



**NEWSLETTER
NUMBER 4
August/September 2019**



Cat-thyme
Teucrium marum

**OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE HERB SOCIETY OF
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
INCORPORATED**

**THE HERB SOCIETY OF SOUTH
AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED**

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Facebook a Public Group, The Herb Society of South Australia

OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President	Sandra Stuart
Vice President	Anthony Medcalf
Secretary	Marianne Piercy
Treasurer	Kath Coombs
Public Officer	Anthony Medcalf
Committee	Suzanne Uppill
Ange Wojcik	Dot Rushton

The membership year begins from 1st July this year to 30th June next. Members who have not renewed their Membership fees by the 1st October will cease to be a Member of the Society.

Fees are payable to the Membership Secretary at meetings or posted to the Secretary at the Society address, or by Electronic Funds Transfer.

Bank Details: BSB 105 142, Bank SA: Account Number 537176940

Single \$12, Single Concession \$10,
Family \$17, Family Concession \$14.50,
Group \$12

The Herb Society meets on the first Monday of each month from February to December (no meeting in January). Located in the Findon

Community Centre,
222 Findon Rd, Findon, at 7.30pm for an 8.00pm start.
Members can borrow newsletters and use the library, sell and purchase plants, seeds, books and other herbal items. Visitors are most welcome. Basket supper is served at the conclusion of the meeting.

Disclaimer: The information contained in “Herb Thymes” is for general interest only. The views expressed may not necessarily be those of the Editor or The Society. The Herb Society of SA Inc. accepts no responsibility for any inaccuracy or in the use of any herb/s by any individual. For the medicinal use of herbs, The Society recommends the use of a suitably qualified practitioner.

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Hello Herb lovers

As usual, I'd consulted Malcom Stuart's book, 'Herbs and Herbalism' to prepare a profile on Bergamot mint.

For a moment I was in a total state of panic as I read *Bergamot Mint* known also as *Eau de cologne mint/Orange*

mint.

My mind spun, I call my Bee Balm, 'Bergamot' had I got it all wrong!!!

I consulted the book again, *Monardo didyma* is Red Bergamot and *Mentha x piperita var is* Bergamot mint. I breathed a sigh of relief. It's so easy to get confused with common names.

But I did get confused with my cat mint/cat nip and cat thyme. Therefore, there's no alias mint for this edition and instead there is profile on Cat Thyme.

And as both Cat Thyme and Cat mint are both considered as hallucinogenic I decided to do some research and found the following website 'Edible Gardens for Pets – Petscaping'

Here, Anthea Davidson, a Creative Horticultural Consultant & Garden Designer has a section called **Edible Gardens for Pets**, here she writes:

CATS

In my experience people spend far more on plants for their cat than for their dog.

Catmint, cat thyme and **cat grass** are the most common herbs used for cat health and wellbeing.

Catmint: This bears a spectacular lavender-like flower spike and

green to greyish foliage. It's good as a low groundcover for hot dry spots. It's extremely drought tolerant, too. Catmint looks great mass-planted under roses—it creates a carpet effect. Cats love it because it has a hallucinogenic effect! Cats rub against it or nibble at it releasing a chemical called Nepetalactone. You will see the cat bouncing around, rolling on the ground and possible drooling. It's a little like the behaviour you see in a human after a few glasses of wine! Catmint is also excellent for repelling mosquitoes and even cockroaches. So plant it near your outdoor entertaining area.

Don't forget this is your newsletter and I'd love to hear from you. Contact me on 8682 6752 or mobile 0408023524.
or at medley0246@gmail.com

Hand written letters and interesting articles cut from magazines may be sent to 12 Hamp St. Port Lincoln 5606

For next edition, deadline for Herb Thymes is August 20th

Happy gardening
Chris Houweling.

Membership Renewals 2019/2020

Thank you to those members who have renewed their membership. A reminder that membership is now due to those who haven't paid as yet. Payment can be at meetings, post or by direct credit to the Society account. *Sandra Stuart.*

Bank Details:

BSB 105 142, Bank SA:

Account Number 537176940

Garden Tour of Beaumont House

Saturday 11th May 2019

An enthusiastic group of members, family and friends arrived at 2.00pm for a tour of the gardens and house at Beaumont House. The forecast showers did eventuate but given the dry nature that we had been experiencing over the last 5 months, most of us welcomed the rain. Fortunately, the rain held off during the garden tour and only became an issue when we went inside for the house tour.

Our group first toured the garden with renowned horticulturist Marilyn Kuchel. Then we enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea on the veranda before touring the house.

A brief history: In 1838, Edward Burton Gleeson arrived from India and established a prefabricated house on the original site and named the property Gleeville Farm. Here he lived with his wife and two children and grew crops. In 1842, the bank he owned in India failed and he was declared bankrupt. His property was sold and the land reverted to the South Australia Company from which he had bought it.

The property then had a succession of owners. In 1846 Samuel Davenport bought Gleeville Farm and renamed it Beaumont. Additions to the house during the following years saw the house change from a wooden house to a stone one and further brick extensions with a colonnade and imposing steps. In 1970, the property passed to the National Trust of South Australia.

The house is furnished with Victorian and Edwardian furnishings from donations to the trust. A few items belonging to the previous owners are displayed but much on display comes from elsewhere.

The garden tour:

This was a highlight of our visit to Beaumont House. The gardens have been beautifully restored and replanted and were in exceptional condition given that we have had little rain. They do use some mains water, but fortunately have access to bore water. A dedicated band of 15 volunteers tend to the garden each Wednesday. The garden had been redesigned by Merilyn Kuchel several years ago. She has sympathetically combined restoration in some parts with new plantings incorporating plants that were grown previously or have some relationship with previous owners.

On the property were several trees that date back to pre-European settlement. There are several native cypress pines (*Callitris gracilis*) bordering the property. A grey box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) is used by koalas as a resting place. It is in poor condition and may actually die. If so they intend to leave the remains.

Several significant trees dating from planting between 1850-1900 remain. A Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*) stands between the house and the front fence and was probably planted by Davenport. Other trees planted by him include a pair of almond trees (*Prunus dulcis*), one of the largest pear trees in South Australia (*Pyrus communis*), Stone pine (*Pinus pinea*) from which we obtain pine nuts, European fan palm (*Chaemerops humilis*), Canary Island date palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) and Italian cypress or Pencil pine (*Cupressus sempervirens*).

Before 1890, a *Wigandia caracasana* was planted. This plant is found in the jungles of Mexico, Colombia and Venezuela. It has spread 3.5m and grows up to 4.5m. The leaves are deep green and rough-textured with hairy white undersides that can be irritating to touch. Violet to purple flowers in long clusters form later during spring and summer.

An olive grove bordering the property has survived for over 160 years. It has been undergoing a rejuvenation. Several of the old olives have been coppiced. This has led to new growth and increased olive production. However, the olives sucker and the volunteers are removing these so that growth is redirected into the upright new growth. They harvest the olives and produce olive oil which is sold as a fundraiser for the National Trust.

Throughout the gardens are plantings of new release and heritage roses. Along the main footpath coming from Glynburn Road to the house is a planting of “City of Adelaide” roses. Around the Beaumont House sign, Iceberg roses are planted. Clinging up a trellis on the stable block is the climbing tea rose “Lady Hillington”, first introduced into cultivation in 1877. Alongside the western side of the house is a planting of “Peace” roses. And in the Perfume Bed are Damask and Cabbage roses.

In the Purple Bed are hellebores, iris, society garlic, cranesbills, delphiniums, plectranthus and ageratum. There is a good collection of salvias in this bed including *Salvia leucantha*, S. ‘Anthony Parker’, *S. microphylla* and S. ‘Snow White’.

There is an herb garden with several almonds and a quince tree. Herbs planted include calendula, rue, English lavender, yarrow, orris root (*iris germanica var. florentina*), society garlic and globe artichoke.

An unusual addition to the garden is a specimen of *Acokanthera oblongifolia*, Bushman's poison or wintersweet. This plant is native of Africa. All parts are toxic and this plant was used to make the poison used by natives to poison the arrows or spears used to capture animals.

The garden continues to evolve and grow with additional plantings. It looks especially good in the springtime. It was well worth a visit. Beaumont House is open on the first Sunday of the month (except January) from 2.00pm to 4.30pm or by arrangement. Admission fees apply. Location: 631 Glynburn Road, Beaumont.

Thank you to Meryllyn Kuchel and the volunteers for their time, hospitality and informative talks. Thanks again to Sandra for coordinating the tour.

Reference: National Trust SA information brochure/maps.

Anthony Medcalf

A BOG GARDEN IN A DROUGHT With Diana Angel AT MORGAN

This last year, as we all know, has been a shocking year of drought. Keeping the hardiest herbs alive has been very challenging! Even then, protecting them from the kangaroos and wildlife, desperate for food and moisture was even more of a challenge. However, in the midst of the sometimes 50°C summer days and on the sunniest, North side of our limestone hill we managed to keep a supply of green herbs such as parsley and dill etc. by planting and building a Bog garden. Being only on non-existent rainwater and having to continually cart water in was

very tiring so by building the bog garden we only needed to water it twice a week.

A bog garden can be built anywhere as follows. Take a deep waterproof container such as a plastic dustbin (we used a deep wine barrel lined with a pond liner that we happened to have). Fill only 1/3 to 1/2 full with the very best potting mix etc. you can get. Plant seeds on an ongoing basis. The plants only grew as high as the rim as the hot North winds seared anything that grew past it. We also put a high animal wire mesh around the top to ensure that nothing was eating by the “Roos”.

Despite the drought we had fresh herbs all summer. It's now been fed and it's growing calendula and nasturtiums etc. also native sea parsley. If next summer is the same, give it ago and enjoy. Our neighbours have copied copy the idea for ornamentals. P.S. It might be necessary to surround a plastic bin with some sort of wadding or polystyrene to keep it insulated. This was not necessary for the wine barrel.

Bergamot Mint *Mentha citrata*

known also as Eau de cologne mint/Orange mint.



Botanical Name: Mentha citrata
It is a natural hybrid of the natural *M. aquatica* (Water Mint) and *M. spicata* (Spearmint), with the botanical name *Mentha x piperita* var *citrata*. One must never forget how readily mints cross breed. This is why commercially mints are usually grown from stolons.

Mentha citrata Bergamot mint

This mint is one of the most attractively scented of all herbs and should occupy a place in every herb garden. The aroma is however somewhat intangible and it is variously described as lemon, orange, Bergamot, lavender and eau de Cologne mint - the latter being the most widely used. Former botanical name, *M. odorata* is therefore rather more accurate than the present one, which suggests only a lemon sent.

Description:

Very aromatic decumbent, glabrous perennial from 30-60 centimetres tall, on over -ground leafy stolons. Stems branched, bearing dark green, purple tinged, smooth ovate or elliptic, petiolate leaves 1.5 to 4 cm long. Mauve flowers in rounded dense terminal spikes or in upper leaf axils, appearing from mid to late Autumn.

Distribution:

European native, naturalised elsewhere. In rich, moist soils in conditions of partial shade.

Cultivation:

Wild. Cultivated horticulturally by divisions of stolons in spring; planting 5 cm deep.

Constituents:

Volatile oil.

Uses:

Fresh or dried leaves. (Not used medicinally). Used sparingly in tisanes, jellies, cold drinks or salads.

May be employed in a range of scented and cosmetic articles. (Although the manufactured Eau de Cologne is now produced synthetically), this mint was the original source of the fragrance.

Ref: Herbcottage .com.au, Malcom Stewarts Herbs and Herbalism and bits and pieces from here and there.

All in one word

decumbent, (of a plant) lying along the ground or along a surface, with the extremity curving upwards.

glabrous free from hair or down

petiolate the stalk that joins a leaf to a stem.

Cat Thyme Teucrium marum



Cat-thyme on left and cat thyme on right.

Family: Lamiaceae
Genus: Teucrium
Species: T marum

Teucrium marum, the Cat Thyme, is a close relative of germander; despite what its name suggests, it is not a thyme. Its small, oval leaves give it a thyme-like appearance, but the musty scent is quite unlike the delicate

aroma of thyme, cat thyme is a mounding, tender perennial with grey-green leaves tipped by fragrant pink flowers in summer.

Cat thyme, a native of Spain and the Western Mediterranean, will live through the winter in the open, on a dry soil and in a good situation, when the frosts are not severe, though it is frequently

killed in hard winters if unprotected by mats or other covering. Older plants can shrub 3 or 4 feet high if grown in a mild climate. It has oval leaves, broader at the base, downy beneath, with uncut margins. It is in leaf all year.

The flowers, appearing between July and September, are in one-sided spikes, the corollas are crimson in colour.

The leaves and younger branches when fresh, on being rubbed emit a volatile, pungent, aromatic smell, which excites sneezing, but in taste they are somewhat bitter, accompanied with a sensation of heat.

Some, but not all cats prefer it to catnip and will corkscrew themselves into the plant in ecstasy.

Editor: I've seen cats knead and drool cotton bags stuffed with Cat Thyme.

RECIPES:

The recipes that follow are from the compendium

'A Taste of Herbs'

Recipes from The Kitchen Garden,

The set of booklets include:

Salads, Cakes, Biscuits and Condiments.

They were first printed by the Herb Society in July 2005 and are still available.

Zucchini salad

- 2 large zucchinis
- 3 tablespoons of extra virgin Olive oil
- 1 tablespoon Lemon or lime juice
- 1 tablespoon clear honey
- 2 teaspoons sesame seeds
- 1 tablespoon shredded mint
- 1 small garlic clove crushed

Grate zucchini on the coarse side of a grater.
Toss with olive oil, juice, honey, sesame seeds, mint and garlic.
Season with salt and pepper to taste and serve immediately.

The Duke of Windsor Gingerbread.

- 225 g butter
- 450 g plain flour
- 110 g brown sugar
- 25 g of ground ginger
- 225 g blanched chopped almonds
- 1 teaspoon caraway seeds, ground
- Half teaspoon ground all spice
- 50 g chopped mixed peel
- Quarter teaspoon cock soda
- Three eggs
- 450 g black treacle or golden syrup

Rub the butter into the flour until it resembles fine breadcrumbs.
Stir in the sugar, ginger, almonds, spices, mixed peel and carb
soda until well blended.

Beat the eggs with the treacle and then stir into the dry
ingredients.

Pour into 2 greased and floured loaf tins and bake in the oven at 180 C for 40-50 minutes or until the cakes are risen and shrinking on the sides of the tins. Turn out onto racks and cool.

Molasses is the same as treacle and helps the bread to rise.

Asparagus Quiche

1 unbaked 20 cm pie shell

1/4 cups cream

1/3 cup grated Swiss cheese

Salt and pepper to taste

500 g fresh asparagus

1/3 cup grated parmesan cheese

4 eggs beaten

Bake pie shell in oven at 180° for 10 minutes. Remove and allow to cool.

Trim asparagus and cook in boiling salted water for 1 minute.

Drain and refresh in Cold water. Cut the asparagus into short pieces and place them in the part baked pastry shell. Combine the cream, cheeses, eggs, Salt and pepper. Pour over asparagus in the pastry shell. Bake in the oven at 150°C for thirty minutes or until cooked.

Pumpkin and Thyme soup

500 g of pumpkin

1 medium potato

2 medium onions chopped

1 tablespoon of olive oil

750 mls off stock

3 sprigs of thyme

salt and pepper to taste

Cream or milk to taste

In a large saucepan, lightly fry the onions in the olive oil, till soft and golden but not brown. peel the pumpkin and potato roughly chop. add to the onions with the stock and thyme. Bring to the boil. Then reduce to a simmer and continue cooking until pumpkin and potato are soft. Puree in a blender and return to the saucepan. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Finish by adding a little cream or milk before serving.

CURRY LEAVES:

Whole Curry Leaves are generally removed after using them to flavour curries, and season roast meats however they may be chopped finely and added to salads, sauces and stir fries.

A concise outline of points of interest to those who did not attend the following meetings. The full minutes are available at General meetings.

COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 15/4/19

TREASURERS REPORT:

*Motion that the accounts be paid and financial report be accepted. Moved/Seconded by Kath and Anthony, carried unanimously.

*Motion to funds from cheque account, which includes \$41,763.04 from LifePlan to interest bearing account with Lutheran Layman's League.

Moved/Seconded by Kath/Dot.

GROUP REPORTS:

SALVIA GARDENING GROUP.

Autumn Salvia Sale will be on Sunday 28th April.

SEED SAVERS GROUP:

- Next meeting 6th June at Findon Community Centre.
- 113 sachets of Lemon verbena packed.

HERB DAY:

- Trolley from Bunnings, price \$98 to be purchased.
- Raffle books ready to be distributed in August copy of Herb Thymes
- Ilsa purchased a set of three clippers and snips from a Stratco Sale for \$25.

TRIPS:

Beaumont House, 20 people have booked – cut of May 6th, Port Lincoln 20 to 22nd September, approximately 6 people have booked.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

- Sunday Mail Expo, 5th-7th April. This was a great success with lots of questions asked.
- The Herb Society Website is being updated by John.
- Propagation day was a successful day with 26 attending

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 6/5/19

SEED SAVERS GROUP:

- Next meeting 6th June at 7.30 pm.
- Making herb and Lemon verbena bags.
- Ilsa asked for suggestion for seeds.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

- 26 enthusiastic people attended April's propagation workshop in the Findon garden.
- Cuttings of pelargonium 'Mabel Grey', goldenrod and hakea were available for members to take and seeds for sale.

THE GUEST SPEAKER: As the guest speaker did not come Anthony Medcalf filled in with photos of his visit to Singapore gardens.

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 20/5/19

GROUP REPORTS:

Salvia Gardening Group:

- 600 pots were sold at the autumn sale with an overall profit of \$702.
- At the salvia propagating workshop at Tupelo Grove on 4th May, six trays were planted.

TRIPS:

21 people enjoyed the trip to Beaumont House, with tours around the historic gardens and house as well as afternoon tea.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

John has updated the website with the calendar for 2019 and has changed photos. To advise cost.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING HELD 3/6/19

NOTICES:

- Spring into Burra: open gardens 19th – 20th October.
- Next year's Expo will be 3rd to 5th April.
- HERB DAY:
- Prizes are being received.
- Celia, Dinny and Marianne will be on the Herb Stall.
- Anthony will do the herb display.
- There will be a display of seeds.
- There have been some applications for stalls, and requests will need to be received by October.
- Sandra has organised the music.

SALVIA GARDENING GROUP.

Six trays were planted out at the salvia propagating day on 4th May.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

- Brian Noone will talk about capers on Gardening Australia on Friday 7th June.
- Ilsa has cuttings of wormwood and potted pelargoniums for sale. It was requested that members bring more contributions.
- Anthony talked about Salvia iodantha.

THE GUEST SPEAKER: Greg Lane from the Cottage Garden Society kindly filled in as speaker, talking about 'the Weird Wonderful and Whimsical' in the plant world.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2019:

AUGUST:

Monday 5th: General Meeting 7.30pm Guest Speaker, Belinda Hellyer from Brewed By Belinda an award-winning boutique artisan tea company, creating organic loose leaf tea blends & herbal and fruit tisanes.

Thursday 8th: 7.30pm to 9.30pm Seed Group

SEPTEMBER:

Monday 2nd: General meeting 7.30pm.

Guest Speaker, Ollie Black. St Bede's Community Garden Semaphore Field Trip to Port Lincoln - Friday 20th to Sunday 22nd.

OCTOBER

Monday 1st General meeting 7.30pm.

Guest Speaker, Les Nesbitt. Australian Native Orchids.

Overview, their conservation and propagation.

Thursday 3rd 7.30 to 9.30pm Seed Group.

Sunday 27th 8.30 to noon, Spring Salvia Day. Fullarton Park Community Centre, 411 Fullarton Rd.

NOVEMBER

Monday 4th General meeting 7.30pm.

Guest Speaker, Catherine McMahon. Seagrass Restoration in Port River. Monitoring and restoration trial underway with major polluter gone. Estuary Care Foundation

HERB DAY:

Sunday 3rd November 10am – 3pm

Fullarton Park Community Centre, 411 Fullarton Rd.

DECEMBER

Monday 2nd General meeting 7.30pm & Christmas Party.