

# Greenwood Herbals

## February 2006

### What's happening at Greenwood Herbals in February:

- **Reading Seed Catalogs**
- **Ordering seeds and organic seed starter**
- **Replacing bulbs in the grow lights**
- **Cleaning the seed trays**

I'm restless. I'm tired of resting. I am planning. I want to garden. I am going to put in a new vegetable garden this year. I find myself perusing the seed catalogs that I have been stock piling since December. I'm picking out seeds for this new garden, seeds that I need for the culinary and the annual herbs that I will be selling and harvesting this season. I am also looking for a new plant to introduce to Greenwood Herbals. I do this every year, finding a plant medicine that I don't grow, making sure that it is safe to grow in Maine and won't become an invasive that will degrade Maine's habitat in the future, like Purple Loosestrife and Japanese barberry. I found an excellent resource to check my choices against. "Gardening to Conserve Maine's Native Landscape: Plants to Use and Plants to Avoid." You can get a copy by visiting The University of Maine Cooperative Extension web site at [www.umext.maine.edu/publications/homegarden.htm](http://www.umext.maine.edu/publications/homegarden.htm) or visit my links page.

I have settled on Boneset for the new plant to introduce here this year. I will also be expanding the *Monarda fistulosa*, (Sweet Leaf) crop this year. I was completely out of Sweet Leaf by the end of December. I was surprised by the orders that were coming in from other parts of the country for this herb. Then I discovered that not too many herb companies supply it. When I run out of a particular herb or cannot grow that herb in Maine, I am forced to rely on other suppliers. One of my teachers, Matthew Wood mentions in his book, "The Book of Herbal Wisdom" that this is a Native American medicine and was not used by our European ancestors, so has been overlooked by modern herbalists. I wish I had known this before I had sold out of my beautiful herb and left myself with none. Thank goodness for the extract that I made. I have some of this left. Though I have been getting orders for this as well!

**Bergamot—*Monarda fistulosa*** Also known as Sweet Leaf by Native American Healer/Practitioners.

I have always known this plant as Sweet Leaf. Have you ever tasted it's leaf? It is rich in volatile oils and tastes sweet, pungent, peppery, hot and buttery. It is a member of the mint family and grows in open fields and meadows which have not been cultivated for some time. You can find it near the edges of forests across most of North America.



It is a perennial and is cultivated in my garden. It is in flower through July and August and the seeds ripen around the end of August. It is pollinated by bees and attracts all sorts of wildlife. One year we actually had a nest of baby hummingbirds hiding in the patch. It was the only year that we could not harvest because the mother hummingbird wouldn't allow it. The plant will grow in all soils, whether sandy, loamy, clay or acid, neutral or alkaline. It will not grow in the shade. But will grow in dry or moist conditions. When harvesting only use the aerial part of the plant, leaving the roots in the ground for next years plants. I like to propagate my plant, though you can start it from the seeds that you collected the year before. I have found that I like to collect my own seeds from some of my plants because of differences I have noted in my medicine. I can't explain this as I don't understand it myself and have often wondered about the DNA or heredity traits of a plant even within it's own family. Sweet Leaf seems to be one of these plants that even though the botanical name and the seed seem to be the same, the medicine is not. In the case of sweet leaf, I have had to stick with my own plant to get the medicine that I want.

**Edible Uses:** The entire aerial part of the plant can be used as a pot herb. The flower can be used in salads and the leaves make a wonderful aromatic tea. It has properties similar to Oregano and will combine well with Sweet Marjoram in cooking.

**Medicinal Uses:** The leaves and flowering stems are used as a tea infusion in the treatment of colds, headaches, gastric disorders, aching kidneys, bladder inflammation and to reduce fevers and soothe sore throats. It is great for drawing out heat in the skin from a burn. What this plant will do for a burn on the skin it will also do for the internal organs. It not only draws the fire out of the body, it is soothing to the nerves. Some herbalists use this in the treatment of bladder and yeast infections. This plant can be used fresh or dry. It can also be used in extract form.

## Featured Product this Month:



**Diaper Rash Cream.**—Contains: *Echinacea Root, Calendula, Thyme, Yarrow, Myrrh, Olive Oil, Coconut Oil, Tea Tree Essential Oil, Lavender Essential Oil, Chamomile Essential Oil, and Beeswax*

*We have gotten excellent feedback on this diaper rash remedy and have been told that it is outstanding when used on other types of skin infections. So don't let the name of this cream fool you.*

Visit our shop or visit us on-line at [www.greenwoodherbals.com](http://www.greenwoodherbals.com)

I would like to thank **Kevin Dawson**, fellow York County Master Gardener for the local beeswax he is providing to Greenwood Herbals. I can now say that all our salves and creams are truly Maine grown, including the beeswax! Thank you Kevin!

I would also like to thank **Wendy Fogg** of Misty Meadows Herbal Center and Farm for donating her credit card machine to Greenwood Herbals when she upgraded to a new machine. Yahoo! We can now accept Visa and Mastercard at the shop. Thank you Wendy!

And many thanks to the **York County Extension Office** for donating their extra four drawer file cabinet. It's already come into great use. Thank you so much!

**Cream of Mushroom Soup**  
*I got this recipe while watching Rebecca's Garden. It is fabulous*

1 lb Mushrooms sliced	
3 tbsp Butter	
1 cup Yellow onion diced	
1 cup Celery diced	
1 cup Carrots diced	
3/4 cup Flour	Clean mushrooms and slice
1 teaspoon Marjoram fresh	Sauté onions & celery in butter
6 cups Vegetable stock	Add mushrooms cook 5 mins
3/4 cup Heavy cream	Add flour and stir
Salt and Pepper to taste	Add vegetable stock,
Parsley	Add Marjoram
	Cook on low for 20 minutes
	Add cream, don't boil,
	Garnish with parsley

**Announcements:**

- We are now accepting applications for our apprenticeship program. See our web-site [www.greenwoodherbals.com](http://www.greenwoodherbals.com) for more details and the application form. The completed forms must be submitted by March 30, 2006
- **We are now accepting Visa and Mastercard at the shop**
- For those of you who have inquired—The 2 week Colon Cleanses are now available. All others call the office to order yours today.
- Sharon Deill Degiovanni will be conducting a *Free* one day art show "A Journey with Trees" with Pat Trotter of Earth Spirit Voices on Saturday, March 18, 2006 at Misty Meadows Herbal Center, from 10—4 pm. For more information call (603)659-7211 or visit [www.mistymeadows.org](http://www.mistymeadows.org). To preview Sharon's art you can also visit [www.theroot-seller.com](http://www.theroot-seller.com) You can find out more about Pat Trotter at [www.landreader.com](http://www.landreader.com)
- We have applications in the office for the Lichenwood Flower Essence apprenticeship program. If you are interested, please ask for one the next time you come in or visit [www.lichenwoodherbals.com](http://www.lichenwoodherbals.com) to access it on-line.
- Greenwood Herbals will be closed April 23rd thru April 29. I will be on vacation. If you need anything from the shop or If you are ordering on-line, or by phone please keep this in mind. All orders placed between April 23rd and April 29th will be shipped on May 3, 2006.