



# Diann's Herb Newsletter

FALL 2011

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**The International Herb Association selects the Herb of the Year. Here is a list of the ones starting from the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century:**

- 2012 Rose**
- 2011 Horseradish**
- 2010 Dill**
- 2009 Bay Laurel**
- 2008 Calendula**
- 2007 Lemon Balm**
- 2006 Pelargonium**
- 2005 Oregano**
- 2004 Garlic**
- 2003 Basil**
- 2002 Echinacea**
- 2001 Sage**
- 2000 Rosemary**

## The Language of Herbs

As I researched herbal books and magazines and wandered in my garden for a topic for this fall herb newsletter, nothing really caught my interest. Then in the wee hours of the morning I woke with an idea—"The Language of Herbs." I had just finished reading *The Language of Flowers*, a first novel by Vanessa Diffenbaugh, which I certainly recommend. The language of flowers is actually a minor theme in the book; it's really a story of relationships. An eighteen-year-old woman is emancipated out of the child welfare system because she had not been adopted after being fostered in many homes. She felt so rejected that it was difficult for her to establish relationships with others. Flowers and the language of flowers, which she had learned from one of her foster mothers, became a life-line for her and allowed her to get a job with a florist and gave her a means of communicating especially when she encountered someone who also understood the language.

The language of flowers has fascinated me ever since I became aware of it; however, few people today are even aware of it. During the Victorian Age, when the royalty and peerage had servants to carry their messages, it was how they, especially courting couples, communicated. It was wonderfully simple—if a suitor wanted to let a young woman know he had a romantic interest in her, he might send her a red rose. Then the young lady might reply with cockscomb, which means *affection*, or baby's breath, which means *everlasting love*. He would be crushed if she sent him candytuft, because it means *indifference*, or basil, which means *hate*.

There were problems with this language, as with any language. Ambiguities were rampant, plus the color of the flower made a difference. For instance, a yellow rose, unlike a red rose, could mean *infidelity* or *jealousy*. A tussie-mussie with a variety of blooms may have made the message clearer--or more confusing.

Here's a list of common herbs and their meanings just in case you have a message to send someone. But don't be surprised if you find another meaning if you look in a different resource. It's fun to think about the messages we may be sending when we send someone flowers.

Allium (*Allium*)  
Aloe (*Aloe vera*)

Prosperity  
Grief



Tussie-Mussie

Perhaps the unattached, the unwanted, the unloved, could grow to give love as lushly as anyone else.

-Vanessa Diffenbaugh  
*The Language of Flowers*

Angelica ( <i>Angelica pachycarpa</i> )	Inspiration
Bay leaf ( <i>Laurus nobilis</i> )	I change but in death
Broom ( <i>Cytisus</i> )	Humility
Chamomile ( <i>Matricaria recutita</i> )	Energy in adversity
Chervil ( <i>Anthriscus</i> )	Sincerity
Clove ( <i>Syzygium aromaticum</i> )	Secret love
Cilantro ( <i>Coriandrum sativum</i> )	Hidden worth
Dandelion ( <i>Taraxacum</i> )	Rustic
Dittany ( <i>Dictamnus albus</i> )	Childbirth
Fennel ( <i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> )	Strength
Feverfew ( <i>Tanacetum parthenium</i> )	Warmth
Flax ( <i>Linum usitatissimum</i> )	I feel your kindness
Foxglove ( <i>Digitalis purpurea</i> )	Insincerity
Ginger ( <i>Zingiber</i> )	Strength
Hibiscus ( <i>Hibiscus</i> )	Delicate beauty
Lavender ( <i>Lavandula</i> )	Mistrust
Linden tree ( <i>Tilia</i> )	Conjugal love
Love-lies-bleeding ( <i>Amaranthus</i> )	Hopeless but not helpless
Majoram ( <i>Origanum</i> )	Blushes
Oregano ( <i>Origanum vulgare</i> )	Joy
Pansy ( <i>Viola</i> )	Think of me
Parsley ( <i>Peroselinum crispum</i> )	Festivity
Peppermint ( <i>Mentha</i> )	Warmth of feeling
Rosemary ( <i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> )	Remembrance
Sage ( <i>Salvia officinalis</i> )	Good health and long life
Sorrel ( <i>Rumex acetosa</i> )	Parental affection
Soapwort ( <i>Stellaria</i> )	Welcome
Tansy ( <i>Tanacetum</i> )	I declare war against you
Thyme ( <i>Thymus</i> )	Activity
Witch hazel ( <i>Hamamelis</i> )	A spell

I will be selling herbs at the Fall Festival at Veterans' Plaza (350 Pageant Lane) October 7 from 8 am to 2 pm.

The Master Gardener Plant Sale will be Oct. 8 at 8 am at the Restore Store on Madison Street. Come early.

Friday, Oct. 14, from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and Sunday, Oct. 16, from 1:00 to 5:00 pm I will be having a ½ price sale on all annuals, biennials, tender perennials, and select hardy perennials at Diann's Greenhouse, 3072 Nicole Rd.

The Clarksville Garden Club will be holding its annual gardening workshop in the public library on Oct. 22 from 10 am to 2 pm. I will be presenting a program on herbs at 10 am. The workshop is open to the public.

## 2011 Herbal Workshops

Space is still available in the October 11 workshop, "Making Herbal Breads." It's from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon. Go to [www.diannsgreenhouse.com](http://www.diannsgreenhouse.com) or call me at 931-648-8701 for details and to register.

### RECIPE

#### Chicken Stock

With the sudden drop in temperature here in middle Tennessee I am thinking about soup. Since most ordinary store brands of stock contain high levels of sodium—1,000 milligrams or nearly ½ teaspoon per cup—and other additives like MSG, I enjoy making my own stock. Here's my favorite chicken stock recipe, which will make about four quarts. However, don't use more water than will cover the chicken. The less water you use the stronger the stock. If you usually buy whole chickens, save the backs, wings, and necks for making this stock.

6 pounds chicken parts or bones, or 2 whole chickens with breast meat removed, each cut into 6 pieces

About 4 quarts cold water

1 small bunch parsley stems

4 4-inch sprigs fresh thyme

2 or 3 fresh bay laurel leaves

1 onion, quartered with peel

1 carrot, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces

2 ribs celery, cut into 1-inch pieces

1. **Stock.** Put the chicken parts in an 8-quart stockpot and add enough cold water to cover. Bring the stock to a simmer over medium heat, then reduce the heat to maintain a very gentle simmer. Using a ladle, skim off any fat or impurities that rise to the surface. Simmer for 30 minutes, skimming several more times.

2. **Aromatics.** Tie the parsley, thyme, and bay leaves together with cotton string to make a bouquet garni. Add it to the pot along with the vegetables. Continue to cook the stock uncovered at the lowest simmer for 2 to 3 hours, skimming from time to time if needed.

3. **Straining and storing.** Pour the stock through a large colander placed over another large pot or a very large bowl. Discard the solids. If you wish to use the stock right away, let it settle for 5 minutes, then skim off all the fat with a ladle. Otherwise refrigerate the stock uncovered and later remove the congealed fat with a large spoon. Store the stock covered in the refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze in small batches for later use.

--Jerry Traunfeld, *The Herb Farm Cookbook*

**Bouquet garni** is a small bundle of herbs—usually only parsley, thyme, and bay, but may include oregano and/or savory-- wrapped in a square of cheesecloth or tied with string and used to season stews, soups, and roasts.