

Gulf Herb Society Coast News letter

January 2022

Mailing Only: 109 Grand Blvd · Mobile, AL 36607 · www.gulfcoastherbsociety.org

Rosemary for Remembrance DATES

- · January 25, 5:30 pm. GCHS Meeting at MBG
- February 22, 5:30 pm. GCHS Meeting at MBG
 See calendar page at the end of the newsletter for complete details.

Thymely NOTES

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

- Please volunteer in the herb garden whenever you can.
 Contact Pat Ivie <u>peivie@comcast.net</u>,
 334-315-5874 for info.
- A Membership form is at the end of the Newletter. Mail to or drop off: c/o Kathy Lovitt, 109 Grand Blvd, Mobile, AL 36607. Make checks payable to GCHS \$25.00 Questions? Call Kathy Lovitt at 251-680-7979.

Did You KNOW

The Best Ways to Extract Aloe Gel From Plants https://www.neguides.sfgate.com

Aloe (Aloe barbadensis) is a popular ingredient for skin care and healing products and has long been a home remedy for minor burns. It is easy to grow as a houseplant. The gel from the leaves can be used by itself or be added to home skin care recipes. Extracting the gel is simple using items found in any kitchen.

Selecting – Carefully choosing the leaves to harvest can keep aloe plants healthy. Aloes produce new leaves at the center of the plant, creating layers of leaves. The most mature leaves are on the outside of the plant. The best leaves to harvest are those on the outside, as these leaves are well established and larger than those in the center.

Gel – Aloe plants are succulents with thick, juicy leaves with a gel-like center. The outer skin of the leaf is tough and has small ridges or soft spines running along the edges. To harvest the gel, begin by breaking or cutting the leaf from the plant. Place the leaf on a flat surface for safety. Use a clean, sharp knife to slice the leaf lengthwise. The gel can be applied directly at this point by rubbing the leaf on the skin or the gel can be removed from the leaf using a knife or spoon.

Growing – Because aloe does not need much care, it is an excellent houseplant. It needs bright light so a sunny windowsill is ideal. Use a light, well-drained soil or cactus mix. During the summer, aloe needs to be watered thoroughly so that the soil is completely moist. Allow the soil to dry out completely between watering. Aloe can be placed outdoors in the summer as well,



Aloe

but must be brought back inside before the first frost, as it does not tolerate cold. During the winter, aloe can go long periods without water. Allow the soil to become dry enough to feel hard or compact before watering.

Propagating – Healthy aloes produce offshoots at the base of the plant or from the roots. These shoots can be removed and planted for new plants when they are 2 to 3 inches tall. Using a clean, sharp knife, cut the shoot at the base of the parent plant. Allow it to dry for two or three days before planting to prevent diseases from entering the cut end and harming the new plant. Plant in well-drained potting soil or cacti mix. Young plants should be watered regularly to allow them to establish roots but allow the soil to dry between watering.

Tropical Lavender | Guide to Grow Lavender in Tropics balconygardenweb.com

Is it possible to grow lavender in tropics? Is there any tropical lavender variety available that grows in hot and humid climate?

The answer is yes! You can grow lavender in tropical and sub-tropical part of the world as a short lived perennial or an annual herb but you'll need to care it more often, especially in summer.

USDA Zones – 8-11, Difficulty – Moderate, Soil pH – Slightly alkaline

You need to experiment, go to your local nursery and check if you find a lavender plant growing there, buy it or you can order seeds online. French lavender (Lavandula dentata) does well in warm climate.

Planting Season – In colder zones Lavender should be planted in spring or summer but in tropics growing conditions are different. Sun is more intense in summer and afterwards it rains, which increases the humidity level and makes intolerable for the plant to thrive that is why winter is the best month to plant lavender in tropics.

Finding Right Location – Grow lavender in a pot so that you can change its location during heavy rain or when the temperature rises up. If you're growing it on ground, take care to plant it in a location where it'll be saved from wind, heavy rain and heat, not receiving full sun, especially in afternoon as the sun in tropics shine more intensely and it can scorch your plant. *Planting it under a tree is a good idea.

Planting and Care – If you're growing lavender from seeds, sow seeds in early winter and place the seed tray in full sun. Seedlings will germinate in two to three weeks; transplant them in a favorable location in a well drained potting mix using compost with bonemeal and lime both of equal amount in a total of half cup. Also add sand if your soil is heavy and clay rich.

Before transplanting make 18" mound of soil and plant lavender in it. This is the best technique to restrict soggy and water logged soil and improve air circulation.

Take care about watering, water only when soil becomes dry. You don't need to fertilize lavender but if you want, occasionally add compost in the growing season.

Sweet Alyssum -- A Tiny Plant with Big Impact davesgarden.com

Sweet alyssum (Lobularia maritima) is one the tiny plants that makes a big statement in the garden. It's one of those that I like to call a little giant, because no matter how small it is, its contribution to the garden can be gargantuan.

Sweet alyssum is a long-blooming annual or short-lived perennial. Growing only about 4 to 6 inches tall, it hugs the ground forming a dense groundcover. Narrow leaves about one inch long hardly show through clusters of tiny flowers that cover the plants over a long season. Flowers come in an amazing array of colors, including not only white, but also bronze, purple, rose, pink, wine red, lemon yellow, salmon, reddish copper, and all tints and shades in between. The website from Swallowtail Gardens shows many selections and gives an idea of the color variations that are available.

In my Zone 8B garden sweet alyssum is best suited to the fall, winter, and early spring garden. However, sometimes it remains in the garden year round. It almost seems perennial

because seeds are produced that fall to the ground or are carried by the wind to nearby places. Because of the reseeding, it seems as if the same plants continue to bloom when in fact new seedlings are filling in. My favorite places to grow it are at the edges of sunny beds and around the edges of my herb garden. It is equally suited for hanging baskets and other types of containers.

Experience has taught me that seeds require light for germination. One spring I bought a packet of seeds and planted them, covering them lightly as I usually do. No plants came up. It was not until I bought a new packet and read the directions that I discovered what I had done wrong. Printed plainly on the packet was a statement that light is required for germination. Taking that advice to heart, I tried again. I prepared my bed as usual, sprinkled the tiny seeds on the surface of the soil, and patted lightly to be sure they had good contact with the soil. Lo and behold, I think every one of them came up. The tiny white flowers bloomed all spring and well into the summer. The following fall more plants came up where the old flowers had reseeded.

Seeds germinate in 8 to 15 days at temperatures between 65°F and 75°F. Light frosts seem to have no effect, but plants cannot endure a hard freeze. Most gardeners in Zones 7-11 enjoy sweet alyssum throughout the winter. In summer it may die out completely or look straggly if it manages to survive summer's heat. While gardeners in southern part of the country enjoy it best as a cool season plant, gardeners in the upper third of the United States may find that it blooms throughout the summer.

Plant sweet alyssum in full sun to partial shade in organic, well-drained but moist soil for best performance. The colored types seem to appreciate a bit more shade than the white selections. If growth becomes lanky and flowering diminishes, shear back by about one third to initiate new growth and blooms. Garden plants should not need additional fertilizer during the growing season, but container-grown alyssum will require more frequent water and respond well to monthly feedings of a water soluble fertilizer.

Amiable Spouse and I frequently comment about the insects that buzz around the sweet alyssum. Some bees are always flying around, and I have seen butterflies and hundreds of tiny wasps gathering pollen or sipping nectar from the blossoms.

A walk into the garden on a cool, sunny day will reveal the sweet, honey-like scent that emanates from a bed of sweet alyssum. Most people seem to enjoy this scent, but others find it too overpowering or even offensive. One Dave's Garden reader reported that it was the worst smell in the world and caused intense headaches. However, the overwhelming majority of comments on the DG website were positive.

Some gardeners reported that sweet alyssum was invasive in their gardens and that volunteer plants reverted to the somewhat gangly species. If this is a problem, select one of the recently introduced sterile types, such as 'Snow Princess'®, a sterile hybrid from Proven Winners that is heat tolerant. Because energy is not used producing seeds, these plants are vigorous and bloom over a long season.

Sweet alyssum is readily available in flats at most garden centers in the spring and fall. Pick up a tray or so of these tiny giants to add a bit of sparkle to your landscape. Or pick up a packet of seeds and plant them where you want them to grow.

Myrtle's MUSINGS

- An article was submitted from our GCHS member and Recording Secretary Larry Liles last month, but we neglected to include the pages of the book he was referencing. We're including it again this month with those pages.
- Exciting activity in the Sybil Burnett Herb Garden!

 The Herb Garden is getting a facelift! With the essential help of MBG Executive Director Robin Krchak, and employees Seth Allen and Pedro, our herb garden is getting new dirt added to the beds to bring the levels up flush with the walls. Also, some of our plants

had become too overgrown and this work is needed periodically.

On Saturday, January 8, Beth, Pat, Barb and Annie met in the herb garden to mark the plants that will be kept or moved. Seth and Pedro are carefully removing and potting those plants to be put back in the beds. We will be ordering new plants for some of the beds to plant in the early spring. The brick flooring is getting a much needed cleaning, too. The Herb Garden will look fantastic, as it will be a focal point for Mobile Botanical Gardens spring fundraiser, One Enchanted Evening, being held Thursday, April 7, 2022. I hope to see you in the Gardens,

soon!
-Annie
Daniels, pastPresident





"DILL"-ICIOUS Cheddar and Chive Bacon Muffins ~ theseasonedmom.com

10 muffins

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4.5 ounces Cheddar cheese grated
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives
- 5 slices cooked bacon crumbled or chopped into small pieces
- 2 eggs
- ¾ cup milk
- 5 tablespoons melted butter

- 1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
- 2. Line a muffin tin with 10 paper liners.
- 3. In a large bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, and salt.
- 4. Add about ¾ of the cheese, the chives, and the bacon. Stir everything together.
- 5. In a separate bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, and melted butter.
- 6. Pour wet ingredients over dry ingredients and stir until just combined, being careful not too over-mix (too much mixing will result in a dry, tough muffin). The batter will be lumpy, and that's fine!
- 7. Divide batter evenly among prepared muffin cups. Sprinkle remaining cheese on top.
- 8. Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until cooked through and firm.

GCHS Officers 2021 - 2022

GULF COAST HERB SOCIETY Calendar of Activities 2021 - 2022

January 25th, 5:30pm: GCHS Meeting at the Mobile Botanical Gardens

February 22th, 5:30pm: GCHS Meeting at the Mobile Botanical Gardens

HERB DAY Postponed. Date to be determined.

NOTE: The above listed plans may change, or additional events and meetings may be added, so please check back frequently

MOBILE BOTANICAL GARDENS Calendar for 2021 - 2022

EVENTS/ SOCIAL (for more info CLICK HERE!)

• One Enchanted Evening 2022. Mobile Botanical Gardens presents Through the Looking Glass: Envisioning the Future. Thursday. April 7, 2022 at 7pm.

Not only will this 2022 event raise awareness of the beauty of the Gardens, it will celebrate the bright future MBG now has due to financial stability realized through City operational support combined with the creation of an endowment fund.

CLASSES (for more info <u>CLICK HERE!</u>).

PRESENTATIONS (for more info CLICK HERE!)

GCHS Food Team Duties

- Make sure kitchen tables and counters are clean
- No food left in fridge
- Pick any trash off floor
- Clean spills from floor
- Take out garbage & place new - bags in cans bags are on to fridge
- If table and chairs are to be put up we will let you know if not they can be left out
- Make sure all doors are locked
- Thermostats must be left as you found them

Submission by Larry Liles, Recording Secretary

"The English Physitian", aka "Culpeper's Complete Herbal" by Nicholas Culpeper, originally published 1653.

At my first Herb Society meeting I mentioned one of my herbal interests was a discovery during my family genealogy research of a Surgeon's Chest being accompanied by a George Lisle on the Third Voyage of the Virginia Company in 1609. Lisle was on the lead ship which was blown away in a hurricane and crashed on Bermuda, where it was rebuilt and reached Virginia the next Spring, after a Jamestown winter called the "starving times." I, and many DNA cousins, are at a genealogy brick wall with five brothers born in the 1690s from the Tidewater area of Virginia. So, anything of earlier "Lisle" mentioning is of interest to us.

The contents of the chest were compiled by a Dr. John Woodall (1570-1643) who maintained until his death a monopoly on Ship Doctor's medicine chests for the East India Company and the British Navy. This chest appears to be his initial construction and everything in the chest was identified in Latin. I have more on his history, the prevailing Guilds of the time, this chest and its contents to discuss later.

For now, I would like to introduce you to another significant event that occurred in the mid-1600s. Mr. Nicholas Culpeper, (18 Oct 1616 - 10 Jan 1654) was sent by his family to Cambridge to study for the church. He failed miserably, which combined with a romantic misadventure, left him disinherited by his family. He did though, seem to acquire a good knowledge of Latin.

He had developed some interest in the healing of the sick, so was fortunate to acquire an apprenticeship with an apothecary in London. Two additional influences occurred during this time. He gained herbal training with Thomas Johnson, editor of the 1633 edition of John Gerard's famous "Herbal" - published initially in 1597, and he studied astrology under the greatest English astrologer of the 17th Century, William Lilly, the author of "Christian Astrology", still in print today.

The knowledge of herbalism, along with astrology, were essential skills for a 17th Century healer. With a new wife, daughter of a wealthy merchant, he set up his practice in a poor section of London and saw up to 40 patients a day, many who could not pay him. This was in contrast to the physicians he distained, who attended just the wealthy. Culpeper fit the portrait of a contrarian.

When the Civil War broke out in 1642, he offered his services as both an officer and a healer. He sustained a bullet wound in his shoulder in 1643, that may have attributed to the tuberculosis that ended his life early, at age 38.

But the seminal event that influenced his life was the repeal of all censorship on printed material with the dismantling of the Star Chamber and Court of High Commissioners. He immediately went to work on a new career, and in 1649 published an English translation from Latin, of the Royal College of Physicians' "Pharmacopeia Londensis", exposing all the mystery veiled in the medical use of Latin. He also included some of his own herbal opinions, which altogether, created havoc and rage in the College of Physicians, who had no recourse to this exposure.

Two years later he published "Semelotica Uranica", aka "The Astrological Judgement of Disease", on the role of astrology in the development of ill health. Regarding this, Hippocrates of Kos, (460-370 BC), the famous Greek Physician, sometimes referred to as the Father of Medicine, and the source of the Hippocratic Oath, is quoted as saying: "A physician without a knowledge of astrology has no right to call himself a physician." The study of astrology was a very arduous task with a lot of math involved. This may seem odd to us now, but medicine from before Hippocrates to this time was dominated by the "humoral theory." Essentially that the body is composed of four fluids (humors) - black bile, yellow bile, phlegm and blood – with illness and pain being the excess or

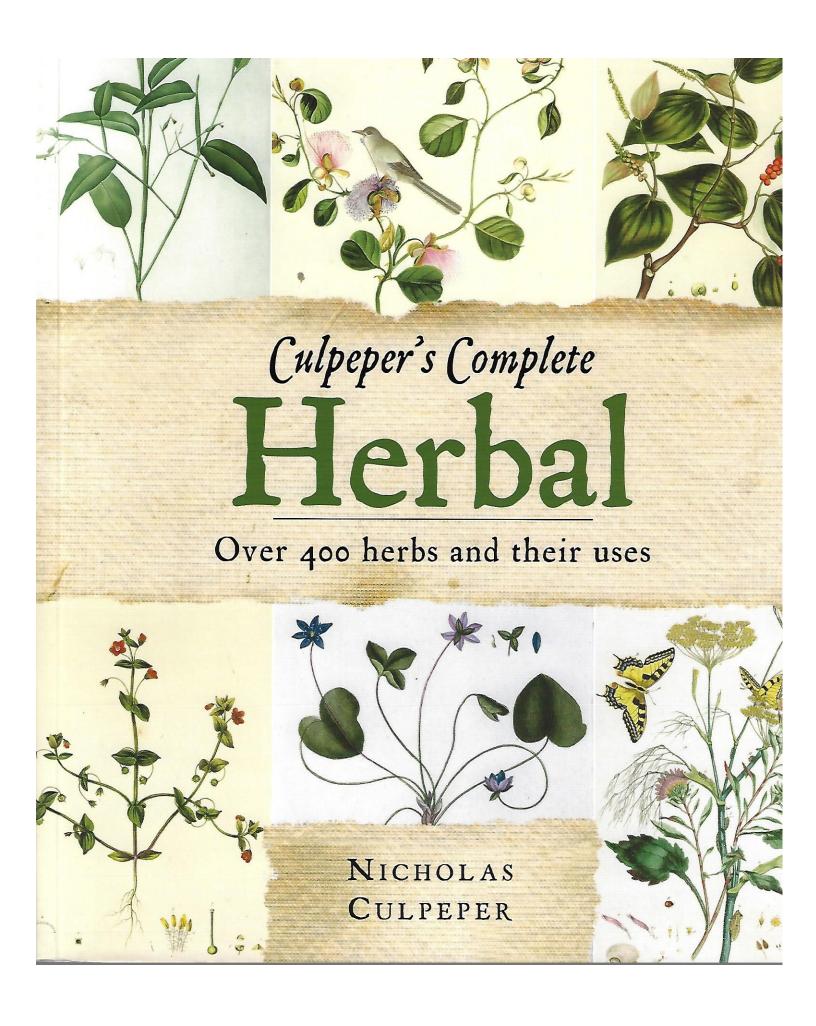
deficiency of these humors. Methods were developed to moderate this bodily balance, one being blood-letting. The stars were believed to influence this balance, and even today, people check their daily horoscopes.

No one agrees on the cause of death of our first President George Washington. But his illness started after getting a sore throat out riding in the rain, and it probably was not helped with the blood-letting of some 80 ounces (2.365 liters, or 40% of his blood volume) over a 12-hour period. Such was the medical care of a very wealthy man in 1799. All this faded in the 1850s, with the rise of cellular and germ-based health care, leading to what we refer to as "modern medicine" today. This leaves to wonder what will be "modern" in medicine in another 200 years?

But I digress, back to Culpeper. He also published a "Directory for Midwives", possibly motivated by the death of one of his seven children. Then on 05 September 1653, Culpeper completed his masterwork, "The English Physitian", aka "Culpeper's Complete Herbal." He commented in a letter to his wife that this volume would be the source of his continuing fame, which has proven prophetical, as it has been in continuous publication ever since. His wife wrote of 79 translations or authored books left in Culpeper's estate. Only one was published posthumously, possibly because it addressed a dangerous subject, "Treatise of Aurum Potabile", on the subject of alchemy and Culpeper's philosophical beliefs.

I borrowed liberally from the Introduction by Diana Vowles in the 2018 edition by Arcturus Publishing Ltd pictured here, then added several personal insights. Hundreds of herbs are described in this text, often giving alternate names, the place and time to grow, and an interesting section called "Government and Virtues" which requires the understanding of the approach to medicine in Culpeper's time. It is still a fun review for anyone interested.

The book closes with a section that I copied here "Of the Gathering, Drying, and Preserving of Plants, Herbs and Flowers", which I believe may be of special interest for those of us who were involved in the recent assembly of Christmas ornaments stuffed with just those items.



OF THE GATHERING, DRYING, AND PRESERVING OF PLANTS, HERBS, AND FLOWERS

The Leaves of Herbs or Trees

Choose only such as are green and full of juice, pick them carefully, and cast away such as are declining, for they will putrify the rest.

Note in what place they most delight to grow, and gather them there; for betony that grows in the shadow is far better than that which grows in the Sun, because it delights in the shadow: so also such herbs as delight to grow near the water should be gathered near the water, though you may find some of them on dry ground.

The leaves of such herbs as run up to seed are not so good when they are in flower as before (some few excepted, the leaves of which are seldom or never used): in such cases, if through ignorance they were not known, or through negligence forgotten, you had better take the top and the flower than the leaf.

Dry them well in the Sun, and not in the shade; for, if the Sun draw away the virtues of herbs, it must needs do the like by hay; which the experience of every country farmer will explode as a vulgar error.

Let the planet that governs the herb be angular, and the stronger the better. In herbs of Saturn, let Saturn be in the ascendant; in herbs of Mars, let Mars be in the midheaven, for in those houses they delight: let the Moon apply to them by good aspect, and let her not be in the houses of their enemies; if you cannot well stay till she apply to them, let her be with a fixed star of their nature.

Having well dried them, put them up in brown-paper bags, and press them not too hard together, and keep them in a dry place near the fire. As for the duration of dried herbs, a just time cannot be given, for, first, such as grow upon dry grounds will keep better than such as grow on moist; secondly, such herbs as are full of juice will not keep so long as such as are drier; thirdly, such herbs as are well dried will keep longer than such as are ill dried. Yet by this you may know when they are corrupted, viz. by their loss of colour, or smell, or both; and, if they be corrupted, reason will tell you that they must needs corrupt the bodies of those people that take them. Remember to gather all the leaves in the hour of that planet that governs them.

Of Flowers

The flower, which is the beauty of the plant, and of none of the least use in physic, grows yearly, and it is to be gathered when it is in its prime.

As for the time of gathering them, let the planetary hour, and the plant they come of, be observed, as above directed; as for the time of day, let it be when the Sun shines upon them, that they may be dry; for, if you gather either flowers or herbs when they

are wet or dewy, they will not keep. Dry them well in the Sun, and keep them in papers near the fire. So long as they retain their colour and smell they are good; either of them being gone, so is their virtue also.

Of Seeds

The seed is that part of the plant which is endued with faculty to bring forth its like, and it contains potentially the whole plant itself.

As for place, let them be gathered from the places where they delight to grow. Let them be fully ripe when they are gathered, and forget not the celestial harmony beforementioned, for I have found by experience that their virtues are twice as great at such times as others: there is an appointed time for every thing under the Sun. When you have gathered them, dry them a little in the Sun before you lay them up. You need not be so careful of keeping them so near the fire as the other before mentioned, because they are fuller of spirit, and therefore not subject to corrupt. As for the time of their duration, it is palpable they will keep a great many years; yet, they are best the first year, and this I make appear by a good argument, they will grow soonest the first year they be set, therefore then are they in their prime, and it is an easy matter to renew them yearly.

Of Roots

Of roots, choose such as are neither rotten nor worm-eaten, but proper in their taste, colour, and smell; such as exceed neither in softness nor hardness.

Give me leave here to deny the vulgar opinion, that the sap falls down into the root in the autumn, and rises again in the spring, as men go to bed at night, and rise again in the morning; which idle tale of untruth is so grounded in the heads not only of the vulgar, but also of the learned, that men cannot drive it out by reason: If the sap fall into the root in the fall of the leaf, and lie there all the winter, then must the root grow only in the winter, as experience witnesses: but the root grows not at all in winter, as the same experience teaches, but only in the summer; for example: If you set an apple kernel in the spring, it will grow to a pretty bigness in that summer, and be no bigger next spring: the truth is, when the Sun declines from the tropic of Cancer, the sap begins to congeal both in root and branch; when he touches the tropic of Capricorn, and ascends to upward, it begins to get thin again by degrees, as it congealed.

The drier time you gather your roots in, the better they are: for they have the less excrementitious moisture in them. Such roots as are soft should be dried in the Sun, or else hang them in the chimney corner upon a string: as for such as are hard, you may dry them any where. Such roots as are large will keep longer than such as are small: yet most of them will keep a year. Such roots as are soft should be always kept near the fire; and take this general rule for it, if in winter you find any of your roots, herbs, or flowers, begin to grow moist, as many times they will (for it is best to look to them once a month) dry them by a very gentle fire; or, if you can with convenience keep them near the fire, you may save this trouble.

Of Barks

Barks which physicians use in medicines are of three sorts: of fruits, of roots, of boughs. The barks of fruits are to be taken when the fruits are full ripe, as oranges, lemons, &c. The barks of trees are best gathered in the spring, if it be of great trees, as oaks, or the like; because then they come easiest off, and so you may dry them if you please: but your best way is to gather all barks only for present use.

As for the bark of roots, it is thus to be gotten: take the roots of such herbs as have pith in them, as parsley, fennel, &c. slit them in the middle, and when you have taken out the pith (which you may easily and quickly do) that which remains is called the bark, and is only to be used.

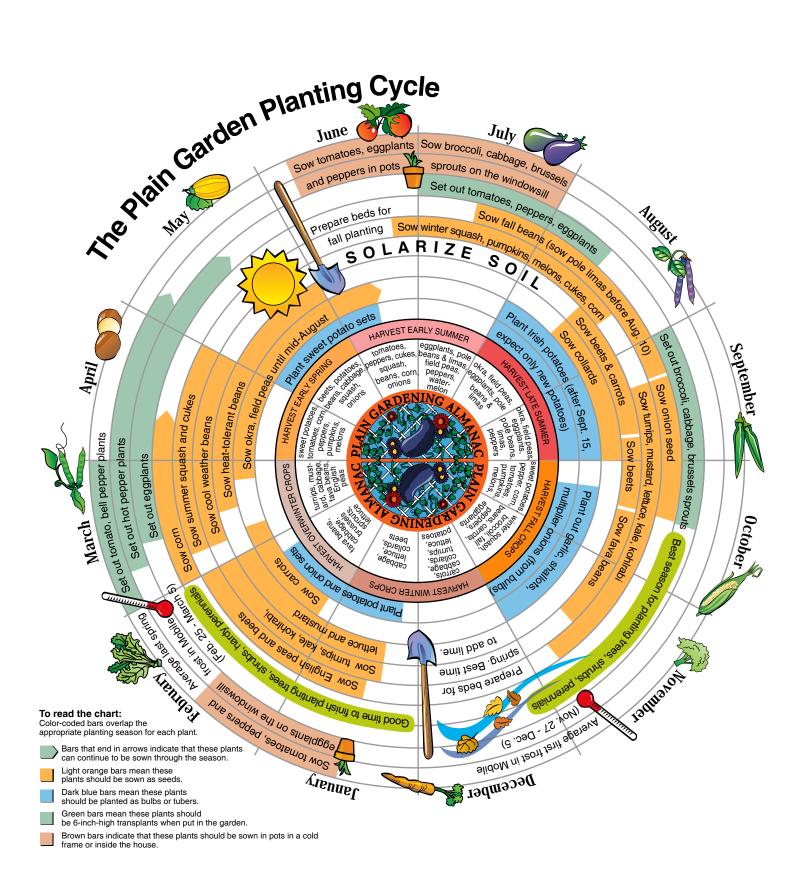
Of Juices

Juices are to be pressed out of herbs when they are young and tender, and also of some stalks and tender tops of herbs and plants, and also of some flowers.

Having gathered the herb you would preserve the juice of, when it is very dry, bruise it well in a stone mortar with a wooden pestle; then, having put it into a canvas bag, press it hard in a press, then take the juice and clarify it.

When you have clarified it, and it is cold, put it into a glass, and put so much oil on it as will cover it the thickness of two fingers; the oil will swim at top, and so keep the air from coming to putrify it; or, instead of oil, when you have clarified the juice as before, boil it over the fire till (when cold) it be the thickness of honey: then tie it down close, and keep it for use.

Whatever you gather of plants, herbs, fruits, flowers, roots, barks, seeds, &c. for medicinal purposes, either for distillation, syrups, juleps, decoctions, oils, electuaries, conserves, preserves, ointments, and the like, must be gathered when they are in the greatest vigour and fullest perfection; for in that state only are they fit to be applied for the restoration and preservation of our health; and, when they are applied, let it be done under the sympathetic influence of planets participating in the same nature; the benefits of which are so amply demonstrated in my *Display of the Occult Sciences*.





GULF COAST HERB SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

New Member? Y N

Name:		Phone		
Address		City/State/Zip:		
Email		(to receive our Nev	vsletter and updates)	
Committees I am interested i			Herb Day	
	Yearly dues are \$25 and Please make check all % Kathy Lovitt, 109 Gr Or bring your check or ca	payable to GCHS and Blvd. Mobile, AL		
Date	Amount \$	Paid by Cash	or Check #	

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

Welcome to the Gulf Coast Herb Society! We meet at the Mobile Botanical Gardens from 5:30 to 7:00pm the fourth Tuesday of the month, unless otherwise announced in our newsletter, emails and Facebook.

Refreshments are served at each meeting, it's optional to bring something to share. Meetings start at 5:30p.m., program will follow, work days in Herb Garden TBA

QUESTIONS?

Check out our website www.gulfcoastherbsociety.org Like us on Facebook!