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Last meet

During our last meet, we had a lovely discussion on the herb Thyme and its many varieties. On display was some Thymes from various members' gardens, and a beautiful selection of Thymes from Lisa's nursery.



Our workshop for the evening was to make herbal shoe deodorizers. An easy and fun little herbal craft, these deo-

odorizers works well anywhere you need a bit of freshness—cupboards, the car, gym bags, etc.



Mix a selection of essential oils, powder (talcum or a homemade blend of baking soda and arrowroot), an optional bulking agent such as rice or oats, and a few dried herbs.



Winter Gardening

Remember to set out your garlic for the year before shortest day (21 June), and it is also a great time to set some shallots.

Many garden centers will have new season bare-rooted roses available too.

Don't forget to use your gorgeously blooming pansies and violas as edible flowers!

Plant a tree! Why not plant a native New Zealand tree to increase your garden biodiversity? Or expand your herb garden with a herbal tree—see more in the newsletter!

Next Meet

Monday, 8 Jun, 7.30pm
Milford Primary
30 Shakespeare Rd
Milford

Topic: Hobby Bee-keeping with Donna
Herb: Sunflower

World Environment Day and Arbor Day

The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) runs World Environment Day each year on June 5 in order to raise global awareness for positive environmental action to protect nature and the planet.

“The goal of sustainable development is to increase the quality of life for all people without increasing environmental degradation, and without compromising the resource needs of future generations.” UN Secretary-General (<http://www.unep.org/wed/messages/SG-WED-Message.asp#sthash.XQPuNtYN.dpuf>)

Going hand-in-hand with the message of World Environment Day, June 5 is also National Arbor Day in New Zealand, a day where all New Zealanders are encouraged to plant and care for trees, especially NZ native trees.

The first NZ arbor day planting was on 3 July 1890, becoming an annual event on June 5 by 1977. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arbor_Day#New_Zealand)

The best
time to
plant a
tree was
twenty
years ago.
The second
best time
is now.
- Chinese Proverb

Herb Trees

Trees are not often thought of when the word “herb” is used, yet so much of our food, spices, and medicines originate in the leaves, barks, berries, nuts, sap, and blossoms of trees.

In celebration of Arbour Day, let’s look at some herb trees:

10 Herb Trees

Bay Tree

Laurus nobilis



By H. Zell via Wikimedia

Prized as a culinary herb, but also used medicinally to stimulate the appetite and help digestion. Externally a leaf decoction can be used to relieve aching limbs.

Birch

Betula pendula



By Abderitestatos via Wikimedia

Birch leaves are antiseptic, and

internally a tea may relieve rheumatism and gout. The bark is used in medicated soaps and in brewing beer, while sap can be made into wine and vinegar.

Elder Tree

Sambucus nigra



By Franz Xaver via Wikimedia

The “medicine chest of the country people”, Elder flowers are infused for treating colds and flu, and for cosmetics. The berries are rich in vitamin C.

Eucalyptus

Eucalyptus globulus



Köhler via Wikimedia

The oil extracted from the mature leaves of Eucalyptus is used commercially in medicines for sore throats, fevers, as an inhalant, as an antiseptic, deodorant and stimulant.

Ginkgo

Ginkgo biloba



By Ladislav Lupa via Wikimedia

An ancient tree dating back some 200 million years, the Ginkgo tree leaves are said to enhance cognitive function and memory while Traditional Chinese Medicine uses the leaves and seeds for asthma and coughs.

Lemon

Citrus x limon



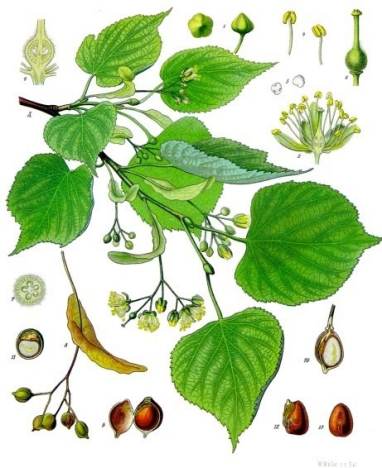
By Amada44 via Wikimedia

A widely used and popular tree, bearing fruit rich in vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. All parts of the fruit, the flesh, juice and peel, are used in cooking and making sweets and drinks. It is also a key ingredient in many cosmetics and medicines and has numerous household uses.

Herb Trees

Lime Blossom Tree

Tilia cordata



Linden tea, made from the dried flowers of the tree, is a delicious digestive and calming tonic in Europe. The flowers are also used as a flavouring.

Tea Tree

Melaleuca alternifolia



Powerfully antiseptic and antifungal, Tea Tree essential oil is commonly used to treat various skin infections, including eczema, psoriasis, to heal wounds, as a treatment for lice and in blends to ease respiratory problems.

Walnut Tree

Juglans regia



By Ahmed-Najib-Biabani-Ibrahimkhel via Wikimedia

The nuts of this tree is very nutritious, pickled when green or eaten ripe in salads, cakes or stuffings. The leaves may be infused to ease herpes and eczema and the powdered bark is a laxative.

White Willow

Salix alba



By Willow via Wikimedia

White willow bark is nature's aspirin—relieving aches, pains and reducing fevers.

Other Herb Trees

Some more trees that give us food and medicine include Cacao, Cinnamon, Cassia, Holly, Hawthorn, Pine, Almond, Clove, Nutmeg and Mace, Juniper, Oak, Coconut, Tea and Coffee. Not to mention the plethora of fruit trees!

New Zealand Trees

A number of native New Zealand trees have historically been used for food and medicine:

Kawakawa Tree—

Macropiper excelsum

Antibacterial and anti-inflammatory, the leaf and bark is used for aches and pain, to heal cuts and wounds and as a general tonic.

Rātā—Metrosideros

The bark of the tree is used for wound healing, as a lotion and the inner bark taken internally for diarrhoea and dysentery.

Kōkōmuka - Hebe elliptica

Chewing the leaves is said to help regulate bowel movements and is used against constipation.

Kōwhai—Sophora

The bark of the tree is made into a poultice to remedy sore backs and heal wounds.

References

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