



Gulf Herb Society Coast Newsletter

August
2025

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

Rosemary for Remembrance DATES

- **August 26th.** GCHS Meeting at MBG (Social time begins 5:00pm following with the meeting at 5:45pm).
- **September 23rd.** GCHS Meeting at MBG (Social time begins 5:00pm following with the meeting at 5:45pm).
- **October 28th.** GCHS Meeting at MBG (Social time begins 5:00pm following with the meeting at 5:45pm).

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: A Brief History of Nasturtiums
nasturtiums.wordpress.com

Colorful, edible, butterfly-like nasturtium blossoms have delighted gardeners and cooks alike for centuries. At different times in their history, they've been considered a vegetable, an herb, a flower, and even a fruit! The name nasturtium comes from the Latin words for nose (nas), and tortum (twist), referring to a persons' reaction upon tasting the spicy, bittersweet leaves. Renaissance botanists named it after watercress, (*Nasturtium officinale* in Latin) which tastes similar.

The garden nasturtiums we grow today descend mainly from 2 species native to Peru. The first, brought to Europe by Spanish conquistadors in the late 15th to early 16th century, was *Tropaeolum minus*, a semi-trailing vine bearing spurred, lightly scented orange-yellow flowers with dark red spots on the petals and shield-shaped leaves. According to Jesuit missionaries, the Incas used nasturtiums as a salad vegetable and as a medicinal herb. In the

late 17th century, a Dutch botanist introduced the taller, more vigorous *Tropaeolum majus*, a trailing vine with darker orange flowers and more rounded leaves. Since Spanish and Dutch herbalists shared seeds with their counterparts, the pretty, fragrant and easy-to-grow plants quickly became widespread throughout around Europe and Britain.



Nasturtium

Nasturtiums were commonly known in Europe as Indian Cress or a translation of "Capucine cress", in reference to the flower shape, which resembles Capucine monks' hooded robes. Leaves of both species were eaten in salads; unripe seeds and flower buds were pickled and served as a substitute for capers. (We know now that these pickled flower buds are high in oxalic acid and therefore should not be eaten in large quantities.)

Their ornamental value was also appreciated: flowers were used in nosegays, and planted to adorn trellises or cascade down stone walls. They became especially popular after being displayed in the palace flowerbeds of French king Louis XIV.

Although it is sometimes reported that nasturtiums were introduced to the US by the Philadelphia seedsman Bernard McMahon in 1806, they were recorded here as early as 1759. Thomas Jefferson planted them in his vegetable garden at Monticello from at least 1774 onward. Interestingly, in one entry in his garden book, he categorized it as a fruit amongst others such as the tomato, indicating that he ate the pickled seeds. Most nasturtiums grown at this time were the tall, trailing orange variety.

Over the course of the 19th century, breeders produced smaller, more compact types that mounded

neatly into containers or formed a colorful, less sprawling edge to flower beds. Cultivars with cream and green variegated foliage appeared, as well as the vermilion-flowered Empress of India, with its strikingly contrasting blue-green leaves. These developments paralleled the gradual shift in the perception of nasturtiums from edible and herbal garden mainstays to viewing them as ornamental landscape plants. Monet let large swaths ramble along a walk at Giverny. The flowers and long-lasting leaves were popular in Victorian bouquets and table arrangements. Nasturtiums were still eaten, however, and were known to help prevent scurvy, since the leaves are rich in Vitamin C.

Gardening "To Do" Tips by Month for Mobile, AL - August

almanac.com

- Continue to harvest peppers and tomatoes and start keeping an eye out for possible frost.
- Harvest herbs and store in a cool, dry place.
- Clean out your vegetable garden once the plants have stopped producing. Remove any that were susceptible to disease and insects.
- This month usually brings mild weather. Plant or transplant cool-weather crops such as beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, collards, lettuce, mustard, onions, radishes, spinach, and turnips.
- With new transplants, be sure to water deeply (not lightly) every morning.
- Add organic matter to all planting areas. Be sure there's an inch-thick layer of mulch on your garden beds to control weeds. No more pruning your shrubs or trees, unless it is necessary.
- Pruning may encourage new growth to occur, which might be damaged during the winter.
- Add leaves and organic material to your compost pile.
- Divide and replant perennials and bulbs that have become overcrowded or too large.
- Divide and replant crowded perennials. This is the last month to plant any new perennials and biennials.

Using Herbs in Cooking

uaex.uada.edu

Garlic powder, onion powder, thyme, celery seeds, ground mustard, and paprika are ingredients in a no-salt seasoning (and heart healthy!) recipe.

Herbs are a great way to turn ordinary meals into

extraordinary meals without adding extra salt, sugar, or fat. Researchers even believe that many culinary herbs have antioxidants that may help protect against diseases such as heart disease and cancer.

Herbs and spices have a long culinary history, dating back more than 2,000 years. They were known to be traded throughout the Mediterranean and Middle East. Spices were the motive for Christopher Columbus' forays across the ocean.

Although many use the terms "spice" and "herb" interchangeably, there is a difference. Spices come from the bark, buds, fruit, roots, seeds, or stems of plants and trees. They are usually dried; garlic and gingerroot are two exceptions.

Herbs are the fragrant leaves of plants. It is possible for one plant to provide both herbs and spices.

Consider the coriander plant. The seeds of the plant are combined with others to make curry powder, while the leaves of the same plant are called cilantro, or Mexican parsley.

Sorry to tell you that it may be time to clean out your spice rack. If you want optimum flavor, ground spices should be stored no longer than 3 years, and whole spices, no longer than 4 years. Herbs are best stored between 1-3 years, while seeds can last 4 years, except poppy seeds and sesame seeds, which only last 2 years. Extracts are best used within 4 years, except vanilla extract, which has an unlimited shelf life, and seasoning blends/mixes, good for 1-2 years.

How do I keep dried herbs and spices fresh?—The freshness of spices and herbs can be maintained longer if they are stored in airtight containers. Keep away from heat, moisture, and direct sunlight.

These elements hasten the loss of flavor and aroma of spices and herbs. Avoid storing over the stove, dishwasher, sink or near a window. Each time you use the herb, make sure the lid is tightly closed.

Spices should not be stored in the freezer. Freezing does not extend the shelf life of regularly used dried spices and herbs. If stored in the freezer, and repeatedly removed for use, condensation will form in the bottles and accelerate loss of flavor and aroma.

When cooking with fresh herbs instead of dried, use three times as much fresh herbs as you would dried.

The flavor is better when you use fresh instead of dried.

If you are purchasing herbs from the produce section of the supermarket, purchase them close to the time you plan to use them. If you are growing them in your own garden, the ideal time to pick them is in the morning after the dew had dried, but before the sun gets too hot. This helps ensure the best flavors.

How do I extend the freshness of fresh herbs?

– Fresh herbs should be stored in an open or perforated plastic bag in your refrigerator crisper drawer for a few days. To extend the freshness of herbs, snip off the end of the stems on the diagonal. Place herbs in a tall glass with an inch of water, like cut flowers. Cover them loosely with a plastic bag to allow for air circulation. Place them in the refrigerator and change the water daily. Herbs may last a week or more stored this way.

When adding herbs during cooking, add them towards the end of the cooking time to preserve their flavor. More delicate herbs like basil, chives, cilantro, dill leaves, parsley, marjoram, or mint, should be added no more than 2 minutes before the end of cooking time, or sprinkle on before being served. Less delicate herbs – dill seeds, oregano, rosemary, and thyme – can be added about the last 20 minutes of cooking. For foods where the herbs have to be cooked in, such as breads, you'll need to add them at the beginning of the cooking process.

Fresh herbs can be added to refrigerated foods several hours before serving. Allow at least a couple of hours if possible, for cold foods with herbs to chill to help the flavors blend.

Myrtle's MUSINGS

- Here is our roof-top garden so far. It's filled with herbs. We frequently see a female hummingbird. -Q and Richard Cooney



“DILL”-ICIOUS Nasturtium Salad ~ champagne-tastes.com

Serves: 4

This nasturtium salad uses both nasturtium leaves and flowers, along with arugula, strawberries, and a quick vinaigrette. Make it for a quick and easy summer salad!

Nasturtium Salad

- 3 ounces arugula
- 1 large handful nasturtium flowers + leaves, leaves roughly chopped if desired
- 1 cup strawberries, cored + sliced

- cup sesame seeds

Vinaigrette:

- cup olive oil
- cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon honey or agave syrup
- teaspoon salt

1. Toss together all salad ingredients.
2. Whisk all vinaigrette ingredients together. Toss dressing with salad. Serve immediately.

GCHS Officers 2025 – 2026

Past-President ~ Beth Poates • President ~ Joy Sanders • President-Elect ~ Vacant • Secretary ~ Pat Ivie
Gardens ~ Lisa Davis • Membership ~ Lydia Criswell • Hospitality ~ Priscilla Gold-Darby and Joan Hoffman
Treasurer ~Annie Daniels • Historian ~ Vacant • Marketplace ~ Alicia Davis • Newsletter Editor ~ Qjuana & Richard Cooney

GULF COAST HERB SOCIETY Calendar of Activities 2025

- **August 26th.** GCHS Meeting at MBG. There will be a seed saving presentation with member Joy Sanders. (Social time begins 5:00pm following with the meeting at 5:45pm).
 - **September 23rd.** GCHS Meeting at MBG (Social time begins 5:00pm following with the meeting at 5:45pm).
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MOBILE BOTANICAL GARDENS Calendar for 2025

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

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

Preschool Storytime: Tales and Trails in the Gardens. Thursdays 10:30am - 11:30am. Tales and Trails in the Gardens Preschool Storytime Returns! Tales and Trails preschool storytime returns to Mobile Botanical Gardens thanks to the generous support of the Lilian S. Woolford Charitable

Sketch Club in the Gardens. Fridays, 2-4pm. The Larkins Classroom OR at Magnolia Hill Studio. A casual sketch club experience with oversight from Derek Norman, botanical arts instructor. Cost: FREE for MBG Members, regular admission for nonmembers.

PRESENTATIONS (for more info [CLICK HERE!](#))

GCHS Food Team Duties

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| • Make sure kitchen tables and counters are clean | • Clean spills from floor | • 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 |
| • No food left in fridge | • Take out garbage & place new - bags in cans bags are on to fridge | | • Thermostats must be left as you found them |
| • Pick any trash off floor | | | |

MINUTES OF GULF COAST HERB SOCIETY MEETING

June 24, 2025

Members present: Debra Morrow; Joan McCracken; Larry Lyles; Martha Adams; Martha Fuller; Priscilla Gold Darby; Julie Castle; Joan Hoffman; Bob Little; Gudren Russell; Lisa Davis; Joy Sanders; Alicia Davis; Lydia Criswell; Beth Poates; Pat Ivie; Jane Finley.

Guests: Jodie Sanders came as a guest with Bob Little.

The meeting was called to order by President, Beth Poates. A motion was made and adopted to approve the minutes of the last meeting (May 27, 2025). Beth presented the Treasurer's Report in the absence of Treasurer, Annie Daniels. Current checking account balance as of May 2025, is \$4551.41. Expenses from Herb Education Day and the day honoring Sybil Burnett are covered. The Society will be making a donation to the Mobile Botanical Gardens ("MBG") by August 2025. Beth reported that the new MBG Director has been very open and generous with the Society. Beth also reminded everyone that members' annual dues for the Society will be due in August.

Election of Society officers was conducted at this meeting. Beth announced that the nominees were: President – Joy Sanders; Vice President – position is open, interested members encouraged to consider serving; Past President – Beth Poates; Secretary – Pat Ivie; Treasurer – Annie Daniels. Committee Chairs include: Lisa Davis - Garden Beds; Priscilla Gold Darby - Hospitality; Lydia Criswell - Membership; and Alicia Davis - Market Place event. Bob Little moved that these officer nominations be accepted, and Joan Hoffman seconded. Voting followed, and these new officers and committee chairs were unanimously elected. The new officers will take over in August 2025.

Beth then led discussion on possible future Society activities. She pointed out that during the summer months there are limitations on work in the Herb Garden. Beth suggested activities to consider could be a road trip to the nursery Petals from the Past, and a glass blowing session at Muffinjaw Designs. Beth advised members to google both possibilities for further discussion and decision next month.

Alicia Davis led a discussion on plans for this year's Market Day. She recommended that the Society begin work in August on the items to be sold at the market. Last year we were rushed in the short time frame. The preparation of the birdseed ornaments may need to be done a bit later, and Priscilla has volunteered to host the seed preparation at her home. Priscilla recommended that we generate more publicity for the event this year, and everyone agreed. An ad in Lagniappe was suggested. Bob suggested that improving the display and marking of items could be beneficial.

Pat Ivie presented information on two upcoming events in which the Society and its members might want to be involved. First, the "Great Southeast Pollinator Census" is scheduled for August 22 and 23. The University of Georgia is leading this effort,

and participating states include Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida, and Alabama. Detailed information can be found at www.gsepc.org

Members are encouraged to review the information so we can discuss whether we want to participate, either as a group or individually. Pat also announced that the Southeast District of the Herb Society of America (HSA) will be holding its annual meeting in Ocean Springs, MS, in October. Announcement of the planned program and the opening of registration is anticipated in August. Those who are interested are encouraged to join the HSA, because slots are limited and HSA members get preference. Pat said she would pass along further information when it is available. Go to www.herbsociety.org for further information about joining HSA.

The next Society meeting will be July 22. The speaker will be Melissa Nichols, who is an herbalist and a master gardener.

Minutes prepared by Pat Ivie

MINUTES OF GULF COAST HERB SOCIETY MEETING JULY 22, 2025

Attendees: Susan Abrams, Martha Adams, Lydia Criswell, Annie Daniels, Alicia Davis, Lisa Davis, Martha Fuller, Priscilla Gold-Darby, Joy Sanders, Joan Hoffman, Pat Ivie, Bob Little, Beth Poates, Dana Renta, Della Schultz, Inga Lange, Gudren Russell, Edna Harris, Cindy Klemmer.

Joy Sanders, in-coming President of the Gulf Coast Herb Society, called the meeting to order. She introduced the Director of the Mobile Botanical Gardens, Cindy Klemmer, to report on recent developments in the Garden. Cindy reported that the Horticultural position is open due to Seth's departure for a job at Bellingrath Gardens. Cindy also reminded us that the educational position previously held by Sarah, is also open. Efforts are underway to fill both positions. Cindy's husband, who previously served as the assistant director of grounds in Austin, Texas, is temporarily in charge of making sure that maintenance of the Mobile Botanical Gardens is being performed. He is supervised by one of the Board members. Cindy said that future plans include building more teams of volunteers, and recruiting corporate groups to do voluntary service work.

Annie Daniels, Treasurer, reported that the current balance of the checking account is \$4800. She reminded members that membership fees (\$25) will be due in August. Members present were encouraged to renew before leaving the meeting.

Alicia presented a gift from the Society to Beth Poates, the outgoing president of the Society. Beth expressed her appreciation and said that she had very much enjoyed her time as President.

Joan Hoffman reported that it is time to begin planning for the Society's annual plant sale. She presented a list of the plants that A-Bloom Nursery could grow for us to be used at the sale.

Melissa Nichols, a community herbalist and a member of the Muskogee nation, was introduced as the speaker for the evening. Melissa is the operator of Cedar and Moon Apothecary, which sells herbal products and organizes foraging classes. She gave a thorough and fascinating talk on the food and medicinal uses of native plants of our region. She encouraged us to arrange to take a "plant walk" with her in the Mobile Botanical Gardens. Her plant walks are free.

Following the speaker's presentation, the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes prepared by Pat Ivie, Secretary



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 and mail % Annie Daniels, 1355 Carson Rd W, Mobile, AL 36695

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.

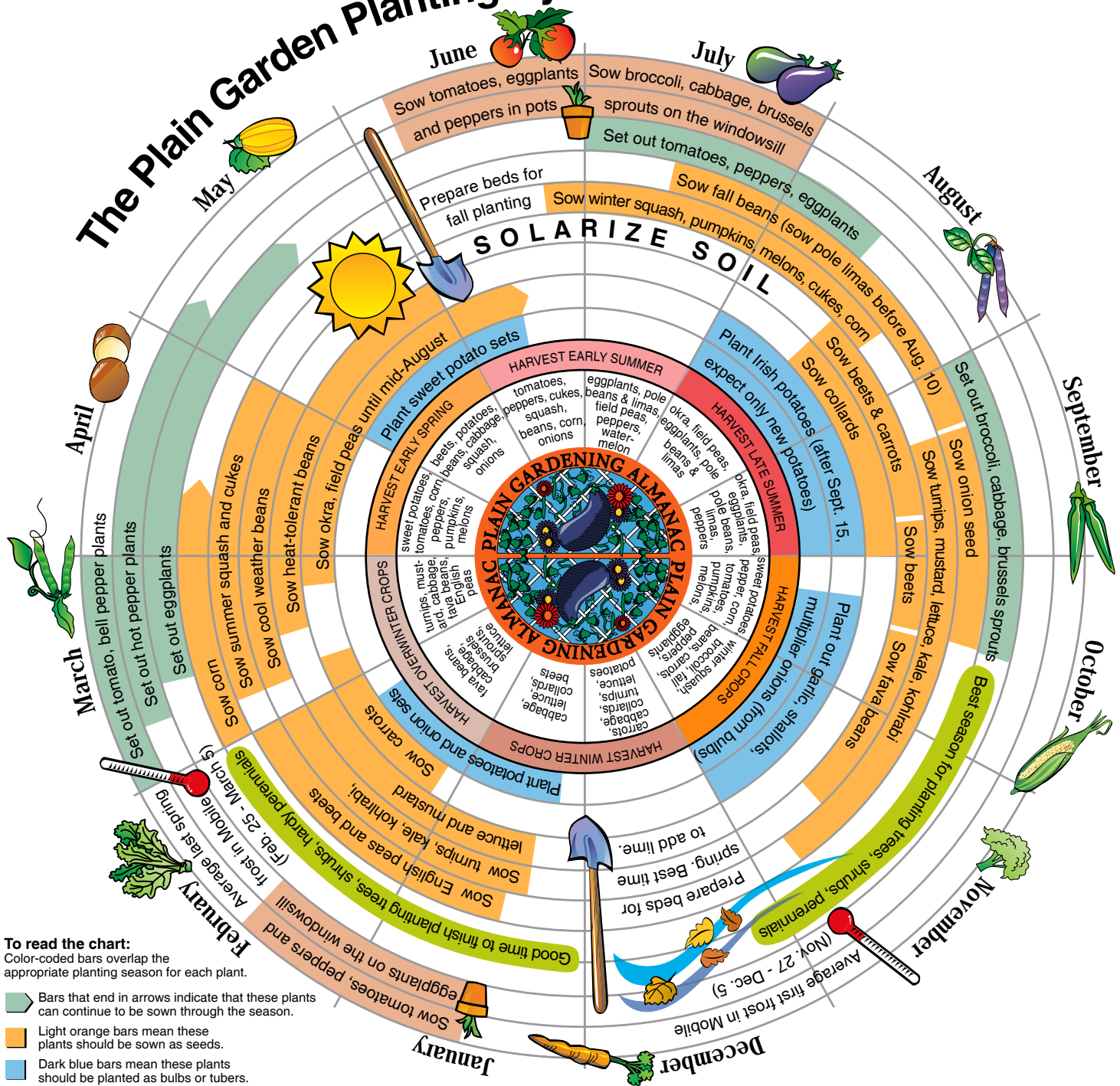
Meetings start at 5:30p.m., program will follow, work days in Herb Garden TBA

Questions? Email Beth Poates at poates57@gmail.com or

Annie Daniels, at mbdmobile@aol.com.

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

The Plain Garden Planting Cycle



To read the chart:

Color-coded bars overlap the appropriate planting season for each plant.

- Bars that end in arrows indicate that these plants can continue to be sown through the season.
- Light orange bars mean these plants should be sown as seeds.
- Dark blue bars mean these plants should be planted as bulbs or tubers.
- Green bars mean these plants should be 6-inch-high transplants when put in the garden.
- Brown bars indicate that these plants should be sown in pots in a cold frame or inside the house.