



Diann's Herb Newsletter

SPRING 2007

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 2

The International Herb Society selects the Herb of the Year. Here are a few from the past:

*2007 Lemon Balm
2006 Pelargonium
2005 Oregano
2004 Garlic
2003 Basil
2002 Echinacea
2001 Sage
2000 Rosemary*

*Check out this website for updates on how to care for freeze-damaged shrubs and trees:
<http://forestry.tennessee.edu/freeze07.htm>*

*Diann's Greenhouse now has a web site:
<http://diannsgreenhouse.com>
Check it out.*

Plants for Specific Spots

Are you looking for a plant for a certain area of your garden? How about those small areas between rocks in your walkway? Try some creeping thyme (*Thymus praecox*) or some English chamomile (*Chamaemelum mobile* 'Treneague'). Unlike German chamomile (*Matricaria recutita*), it does not bloom, and it is perennial. How will you cover that bare wall or corner quickly? Try one of the beautiful climbing beans—Painted Lady, Scarlet Runner, or Purple Hyacinth. What can you plant around the base of the plant in your pond or in a wet spot? Try some watercress (*Nasturtium officinale*); it's great for salads and sandwiches, and the fish love it too.

Do you need a tall plant for the back of your perennial bed? Russian sage (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*) with its soft blue flowers can reach five feet. Anise-hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*) is borderline hardy here, but it self-seeds, plus there are many new varieties being developed such as 'Apricot Sprite.' What about for a dry spot? Plant oregano (*Origanum vulgare hirtium*) and sweet marjoram (*Origanum majorana*). Are the deer a problem? They don't like bee balm (*Monarda didyma*), which will attract butterflies and hummingbirds. How about a foil for all the green? Try some of the gray wormwoods (*Artemisia* 'Silver Mound' or 'Powis Castle'), or silver tansy (*Tanacetum niveum* 'Jackpot'). Not only is tansy great for flower arranging, but it will keep many pesky insects away. If you have other problem spots, there's an herb for you. We can find it.

Speaking of Chamomile...

I have several new varieties of chamomile. There's the old favorite for tea—German chamomile, but you may want to try the new double chamomile (*Chamaemelum nobile* 'Flora Plena'). If you like the perennial Roman chamomile (*Chamaemelum nobile* or *Arthemis nobilis*) for a ground cover, you may want to try the new English chamomile that does not bloom. Some other plants you might like to try are chocolate mint (*Mentha x peperita piperita*), margarita mint (*Mentha* 'Margarita'), costmary (*Chrysanthemum balsamita*), horseradish (*Armoracia rusticana*), and golden sage (*Salvia officinalis* 'Aurea').

You'll find these plants and many more at Diann's Greenhouse. Just call anytime for an appointment. If I don't answer, please leave a message; I'm probably up to my elbows in dirt. Did you know that gardeners know the best 'dirt'?

One More Lemon Balm Recipe

You probably thought I had said everything I had to say about lemon balm in the last newsletter, but I have to include one more recipe for lemon balm pound cake. This sweet, simple cake can be sliced and served warm or cold with a sweet herb tea.

Lemon Balm Pound Cake

Makes about 8 mini loaves

1/3 cup fresh lemon balm leaves
1 cup milk
1 cup butter
2 ½ cups sugar
3 cups flour
¼ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking powder
Grated zest of one lemon
5 eggs

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Wash and finely chop lemon balm leaves. Steep lemon balm in hot milk for 3 minutes. Cream together butter and sugar. Add milk and lemon balm to creamed mixture. Sift together flour, salt, and baking powder, and add to wet mixture. Add lemon zest and eggs and mix thoroughly. Pour into greased and floured mini loaf pans. Bake for 25 to 35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

(Recipe from Herb Companion, July 07)

Herbal Sprays and Splashes

With summer solstice just a few weeks away, I thought you might like some recipes for fresheners to revive both tired skin and tired spirit.

Chamomile Skin Freshener

Tuck this freshener into your gym bag or purse to use throughout the day.

1 Tbls dried or 2 Tbls fresh chamomile flowers, or 2 tea bags
1 cup boiling water

Pour boiling water over chamomile in a ceramic bowl and allow to steep for several hours. Strain liquid, if needed, and pour completely cooled liquid into a clean bottle. Yield: 8 ounces.

Chervil Mint Splash

The scent of fresh chervil, or "sweet fern," purportedly gives one a feeling of well-being. Some herb experts believe it reduces the signs of aging, fine lines, and wrinkles because it moisturizes the skin, keeping it soft and supple.

¼ cup fresh chervil leaves or 2 Tbls dried
¼ cup fresh mint leaves or 2 Tbls dried
1 cup boiling water
¼ cup rosewater

Place the chervil and mint leaves in a glass or ceramic bowl and pour boiling water over them. When cool, strain the mixture and stir in the rosewater. Pour the mixture into a clean container. Yield: 8 ounces

(Recipes from Herb Quarterly, Summer 07)

Herbal lip balm company aims to encourage an organic way of life. For more information, visit <http://www.EcoLips.com>

*Diann's Greenhouse
3072 Nicole Rd.
Clarksville, TN
37040
931-648-8701
diann@dianns
greenhouse.com*