



Gulf Herb Society Coast Newsletter

August
2016

P. O. Box 81817 • Mobile, AL 36689 • www.gulfcoastherbsociety.org

Rosemary for Remembrance DATES

Regular Meetings are held at the Mobile Botanical Gardens.

- **August 23, 5:30pm:** Herb Day Coordination
- **September 17, 5:30pm:** Herb Day at MBG.
- **September 27, 5:30pm:** Regular Meeting at MBG Spiritual Bed by its nurturers
- **October 25, 5:30pm:** Regular Meeting at MBG Fragrance Bed by its nurtures

HERB DAY!

Herb Artisans – Growing Using Your Favorite Herbs
Includes lunch, info packet, door prizes, and more!

September 17th, 2016, 9am-Noon
at the Mobile Botanical Gardens.

Register at www.gulfcoastherbsociety.org

Thymely NOTES

[Click Here to find us on Facebook!](#) Read herb tips, recipes, and see pictures from our latest events.

- We'll be featuring a **Tip Time** where we share our knowledge with our newer members. Please have a gardening tip in mind to share.
- Please **volunteer** in the herb garden Saturdays after the monthly meetings.

Did You KNOW

Anise Hyssop
(alchemy-works.com)

The Native Americans found many uses for this North American plant. The Cheyenne drank a tea of this herb to relieve a "dispirited heart." The Cree included the flowers of this magick herb in medicine bundles, and the Chippewa made a protective charm of it. Plant it around your back door for protection or add it to a back border. The dried plant has been burned as an incense. The flower essence is said to bring back sweetness after one has indulged in unwarranted guilt, to encourage honest communication, and to allay anxiety before exams or performances. In this plant we can see a lot of Mercury - uplifting, alleviating, quelling anxiety, communicating, the licorice scent - in a normally Venus plant family (Mint).

Mundane Uses – Anise hyssop is good for cut flowers and in pot pourri, and the flowers dry nicely to navy blue (the dried seed heads look pretty nice in the winter garden, too). This herb smells like black licorice and in fact has some chemicals in common with licorice, but the scent also has notes of lemon, pine, sage, black pepper, and camphor, so it's nice and complex.

The leaves or flowers are edible and can be used to sweeten tea or flavor sugar or quickbreads and muffins (add 1/2 cup chopped fresh flowers). Add the leaves to fruit salads or steep them in milk for flavoring when making ice cream. You can make anise-hyssop honey (or any herb honey) by putting some dried (don't use fresh for this) leaves in a jar, pouring warm honey over them, and leaving them for a month for the honey to soak up the herb taste. Make some delicious butter cookies by adding 2 tablespoons of the fresh minced flowers to the dough. The flowers make a nice garnish for iced tea.



Anise Hyssop by Richard Cooney

Anise hyssop is a typical prairie plant but also likes growing on the edges of open woodlands. It's a wonderful addition to the cottage garden. I also like to have some bee plants like this near me where I sit in the garden because I like watching our furry little sisters enjoying their work! It's a great honey plant.

The color and shape of the flowers are among bees' favorites. It attracts butterflies and hummingbirds, and goldfinches like to eat its seeds. There is nothing like brushing your hand against a scented plant like this in winter - very uplifting on those grey days. This plant is also known as giant hyssop, lavender hyssop, licorice mint, blue giant hyssop, anise-mint, lavender hyssop, licorice mint, wonder honey plant, elk mint, and fragrant hyssop.

How to Grow Anise Hyssop – Seeds require light to germinate, so barely cover at room temperature to germinate 5-30 days. Keep soil moist but not sopping. Transplant to 1 ft/.25m apart in rich soil and full sun or partial shade - stalks will be stronger in full sun. It might need staking in partial shade.

This makes sense because mints typically like water. Best place for mints in the garden is by a leaky faucet. This perennial generally blooms the second year from seeds but might bloom the first year if it is happy. Cut it back by 1/3 after blooming, and it will get bushier and rebloom. Plants get 3-6ft tall. Anise hyssop is hardy from zone 5 to 9. It self-seeds readily and its roots travel underground, but it is not too aggressive. Deer tend to avoid eating this plant, so a back border of anise hyssop can be effective in keeping them away. Rabbits love it, though.

Hover Fly Information: Plants That Attract Hover Flies To The Garden

(gardeningknowhow.com)

Hover flies are true flies, but they look like small bees or wasps. They are the helicopters of the insect world, often seen hovering in the air, darting a short distance, and then hovering again. These beneficial insects are valuable tools in the fight against aphids, thrips, scale insects and caterpillars .

What are Hover Flies? – Hover flies (Allograpta oblique) go by several other names, including syrphid flies, flower flies and drone flies. Hover flies in gardens are a common sight throughout the country, especially where aphids are present. The adults feed on nectar as they pollinate flowers. The female lays her tiny, creamy white eggs near aphid colonies, and the eggs hatch in two or three days. The beneficial hover fly larvae begin feeding on the aphids as they hatch.

After spending several days eating aphids, the hover fly larvae attach themselves to a stem and build a cocoon. They spend 10 days or so inside the cocoon during warm weather, and longer when the weather is cool. Adult hover flies emerge from the cocoons to begin the cycle again.

Hover Fly Information – Hover flies are nearly as effective as ladybugs and lacewings at controlling aphids. A well-established population of larvae can control 70 to 80 percent of an aphid infestation. Although they are most efficient at controlling aphids, they also help control other soft-bodied insects.

The bright bands of color on a hover fly's abdomen probably help to defend the insect from predators.

The bright color makes them look a lot like wasps so that predators, such as birds, might think they can sting. You can tell the difference between hover flies and wasps by their heads, which look like typical fly heads. Another identifying factor is that flies have two wings, while wasps have four.

Hover flies aren't available for purchase, but you can plant flowers and herbs to attract them. Plants that attract hover flies include fragrant herbs such as:

- Oregano
- Garlic chives
- Sweet alyssum
- Buckwheat
- Bachelor buttons

Of course, it helps to have an abundance of aphids in the garden too!

Out Of Cilantro? Save A Recipe With These Swaps

(herbgardens.about.com)

When hot weather brings an end to this annual's harvest, switch to heat-loving substitutes in your recipes and windowsill pots.

Cilantro is earthy, grassy, and citrusy with—it must be said—a hint of soapiness. Despite its polarizing reputation, countless chefs and home cooks consider this herb to be an essential ingredient for salsas, salads, ceviche, and many other savory dishes.

It's also incredibly easy to grow in a pot using container gardening. Just sprinkle seeds onto prepared soil. and water them in. The harvest of flavorful leaves begins in three to four weeks. But there's a catch. Cilantro grows best in the cool weather of spring and fall. Once temperatures creep up in hot-summer regions, there's no stopping cilantro from bolting. The plants switch into reproductive mode, cranking out flowers and seeds (aka coriander). When this happens, the flavor of the leaves turns bitter. When that happens, it's time to look for substitutes in the farmers' market, or look for starts at an organic nursery.

Papalo (*Porophyllum ruderale*) – With a flavor that's akin to a peppery cilantro-cucumber cross, papalo can stand in for cilantro in all summertime recipes. The annual plant—a member of the daisy family—is native to South America and grows happily through

the heat of the summer. Add raw chopped leaves to cooked dishes, or serve as a garnish or side. The flavor is stronger than cilantro, so adjust according to taste.

Growing tips: Plant in full sun. Harvest leaves or stem tips as needed.

Vietnamese coriander (*Polygonum odoratum*) – This cilantro substitute combines flavor with good looks; the spreading growth pattern works well in containers or in the garden as a groundcover. Native to southeast Asia, Vietnamese cilantro has a lemony-cilantro flavor and is often used in regional recipes as a substitute for both cilantro and mint.

Growing tips: Plant this perennial in afternoon shade and moist soil. Harvest young leaves.

Culantro (*Eryngium foetidum*) – This tropical herb tastes like a more pungent version of cilantro; home cooks should adjust recipes to taste. The robust flavor can withstand cooking, and the leaves dry well for year-round use. Native to South America, culantro is widely used in Latin America to season rice, soups, and salsas.

Growing tips: Culantro may bolt in hot, sunny conditions. This can be delayed by growing the tropical biennial in shade.

Myrtle's MUSINGS

- Okay - I'm hosting 2 foreign exchange students – 1 from Spain and 1 from S. Korea, so we'll be doing high school things again here at my house!?
-Jody Conrad
- **Membership Dues** are \$15 for a single person, \$25 for couples - due by the end of our calendar year, which is August. Please pay Lettie McDaniel at the next meeting.
- **Herb Day** is our biggest yearly fundrasier. Don't forget to tell your friends. Includes lunch, info packet, door prizes, & more! Featured presenters include Mobile Botanical Gardens, Mobile County Master Gardeners & the Gulf Coast Herb Society with delectable dishes from their cookbooks featuring favorite herbs mint, parsley, basil, thyme & lemon balm.

Also featuring the Montrose Garden Club and the 2016 Herb of the Year: Peppers!

Seating is limited and **pre-registration is required**. The registration form is on our website at www.gulfcoastherbsociety.org.

“DILL”-ICIOUS Steamed Green Beans with Lemon-Mint Dressing ~ myrecipes.com

Yield: Serves 4 (serving size: about 1 cup)

- 1 pound green beans, trimmed
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh mint leaves
- 1 tablespoon minced shallots
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1. Steam green beans 4 minutes or until crisp-tender; drain.
2. Combine mint and remaining ingredients in a large bowl, and stir with a whisk. Add green beans to bowl, and toss to coat.

Variations (the rest are in the link above):

Red Pepper and Pesto: Place jelly-roll pan on bottom rack of oven. Preheat to 450°. Toss 1 pound green beans, 1 sliced red bell pepper, 1 tablespoon olive oil, and 1/4 teaspoon salt; spread on pan. Bake 8 minutes, stirring after 4 minutes. Pulse 1/2 cup parsley, 1/4 cup unsalted pistachios, 1 tablespoon water, 1 tablespoon olive oil, 2 teaspoons lemon juice, 1/8 teaspoon salt, and 1 garlic clove in food processor. Toss with bean mixture.

GCHS Officers 2016-17

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