

# Kentuckiana Herbal Thymes

“FOR USE AND FOR DELIGHT”

## TARRAGON

French Tarragon - *Artemisia dracunculus*



Tarragon is considered the "King of Herbs" by the French and for good reason: it's the main flavoring in many sauces that form the foundation of classic French cuisine, such as béarnaise, rigavote and tartare. When added to chopped sprigs of fresh parsley, chives, and chervil, you have the traditional seasoning blend known as fines herbes - it enhances egg, chicken and fish dishes, and is also used as a basis for salad dressings. When cooking with tarragon, it is best to add it near the end, as heat tends to dissipate the flavor. Unlike most herbs, tarragon loses a good deal of flavor when dried. This is probably why it is so frequently preserved in vinegar, it captures tarragon's essence and creates a tasty condiment that can be used in dressings, mayonnaise and as a zesty deglazing alternative to wine.

*dracunculus*) is the variety recommended in most recipes. Its flavor is sweeter and its leaves are more delicate than its relative Russian tarragon, (*Artemisia dracunculoides*), which tends to have a bitter, inferior flavor. Unfortunately, Russian variety spreads and reproduces easily, but French tarragon cannot be propagated by seed but must be cultivated by cuttings and root divisions. Provide rich, well drained soil and full sun.

Tarragon was originally from Siberia and was not cultivated in Europe until the late 1500's, when the Tudor family brought it to the royal gardens. When colonists settled in America, they brought tarragon for their kitchen gardens, burnett to flavor ale, horehound for cough syrup and chamomile for tea and insect repellent.

The ancient Greeks used tarragon as a remedy for tooth-

French tarragon (*Artemisia*

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## NEXT MEETINGS

**TUESDAY, MAY 13, 4 P.M.**

*Kentucky School for the Blind*

Workday in the garden. Dinner at Shiraz Mediterranean Grill on Frankfort Avenue.

**TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 6 P.M.**

*Central Christian Church*

Marie Henize will present "Herbal Cleaning"



**Happy  
Birthday!**

**May**

Kim Davis  
Barbara Warf

**June**

Martha Ritz

## POTPOURRI

- **Wanted:** Members needed to review books from the KHS library and submit reviews. Other herb-related book reviews also welcome.
- **Receiving the newsletter by e-mail** was discussed at our last meeting and several members were in favor. If you would like to receive yours by e-mail, please notify Kim Davis. It will help save resources and expenses for the club.
- Interesting information sent by Pat Greathead: **“The Difference between Afternoon Tea, High Tea, Cream Tea and Elixirs”**. For you tea lovers, check it out at: <http://networkedblogs.com/WnJc8>
- If you do not wish to receive miscellaneous info on herbs from Pat Greathead, only HSA info, please e-mail her at: [patherbs@frontier.com](mailto:patherbs@frontier.com) and tell her your name, e-mail address, your unit’s name or if you are a member-at-large, and just say “HSA info only, please!”

## MEDICINAL TARRAGON

- “Dragon’s-wort” has been traditionally used for:
- Insomnia
  - Toothache
  - Upset stomach
  - Loss of appetite
  - Intestinal worms
  - Hyperactivity
  - Anti-bacterial for cuts
  - Depression
  - Aids digestion



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# TARRAGON

(continued from page 1)

ache; today we know that tarragon has an anesthetic element, eugenol, which is also in anesthetic clove oil, making its use for temporary pain relief understandable. According to the Doctrine of Signatures, tarragon was thought to cure snake bites, due to the serpentine shape of its roots. The Latin name 'dranunculus', or dragon, refers to the root and perpetuating the myth of curing bites from venomous beasts and mad dogs.

The Greek goddess Artemis, goddess of the moon, lends her name to the plant Artemesia. Many plants in that family, have a soft, silvery color, as if bathed in moonbeams, such as Dusty Miller and Sagebush. The common name tarragon, meaning 'little dragon' is thought to be a corruption of the Arabic word "tarkhum".

Another variety of tarragon, actually a member of the marigold family (*Tagetes lucida*), commonly called Mexican

marigold or winter tarragon, makes an attractive addition to the garden, as well as a welcome ingredient in the kitchen. The plant grows to a height of about 2 1/2 feet and is quite bushy, needing full sun and good drainage. In late fall, tiny golden flowers at the end of its long, erect stems make interesting additions to floral arrangements, especially with the fragrance to enjoy. The stems are also the perfect finishing touch to a decorative bottle of herb vinegar.

Mexican marigold is spicier than French tarragon, with a touch of cinnamon flavor as well as the sweet licorice taste normally associated with tarragon. It can be used the same way as French tarragon, and gives an extra dimension of zest. This hardy perennial will keep producing all through winter, after French tarragon has gone dormant.

*Reference:* from <http://www.sallybernstein.com/>



## TARRAGON LEMONADE

10 cups water  
2-1/4 cups sugar  
17 tarragon sprigs

6 cups fresh lemon juice, strained (about 40 lemons), plus 12 thin slices for garnish  
salt, ice



In a medium saucepan, combine 4 cups water with the sugar and bring to a boil, stirring until dissolved. Simmer over moderately high heat until reduced to 3-1/4 cups, about 25 minutes. Remove from heat and add 5 of the tarragon sprigs. Let stand, stirring often, until cooled to room temperature, about 30 minutes. Discard tarragon sprigs. In a large pitcher, combine the remaining 6 cups of water with the tarragon syrup and fresh lemon juice. Add a pinch of salt, stirring until it dissolves. Serve the lemonade over ice, garnished with the lemon slices and the remaining tarragon sprigs.

## A TRIBUTE TO CHARLENE RUPP

*By Joan Burton, KHS Member*

Over two decades ago I was approached by this petite lady with jet black hair. She had heard that I grew some herbs and she invited me to my first meeting of the Kentuckiana Herb Society. She not only invited me, but picked me up and drove me to at least my first three meetings. I soon found out that Charlene was co-chair of the herb booth at Chautauqua. Soon after I also learned that she was planning the unit's first Spring Education Day, in those days called our Spring Symposium. Charlene had recruited a nationally known speaker, Linda Rago, and this event was held in the recreation hall at The Kentucky School for the Blind. For several years after that first symposium, Charlene continued to chair this event as it grew larger and larger prompting us to move in larger halls to accommodate increasing attendance.

My next memory of Charlene was that she had become unit chair and the Kentucky School for the Blind Garden had to be moved due to construction. Charlene presided over the rededication celebration. It did not take long to learn that this special lady was a perfectionist from planning an event, decorating a room, writing an article, or cooking a herbal treat. I was in awe that she was always "in the know". She became a role model, inspiration and a friend. Often Charlene would call to say that she had discovered a new book, a new

place to visit, a delicious recipe, or just to share some herbal tidbit.

Over the years Charlene continued to invite new people to our meetings and many new members joined. Her enthusiasm for herbs was contagious. After a decade of leadership Charlene and George decided to move to Indianapolis to be near their daughter Lisa. Our loss was the Central Indiana Units gain.

Next thing I knew, Charlene had planned their first Spring Education Day and was an active member of the unit. However, Charlene never failed to continue to support The Kentuckiana Unit by becoming an associate member. She continued to send money for Chautauqua, books for the library and as her last contribution, the Gnomes Statuary and the darling Two Little Girls Statuary for this last Spring Education Day.

Several weeks ago Charlene learned that she was to receive a Certificate of Achievement from The Herb Society of America at the annual conference this June. She was so pleased that she was being honored by her peers for all of her genius, hard work and dedication. She will be smiling down on that day. And as Carolee Snyder commented to me, we know that Charlene and Marty are up in heaven planning a wonderful Herb Symposium. She will be missed and long remembered.

## STREAM CLIFF FARM TRIP

*Submitted by Marjo Howe, KHS Member*

On April 16th some of our members took a day trip to Stream Cliff Farm. It was a beautiful day, and members Joan Burton, Carolyn Cutshall, Edith Davis, Gerri Dyer, Marie Heinze, Barbara Lusco, Marjo Howe, Helen Trueblood, and Deb Knight enjoyed the weather and the day.

We made luncheon reservations and it was fortunate that we did because, as usual, the restaurant was crowded. Betty Manning

was her usual gracious self, and she remembered Helen's April 25th birthday with a gift from Stream Cliff's winery.

We enjoyed browsing thru the gift shops and enjoying the emerging plants in the garden and greenhouses. Some of us purchased gifts for future events and especially plants to kick-start our gardens. All in all an extremely enjoyable outing.

## A FUN MEMORY OF MARTY

*By Joan Burton, KHS Member*

There are so many stories that could be repeated about Marty. I have chosen this one as it was one that Marty like to tell and laugh about.

Many years ago Marty decided to make herbal shoe deodorizers to sell at Chautauqua. She had cut out and sewed cute shoe sole patterns and had gathered kitty litter and several essential oils to blend in with the litter. One of the oils was eucalyptus. I do not remember what the other ones were but they were



good and smelly. She recruited me and several other members to help her with this project. Marty proceeded to empty the bottles of essential oil on the kitty litter. At that point the room cleared except for me and Marty. The scent was overwhelming but we stuck with it until every sole was filled and packaged. I bought a couple of these for my husband's stinky shoes and they really did work; I still have them. Marty enjoyed laughing about this but we never made them again!



## MEETING MINUTES

*By Marjo Howe, KHS Secretary*



**Meeting - March 11, 2014**, 6 pm, Central Christian Church.

- March 11th was our meeting "Spring Education Workshop" at the Central Christian Church at 4:00 P.M.
- Hostesses were Millie and Cynthia Hardy, pizza was supplied and salads were donated. Drinks were supplied.
- Attending were Cynthia Johnson, Millie Chapala, Edith Davis, Barbara Lusco, Deb Knight, Marie Heinze, Kim Davis, Cynthia Hardy, Rosa Kestan, Bonnie McKim, Joanne Lueke, Clovis Hayse, Qudsia Davis, Gerrie Dyer, Marjo Howe, Julia Warf.
- Treasurers report was given, our new historian will be Clovis Hayse, new recording secretary Joan Burton, new

corresponding secretary Marjo Howe, treasurer will be Jett Rose, librarian Carolyn Cutshall.

- Our members health concerns were addressed, Greg Rose had gall bladder surgery, Juanita Popp hip surgery.
- Our web site address is [KentuckianaHerbSoc.org](http://KentuckianaHerbSoc.org)
- National news from HSA-the herbalist is seeking ads.
- We discussed education events, finished crafts for event, and all committee heads reported on status of their committees
- It was a fun, successful meeting for all

**Meeting - April 8, 2014**, 6 pm, Pioneer Garden Workshop cancelled due to weather.



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Postage



*The Herb Society of America*



How strange that Nature does not knock, and yet does not intrude!  
- Emily Dickenson

## WHITE BEAN & WINTER TARRAGON SOUP

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 8 oz. Great Northern white beans          | 7 cups chicken stock                             |
| 2 Tbls. olive oil                         | 1 Tbls fresh winter tarragon leaves,<br>chopped* |
| 1 med. onion, diced                       | 3 Tbls thinly sliced ham, julienned              |
| 1 small fennel bulb, diced, (about 1 cup) | salt and pepper to taste                         |
| 2 tsp. grated lemon peel                  |  |
| 2 cloves garlic, minced                   |  |

Sort through the beans to remove rocks and other items. Put in a container and cover with four inches of water. Soak overnight. Drain off the water. In a stainless steel pot heat the olive oil. Sauté the onion and the fennel until golden. Add the grated lemon peel and the garlic. Cook for one minute to release the flavors. Add the stock, cover the pot and reduce the heat to a simmer. Cook the beans until soft, about one hour. Stir in the tarragon, reserving 1/2 teaspoon to use for garnish. Add the ham, stirring to blend all flavors. Add salt and pepper to taste. Ladle into decorative soup bowls and garnish with the remaining tarragon. Serves 4.

\* *French tarragon can be substituted for winter tarragon.*

