentioned in the text. The book is fairly easy to get around in, using both scientific and common names for plants.

What I like best about the book is that it allows me to see the Renaissance approach to herbs, medical treatment, and patient care.

Submitted by Jan Conwell

SIG-nificant Events

Oh, SIG Leaders... a request

Please provide a line or two about what your SIG's doing -the month before or next. The column is titled "SIG-nificant Events" (see page 7). Having this little bit of information may help newer members figure out some new SIGs!

Herb Forum 2009

After a lovely early morning drive, Evelyn and I arrived at Round Top in time to listen to Henry Flowers give an overview of some lesser known plants that were for sale. This was the first year Henry has done this and it really helped raise interest in some new plants. After Evelyn and I checked in we wandered the grounds for a bit before the marvelous buffet lunch.

I participated in an olive oil workshop given by Sandy Winokur. It covered the benefits and classification of olive oils and the harvesting of olives. Did you know that olives must be preserved within 3 days or they can spoil? Some kitchen tips with recipes followed. I learned how to make herbal infusions with olive oil and some great green cleaning ideas. In the kitchen, use olive oil on burns and use on ant bites. Olive oil and the skin covered anti-wrinkle mixes and a cuticle and nail formula. Sandy sent us away with a marvelous bottle of aroma oil. Sandy also spoke on Saturday afternoon on how to grow and the types of olive trees.

Next was Luscious Libations of the Mediterranean by Billi Parus, a yearly presenter from Virginia. Not only did we sample about 11 liqueurs but also we learned about the history of liqueur. We were given many recipes and instructed on the 'how to'. As most liqueurs must age between 3-5 months, we were given 2 small bottles to take with us. They will be aged in April and I don't share well with others. There was a lovely lavender liqueur and a very unusual and very good Seven Seed liqueur made with cumin, anise, dill, allspice, caraway, coriander and fennel seeds.

Saturday lectures included Growing Mediterranean Herbs by Tina Marie Wilcox who cares for the herb gardens at The Ozark Folk Center. She was funny and very knowledgeable. At times I could hear Malcolm Beck — compost tea, green sand and fish emulsion. Tina also did a one-woman show in the afternoon called The Widow Wilcox of Rattlesnake Ridge. We learned a great deal about the why's and how's of living in the country of that date. Susan Belsinger spoke on the herb of the year — bay laurel. We received many recipes and samples. Later in the day she also made tapas keeping with the Mediterranean theme. Deni Brown came from England to speak on some of the lesser-known herbs of the Mediterranean regions.

Before you knew it, it was Saturday night and we went to the famous SAHS pot luck dinner on the porch of the Yellow Artist residence. To all that were unable to attend this year — we did our best and celebrated well. All felt your absence.

Don't forget the herb of 2010 is dill and the Herbal Forum is March 19th and 29th, 2010.

Submitted by Sally Ann Hnaituk



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