



Gulf Herb Society Coast Newsletter

August
2022

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

Rosemary for Remembrance DATES

- **August 23, 5:30 pm.** GCHS Meeting at Valentino's restaurant, 396 Azalea Rd, Mobile, AL 36609 (near GoodWill, across from McDonald's).
 - **September 27, 5:30 pm.** GCHS Meeting at MBG
 - **October 25, 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 peivie@comcast.net, 334-315-5874 for info.
- A Membership form is at the end of the Newsletter. Make checks payable to GCHS \$25.00.

Did You KNOW

HERB OF THE MONTH: Popular Lemon Balm Types, Species, and Cultivars
petalrepublic.com

Citronella Lemon Balm

This variety is deeply fragranced and is probably the plant you think of when you hear the name lemon balm. It grows to heights of 10 to 12 inches and has intense flavor and fragrance.

Variegated lemon Balm

Variegated lemon balm sports foliage that is yellow/green along the edges with deeper green veins. It grows to heights of 5 to 7 inches, making it ideal for containers or the front of the herb or flowerbed. Variegated lemon balm has a distinct minty flavor.

Aurea Lemon Balm

This variety has distinct wrinkled leaves in shades of green and yellow. It is similar to variegated lemon balm, but the colors are brighter and the plant grows to heights of 2 to 4 feet with a spread of 18 inches. Aurea lemon balm is tolerant of poor soil and can be grown in full sun or partial shade.

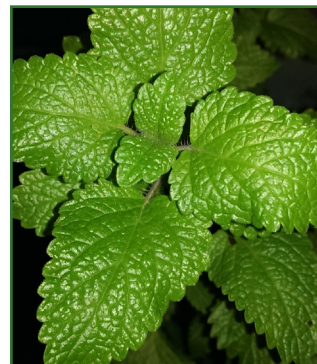
Lime Lemon Balm

This variety sports lightly textured foliage in bright medium green. It emits a distinct lime fragrance with the flavor to match. Lime lemon balm grows to heights of 18 to 24 inches and can be grown in either full sun or partial shade. To add a little variety to your lemon balm, try growing lime lemon balm with one of the lemony flavored varieties.

How to Treat Holes in the Leaves on Flowers

homeguides.sfgate.com

Holes in flower leaves usually indicate insect pests rather than disease, which tends to cause spots on the leaves or dropping leaves. Holes are caused by insects with chewing mouthparts, such as caterpillars and beetles.



Lemon Balm

Before you rush for a can of insecticide, though, consider that each insect is part of a larger ecosystem. Those bugs that eat your plants probably feed birds and frogs. In most cases, insects feed for a few weeks on plants and then move on. If you take a wait and see approach, the problem might resolve itself. In more serious cases, try a few natural or cultural strategies before resorting to chemicals.

Identify the problem. In most cases, holes in the leaves of your flowers mean insect pests, such as caterpillars or slugs. Look on the undersides of leaves for insects or inspect the ground for other telltale signs. Caterpillars, for example, leave green fecal pellets, while slugs and snails leave a shiny trail.

Select a treatment based on your findings. For example, handpick caterpillars and drop them in soapy water or treat them with *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt), soilborne bacteria that prevent caterpillars from feeding and eventually destroy them. Milky spore disease controls Japanese beetles. Treat slugs and snails with a commercial product containing iron phosphate or handpick them at night. Spreading sand on the soil around the plants might also deter slugs and snails, according to "Sunset" magazine.

Remove weeds, dead plant debris and webs from around your flowers. By removing shelter for bothersome insects, they'll often leave on their own.

Grow a variety of flowers in your garden. Most insects prefer certain flowers to others. By increasing the diversity in your garden, you reduce the amount of damage one type of insect can cause. Growing a diversity of plants also encourages beneficial insects and predatory animals, such as ladybugs, praying mantises, birds, frogs and snakes. These animals find shelter in your flower garden and eat the insects.

Things You Will Need

Bucket, Soapy water, *Bacillus thuringiensis*, Milky spore disease, Iron phosphate, Sand.

Tip

You probably can't prevent all insect damage, but healthy plants are better able to survive attacks. Keep flowers

healthy by planting them in the right conditions. Most flowers prefer moderate moisture and rich, well-draining soil.

If insects constantly attack a particular flower in your garden, consider replacing that plant with one that is less desirable to pests.

Select flowers that are known to attract beneficial insects and thrive in warm, coastal climates. A few to try include coreopsis (*Coreopsis* spp.), yarrow (*Achillea*) or cosmos (*Cosmos bipinnatus* cvs.), all hardy in U.S. Department of Agriculture plant hardiness zones 4 through 9. Cosmos is hardy to zone 11.

How to Stop Your Herbs & Vegetables from Bolting

ruralsprout.com

Although the gardener grows plants as a source of food and beauty, it's easy to forget that the plant's sole purpose in life is to reproduce.

Bolting – or going to seed – occurs when a plant prematurely puts out flowering stems before the crop is harvested. The process diverts precious energy away from the edible bits – the leaves and roots – to instead produce flowers and seeds.

Often, the quality of the harvest will be quite poor with a far less sweet and tasty crop.

While there are some plants we want to flower – tomatoes, peppers, beans, cucumbers and the like – so that we can harvest their fruits, other types of vegetables and herbs that are cultivated for their foliage are much more susceptible to bolting.

Plants more likely to prematurely go to seed include: leafy greens like lettuce, spinach, and arugula; Members of the Brassica family, like cabbage, kale, broccoli, cauliflower, mustards, and Brussels sprouts; as well as biennial plants such as onion, carrot, beetroot, and leeks.

What Causes Plants to Bolt?

Plants wholly rely on environmental cues to tell them what to do and when. These processes are regulated by plant hormones called gibberellins that control everything from seed germination to stem elongation to flowering to fruit ripening. When the plant experiences one of these conditions, gibberellins are released that induce blooming.

Changes in Day Length – For some plants, longer days triggers flowering. Termed “long day” plants, these go to seed when days are longer and nights are shorter. When long day plants like lettuce, spinach, sugar beet and potato receive more than 12 hours of sunlight each day, this signals that it's time to put out flowers.

Conversely, “short day” plants require longer nights to induce flowering. These types of plants will only bloom when they experience less than 12 hours of daylight. Examples of short day plants include rice and soybean.

The blooming times for day-neutral plants, like tomatoes, cucumber, and peas, is not affected by day length at all. These cultivars put out flowers simply when they are mature enough to.

Changes in Temperature – Cool season crops like artichoke, bok choy, broccoli, cabbage, garlic, kale, and cauliflower are sensitive to heat. As the weather warms, they will certainly go to seed.

Biennial plants, which complete their lifecycle over a period of two years, are more prone to bolting during a cold snap that occurs during their first season. Sudden cool weather signals to them that winter has passed and it is time to flower.

Times of Drought – Dry soil also encourages bolting since it signals to the plant that it's do or die. Periods of low or no rainfall triggers a hasty reproductive cycle so that, if the mother plant perishes, it has been successful in its life purpose.

Poor Soil Quality – Similarly, poor quality soil will also signal to the plant to hurry it up. Too little of nutrients that plants need or the presence of metals, salt, or other pollutants in the soil will initiate flowering.

Stress – Sudden temperature swings, lack of water, and bad soil are all factors that will stress out plants. In addition to these, attacks by pathogens, insects, or herbivores will fast track the plant's lifecycle. Even strong winds can be enough to unduly stress out the plant and induce early blooms.

How to Prevent Plants from Bolting

1. **Time Your Sowings** – Cool season crops should be started as early as possible in spring. Quick growers like lettuce, bok choy, broccoli rabe, and mesclun mixes can provide quite a bounty before the heat of midsummer arrives.

a second sowing a couple weeks after the summer solstice – the longest day of the year – for an autumn harvest of kale, broccoli, beets, Brussels sprouts, and other cool weather veggies.

You can also stagger your sowings throughout the season to increase the odds of many successive, bolting-free harvests.

2. **Enrich Your Soil** – It's gardening 101, but it certainly bears repeating: good soil is the bedrock of any garden.

The best soils are loamy in texture, retain water, drain well, and are rich in nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium, as well as several other trace minerals, proteins, fats, lignins, and organic acids.

Amending your existing soil with finished compost – or humus – is an all-in-one solution for conditioning soil texture, boosting fertility, retaining moisture, and naturally deterring diseases and pests.

Keep plants from drying out by mulching your garden beds. Also practice crop rotation each season to prevent your soil quality from degrading over time.

3. **Keep an Eye on the Weather** – Although unpredictable weather and sudden swings in temperature can throw a monkey wrench into your plans, there are a few tricks you can employ to help shield your plants from the elements.

When growing cool season vegetables and confronted with a heat wave, use a shade cloth to protect them

from roasting away in full sun. You can also sow crops strategically by planting spinach, for example, next to taller plants like tomatoes and peppers. Be sure to plant the cold weather crop east of the larger cultivar to shelter it from the hot afternoon sun.

For biennials during a cold snap, keep them warm by using a garden cloche or frost blanket or even an old bed sheet – any cover will help. When using non transparent materials to cover up your plants, remove them in the morning to let the sunlight in and cover them up again at sundown. You'll only need to do this until the cool weather passes. For container gardens, simply bring pots inside.

4. Harvest Often – Making sure you harvest on the regular can help stave off premature flowering.

Plucking the outer leaves of cut and come again plants, like lettuce or spinach, will keep the plants from fully maturing. These plants will respond by continuing to grow their foliage more vigorously.

Not only does it extend the vegetative stage and delay the reproductive stage, but harvesting more will ensure you get that delicious bounty too!

5. Try Planting Bolt-Resistant Varieties – If no matter what you do and your plants are still bolting, considering purchasing specially bred cultivars that are less sensitive to bolting triggers.

Look for “slow bolt” or “heat tolerant” labeled on the seed packet. You should be able to find bolt-resistant lettuce, arugula, cilantro, spinach, kale, beets, collard greens, and more.

What to Do If Your Plants Bolt

It's definitely disheartening to see the plants you spent all those months nurturing start to flower before harvest time. One way to save your crop is to pinch off flowers as soon as they appear on the plant. With herbs like basil, chives,

and parsley, removing the blooms will divert their energies back to the foliage without loss of flavor.

Even in cases where it's too late to save the crop, there's always a silver lining. Allowing a few of your plants to go to seed means that bees and other pollinators will have an added supply of food.

Collect the seeds for next year's crop or leave the flowers on the plant to provide a nutritious feast for the birds.

Myrtle's MUSINGS

• **Joan Hoffman** will be teaching a class on different forms of propagation of plants on August 27th at MBG at 10:00. It is free to MBG members.

• Reminder **Dues are Due** at \$25.00.

• My son Carl recently visited and I brought up Patchouli as a scent from the 60s, with some old oil in my jewelry box to sample. Surprisingly - this is a fragrant mint.
-Larry Liles

• **Grandma Lucy's poem on gardening!**

“Dig in the earth	Paid in good fresh air
Helpin things to grow	And a lot of health
Foolin with a rake	Never any chance
Flirtin with a hoe	Of your gettin fired
Waterin the plants	And when night comes on
Pullin up the weeds	Knowin why you're tired
Gatherin the stones	Nature's hired man
Puttin in the seeds	That's the job for me
On your face and hands	With the birds and flowers
Pilin up the tan	For society.”
That's the job for me	
Nature's hired man.	– Lucy Comstock
Wages best of all	
Better far than wealth	

“DILL”-ICIOUS Lemon Balm Pesto with Cashews ~ healthygreenkitchen.com

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|---|---|
| • 2 cups fresh lemon balm leaves packed | 1. Combine herbs, garlic, and cashews in food processor and pulse a few times. |
| • 1 cup fresh parsley leaves packed | 2. With the food processor running, slowly pour in the olive oil. Turn it off and scrape down the sides of the food processor with a rubber spatula. |
| • 3 medium garlic cloves peeled | 3. Add the lemon juice and grated cheese and pulse again until blended. Taste and salt and freshly ground black pepper, if you like. |
| • 1/4 cup raw cashews | 4. Pack into glass jar(s) and top with a little olive oil for storing in the refrigerator (where it should last a few weeks). Or, use appropriate containers and store for a longer-term in the freezer (if doing this, I'd omit the cheese from the recipe and add it after you've defrosted the pesto). |
| • 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil | 5. Pesto is great on pasta, of course, but it is also lovely mixed with steamed or sauteed veggies, spread on cooked fish or chicken, mixed with beans, in sandwiches, on potatoes ... it's pretty much good anywhere |
| • 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan-Reggiano or Romano cheese | |
| • juice of 1 fat lemon seeded | |
| • fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste | |

GCHS Officers 2022 – 2023

President ~ Beth Poates • Outgoing President ~ Annie Daniels • President-Elect ~ Vacant • Recording Secretary ~ Larry Liles
Programs/Photograph ~ Nicole Owler • Treasurer ~ Annie Daniels • Historian ~ Vacant • Ways & Means ~ Alicia Davis
Parliamentarian ~ Martha Fuller • Weeders & Planters ~ Sybil Burnett & Nita Crandall • Newsletter Editor ~ Qjuana Cooney

GULF COAST HERB SOCIETY Calendar of Activities 2022 – 2023

August 23th, 5:30pm: GCHS Meeting at Valentino's restaurant, 396 Azalea Rd, Mobile, AL 36609 (near GoodWill, across from McDonald's).

September 27th, 5:30pm: GCHS Meeting at the Mobile Botanical Gardens

October 25th, 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 2022 – 2023

EVENTS/ SOCIAL (for more info [CLICK HERE!](#))

CLASSES (for more info [CLICK HERE!](#)).

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

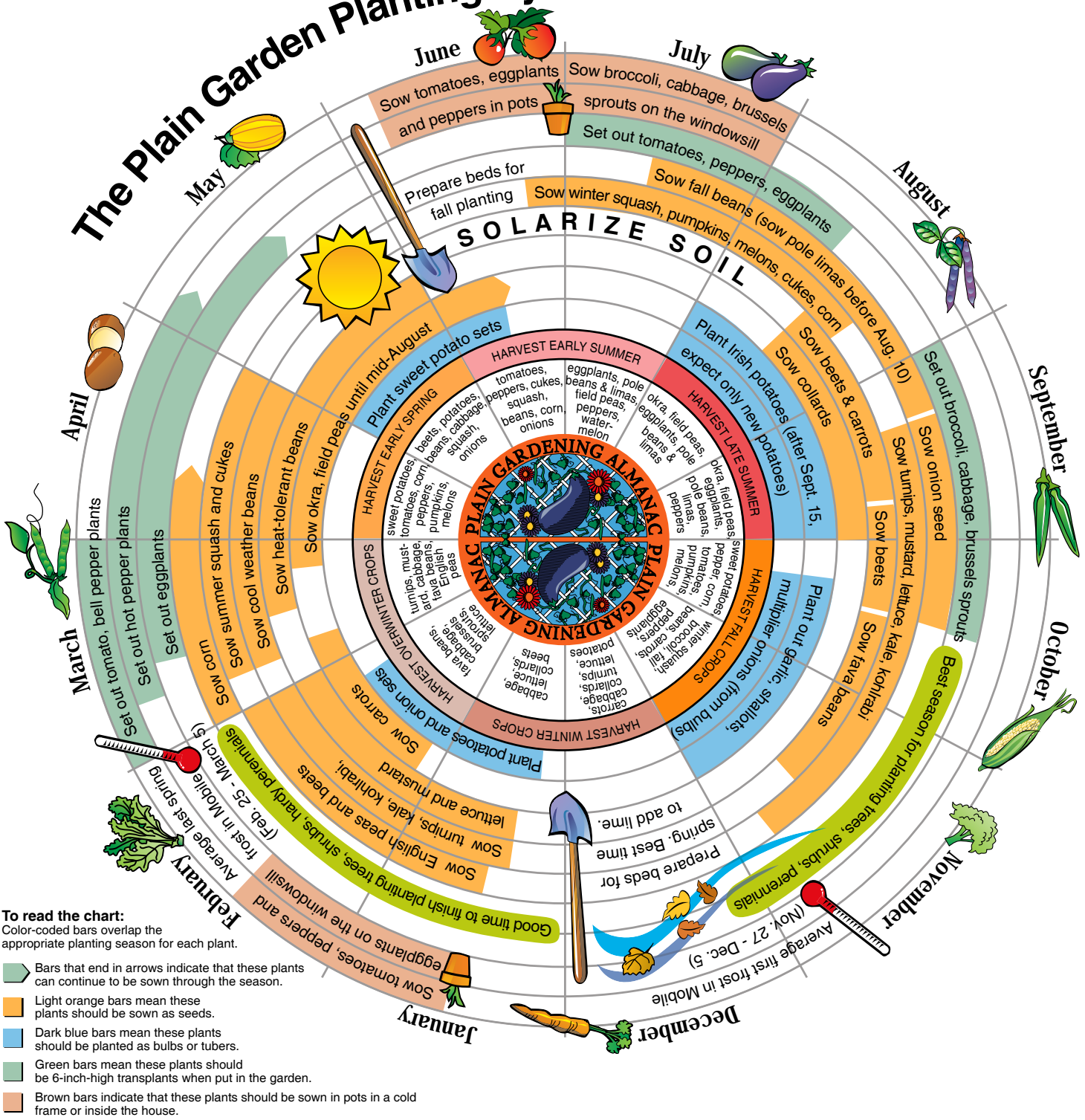
MINUTES OF GULF COAST HERB SOCIETY MEETING

JULY 26, 2022

- President Beth Poates opened our monthly meeting at the Mobile Botanical Garden at 5:40 PM. Seventeen members and guests attended.
- Beth announced that member name tags would be available through the Mobile Botanical Gardens. A sign-up sheet was circulated for member's preferred name spelling.
- Beth announced that our August 23rd meeting will be at Valentino's restaurant on Azalea Road at 5:30 p.m, as a social event.
- Last month's Minutes were in the newsletter as submitted by Pat Ivie, due to Larry Liles being out of town. No errors or omissions were noted.
- Kathie Lovitt is stepping down from two long-term positions she has held in our Society, Treasurer and Ways & Means. Annie Daniels will assume the Treasurer's position and a discussion was held on meeting at the bank to change the signature card. It was also noted that August 1 is the start of our new calendar-year and dues of \$25 were due. Many members paid at the meeting. Alicia Davis will assume the Ways & Means Chair. It is not too early to start planning for our December fundraiser and members were encouraged to brainstorm new products for our sale.
- Annie then reported on the successful garden weeding the prior Saturday, with a follow-up planned that will be in an email.
- Larry mentioned attending a meeting at the Mobile Medical Museum where he discovered they had a medical herb garden, that we might consider visiting and hearing about.
- Pat Ivie then gave a presentation on mint plants. Many herbs come from this family. Check for a square stem as an indicator for mint. Mint has long been used in cooking and medicinally for many problems, such as toothpaste, bad breath, depression and destroying bacteria. The Herb Society makes no recommendation on medical use of herbs. Two main families of mint were noted; Peppermint and Spearmint. This was expanded on, and different varieties were discussed, with emphasis on what grows in our climate. Kentucky Colonel mint is currently in our garden.
- It was noted that the Herb Society of America's Educational Conference will be in Baton Rouge next year on April 26 th , for those interested.
- The meeting closed at 6:40 PM with two drawings for mint plants provided by Pat.

Respectfully submitted Larry Liles, Recording Secretary

The Plain Garden Planting Cycle





GULF COAST HERB SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

New Member? Y N

Name: _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Email _____ (to receive our Newsletter and updates)

Committees I am interested in: _____ Herb Garden _____ Membership _____ Herb Day

Yearly dues are \$25 and payable in August.

**Please make check payable to GCHS
mail % Kathy Lovitt, 109 Grand Blvd. Mobile, AL 36607
Or bring your check or cash to one of our meetings**

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!