

# Herbal Expressions

Herbalist Association of Nova Scotia (HANS) Summer 2007 Newsletter

## Herbal First Aid

By Natasba Paul

With the summer sun upon us, we are drawn outside to play. And perhaps you have found, like me, that frolicking, camping and tramping in the woods can be a dangerous business once the kid within breaks free. But never fear, there are many quick remedies in the kitchen or along the trail we can use to treat bumps, bruises, burns, belly aches and bug bites.

In the kitchen: garlic, ginger, honey and aloe are simple ingredients that are useful for first aid. Garlic is highly antiseptic and can be rubbed on acne or other infected spots. Ginger taken internally helps with travel sickness and an upset stomach. Honey can be used to draw pus and poison out of wounds. And the "juice" of a fresh aloe leaf applied on the skin, soothes minor burns, scalds and sunburn.

While outdoors don't forget how Mother Nature cares for us by providing many natural remedies such as Plantain, Daisy, Shepherd's Purse and Dock. For bee stings or insect bites, Common Plantain (*Plantago major*) leaves are an easily accessible remedy that you can rub on the affected area on site. With a little preparation, a poultice or compress can be made with Daisies (of fresh Daisy (*Bellis perennis*) to relieve bruises and sprains. Shepherd's Purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*) is known to stop bleeding. A poultice can be made fresh to apply on cuts and scrapes. Finally, for those of you who found your way into a fine patch of Stinging Nettle (*Urtica dioica*), I have just learned that Dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*) is its natural antidote. One rubs the crushed leaves over the itchy bumpy site. No doubt, I will keep my eye out for this herb in the months to come!

The herbal remedies mentioned above were sourced from *Home Herbal* by Penelope Ody (1995). It is an excellent home remedy guide. If you are interested in learning more about herbal first aid remedies and natural medicinal plants please join one of our many Herbalist's Herb Walks and our annual Herb Fair held on July 28<sup>th</sup> this year on McNab's Island. And have a happy green summer outdoors!

## An Interview with Michele Graveline, Master Herbalist

by Shirlie Williamson

Michele Graveline is a Master Herbalist living on the Eastern Shore of Nova Scotia. Raised on her parent's farm in northern Manitoba she has been interested in herbs and growing things for as long as she can remember. Her parents had a massive garden, which provided food well into the cold winter months for the family of nine. Before her parents left this world, they passed on a respect for the land, a firm foundation in the benefits of producing your own food and many plant and tree names.

As a teenager in 1983 Michele bought her first herb book – the Rodale Herb Book, which had a chapter about everything you ever wanted to do with a herb. At the time, she was also dabbling in alternative practices and was slowly developing a reputation as someone 'into' herbs. Using herbs became part of her chosen lifestyle as she started learning the medicinal uses of the plants. By the time she reached her early 20's, friends and family started coming to her for advice on what to take for their problems. It was at this time that Michele started looking at the possibility of formal education and discovered a little school in B.C. called Dominion Herbal College. Opportunity however knocked on a different door and instead she moved to Winnipeg and participated in a university program.

In the early 1990's Michele was living in Winnipeg finishing up a Bachelor of Arts Hons degree in Psychology at the University of Manitoba. Upon completion she realized the one thing she missed the most during that four years, was studying and learning about herbal medicine. She then returned to the idea of taking formal training, but there wasn't a lot offered at that time. She contacted the two practicing herbalists, both Master Herbalists, in Winnipeg and found that one, Walter Enns, offered some herb walks occasionally, but was not offering any in-depth courses. While working, Michele signed up at Dominion Herbal College in B.C for their Chartered Herbalist diploma program through distance learning. In the fall of 1995 she moved to Nova Scotia and while working at a local health food store she participated in workshops and classes as they became available by other herbalists and in various other alternative health practices.

Michele experimented quite a bit with making medicine during this time, and in the late 1990's she designed and taught workshops and a series of herbal classes at the

Maritime School of Health and Well Being. It was at this time that she realized how much she loved teaching.

The college closed in the early part of 1998 and by the summer Michele gave birth to her first child. She took a little break from teaching and enrolled in the Registered Holistic Nutritionist program through the Canadian School of Natural Nutrition. Finishing the program in late 2000, she gave birth to her second child in early 2001. By 2004 she completed the Masters Herbalist program from Dominion Herbal College. During this time of studying and child raising she also continued to walk the herbal path, offer workshops from time to time, attend workshops and provide counsel on occasion.

Through a combination of her work with the traditional Medicine Wheel for her Master Herbalist thesis, teaching tree medicine, and knowing the fundamentals of herbal medicine, health and human behaviour, Michele came to the realization that the primary reasons for human illness (mental, spiritual, emotional & physical) are a basic disconnect between humans and the natural world and not listening to what our spirit tries to tell us.

As an attempt to gain footing into broader, mainstream venues, Michele is now completing a Master of Arts in Education in the Life Long Learning Program at Mount St. Vincent University. Her thesis topic is on transformative adult education with respect to ecological consciousness, with a main study area in creating and researching programs/activities that are designed to assist people in becoming aware of how they view the natural world and themselves in it. Michele is hopeful that her period of study will end soon and she can begin to make a meaningful contribution in healing ourselves and the rest of earth.

Michele is one of the founding members of the Herbalist Association of Nova Scotia and has been on the Board of Directors for 5 years. She is a member of the Politics and Standards Committee and the Organizational Development Committee.

### **What is your favourite herb?**

People have asked me this many times through the years. I can honestly say – even though I try to focus on local herbs - I really like cinnamon right now. It is such an amazingly powerful herb, but almost deceptively so. When you can use a plant in your every day existence you're getting that medicine easily and simply. And it's easy to give to kids, if they like it, without them knowing it's "medicine".

### **What is your favourite way to give herbal medicine?**

Hard to choose -- tinctures are good and there is something about poultice that provides such an organic experience, so I like those for that reason. But using it as food is probably my favourite way. I like teas and herbs as or on food. I think it is

important to know how to use herbs in your everyday life. Sprinkling them on food, using them as food - that's beautiful medicine.

### **What is your favourite herb book?**

I guess it would be my personal journals, my own journey. I also like Pamela Jones book *Just Weeds*. It's not a really clinical book but it tells the history, myths and uses of plants. What I like about it the most though is that she writes about lesser known "weeds" - a lot of plants you wouldn't find in other herb books.

### **Where do you get your seeds?**

I have not actually gone out to buy herb seeds for many years. Now I just let the plants find me. If an opportunity comes along where the plants or seeds are around, I buy them, but I don't really go looking for seeds.

### **What is your vision of the future of the herbal medicines in our world?**

I guess I'm a bit of a romantic about this. For me it comes back to having people accept herbs into their life. To become empowered about their own health decisions. I'd like to see people having their own backyard or community gardens and including herbs in their life in healthy ways. A lot of work has to be done to get people to this place and herbalists have a role in this. This is a vision I may not see in my lifetime, but maybe in my grandchildren's lifetime this can happen. Who knows - I remain optimistic.

## **Equinox Plant Circle**

*By Lynn Marie Mattie*

Our Spring Plant Circle was held in Shubenacadie on March 25<sup>th</sup>. As the time of year when energy is bursting forth all around us with melting and new growth, we had planned a celebration of reconnecting with the earth and life itself. We were blessed with fabulous weather and were able to go out walking as individuals to explore the land. Burdock was found, leftover from last year, with its sticky, velcro-like burrs. Dandelion leaves were out already and easily recognized. Usnea was found all over, having been blown off the trees by winter winds. It was necessary to dig under the last traces of snow to find the treasures of Gold thread and Wintergreen. Wintergreen is an evergreen herb and continues to grow all winter under the snow. Hawthorn trees were easily seen for their long spikes before their leaves and berries camouflage them. Back inside we shared what we had found. A discussion was started on planting and moved to moon phases and astrology as we sipped an herbal tea blend of Elder flowers, Peppermint and St. John's Wort.

## A Herbalist Gone Wild

By Michele Graveline

When I moved to the eastern shore in 1999 I became a first time homeowner, and while that was a bit scary, I also marveled at the idea of having my own little spot of paradise in this world. Herb wise the first thing to do was find out what I had growing in my midst, and what beauties would unveil themselves as the growing season progressed. We had bought the house in April, but I was able to recognize that I would have stinging nettle. Granted this may be something only a herbalist would do, the truth be told, the nettles were part of the reason I chose the place I did. Having such a find as stinging nettles, with baited breath I looked forward to what else would present itself during my first growing season in my private eden.

That same summer a friend of mine from away came for a visit and knowing I was a herbalist, she expected a yard full of beds displayed in some old fashioned English garden motif. "Where are all the herbs?" she asked, a little disappointed seeing the yard in such wild abandonment. I was actually surprised she did not see what I did; the fireweed swaying in the wind beside the goldenrod, all the plantago underfoot, red clover, white clover, daucus, achillea, lamb's quarters, tussilago, yellow dock, taraxacum, self-heal and of course the lovely stinging nettle. I exclaimed to my friend "Look around you!" while waving my hand as if showing the most sought after prize. She remained unimpressed despite my absolute enthusiasm, but managed to humour my belief that it was all planned.

It is now ten years later and while I do have a few more beds for herbs and vegetables then I did the year my friend first visited, I still believe in letting things go wild. Granted I do cut a small area around my house, however the most fantastic thing about forgoing the laborious task of cutting the greens, is you never know what might find its way to you. If you continually cut, how can anything present itself to you? Already this year walking along a patch I have not cut for a number of years, expecting to find the usual red clover, drucus and plantago coming up, I found comfrey and stinging nettle as well.

Letting your space go wild is truly a beautiful thing for reasons other than herbal visitors. In contrast to my neighbors, who insist on spending their weekends manicuring their lawns, my wild grown yard will be visited by the loveliest of butterflies and little birds. In the warm summer sun, honey and bumble bees dance amongst the flowering plants swaying in gentle breezes. The occurrence of these, providing such sweet summer visions.

And so with the ebb and flow of nature itself, so too will your yard reflect this. Each year bringing something new, while other parts grow more mature, thus providing a welcoming space for the fluttering creatures of this world. Nature offers

us gifts each and every year; I feel I am even more fortunate that I choose to accept them. If you must cut, consider also selecting a spot to let go wild for one year, let nature be free and you might be pleasantly surprised what comes to visit. If you are interested in the possibilities of a wild weed sanctuary, contact an herbalist or refer to a reputable field guide.

## Lunar Data

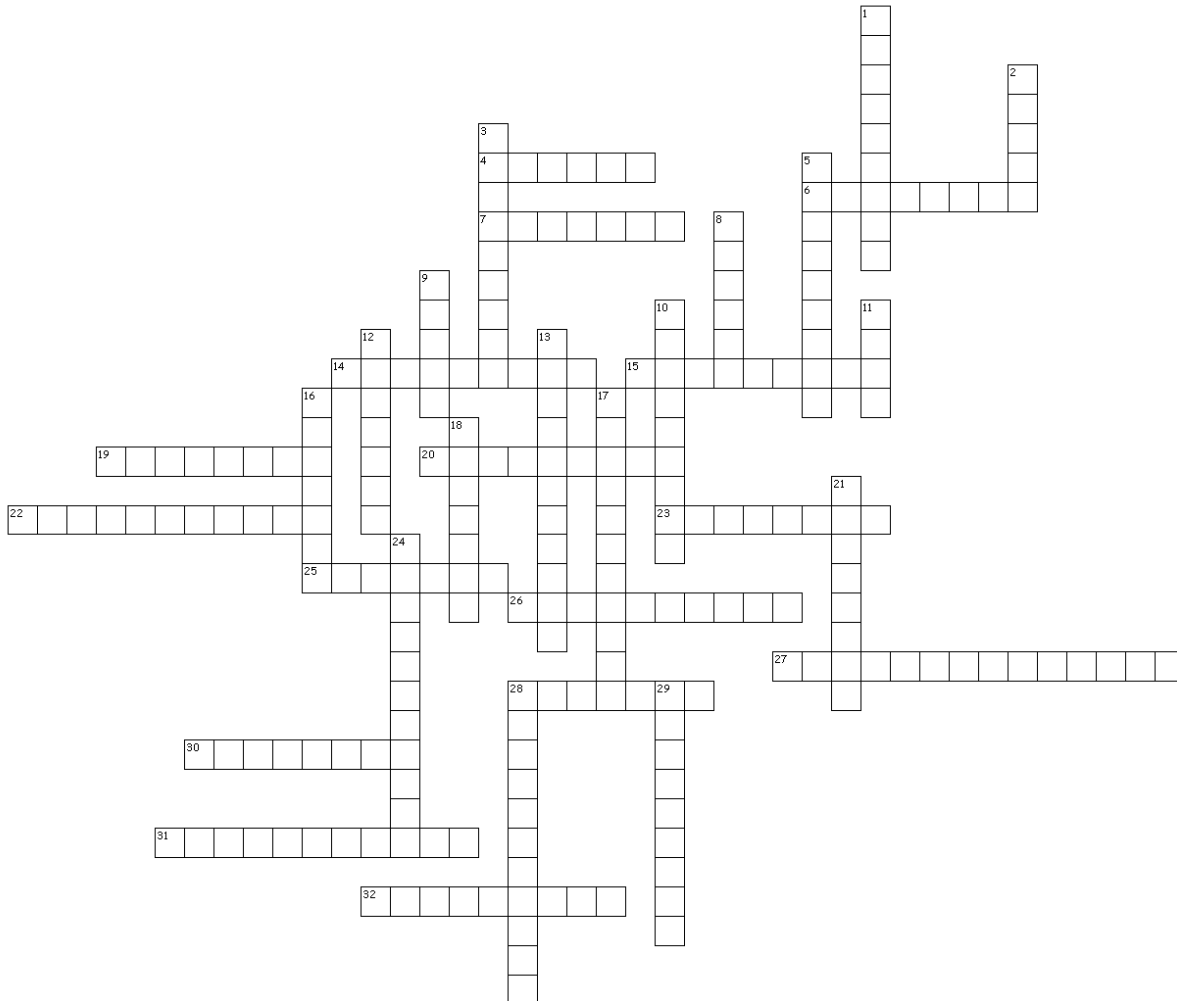
by Lynn Marie Mattie

For those of you who enjoyed the lunar (moon) data in our Spring Edition, here is an updated schedule for July, August and September. It is taken from 'Guided by the Moon: Living in Harmony with the Lunar Cycles' 1996 by Johanna Paungger and Thomas Poppe. Their suggestion is to use the moon in fire signs (Aries, Leo, Sagittarius) for fruit, the moon in earth signs (Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn) for root, the moon in air signs (Gemini, Libra, Aquarius) for flower, and the moon in water signs (Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces) for water

July			August			September		
S	1	Cap	W	1	Pis	S	1	Ari
M	2	Cap	T	2	Pis	S	2	Tau
T	3	Aqu	F	3	Ari	M	3	Tau
W	4	Aqu	S	4	Ari	T	4	Gem
T	5	Pis	S	5	Ari	W	5	Gem
F	6	Pis	M	6	Tau	T	6	Can
S	7	Ari	T	7	Tau	F	7	Can
S	8	Ari	W	8	Gem	S	8	Leo
M	9	Tau	T	9	Gem	S	9	Leo
T	10	Tau	F	10	Can	M	10	Leo
W	11	Gem	S	11	Can	T	11	Vir
T	12	Gem	S	12	Leo	W	12	Vir
F	13	Can	M	13	Leo	T	13	Lib
S	14	Can	T	14	Vir	F	14	Lib
S	15	Can	W	15	Vir	S	15	Lib
M	16	Leo	T	16	Vir	S	16	Sco
T	17	Leo	F	17	Lib	M	17	Sco
W	18	Vir	S	18	Lib	T	18	Sag
T	19	Vir	S	19	Sco	W	19	Sag
F	20	Lib	M	20	Sco	T	20	Sag
S	21	Lib	T	21	Sco	F	21	Cap
S	22	Lib	W	22	Sag	S	22	Cap
M	23	Sco	T	23	Sag	S	23	Aqu
T	24	Sco	F	24	Cap	M	24	Aqu
W	25	Sag	S	25	Cap	T	25	Pis
T	26	Sag	S	26	Aqu	W	26	Pis
F	27	Sag	M	27	Aqu	T	27	Ari
S	28	Cap	T	28	Aqu	F	28	Ari
S	29	Cap	W	29	Pis	S	29	Tau
M	30	Aqu	T	30	Pis	S	30	Tau
T	31	Aqu	F	31	Ari			

## Herbs That Grow In Your Back Yard

Here's a little puzzle for you – we've given you the botanical names – you need to fill in the common name of these plants that grow in Nova Scotia. The answers are on page 5.



### Across

4. *Achillea millefolium*
6. *Agrimonia eupatoria*
7. *Arcticum lappa*
14. *Equisetum arvense*
15. *Tussilago farfara*
19. *Prunella vulgaris*
20. *Solidago virgaurea*
22. *Alchemilla mollis*
23. *Valeriana officinalis*
25. *Urtica dioica*
26. *Rumex crispus*
27. *Capsella bursa-pastoris*
28. *Artemisia vulgaris*
30. *Tanacetm parthenium*
31. *Silybum marianum*
32. *Stellaria media*

### Down

1. *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*
2. *Bellis perennis*
3. *Euphrasia officinalis*
5. *Taraxacum officinale*
8. *Viola canadensis*
9. *Viola tricolor*
10. *Glechoma hederacea*
11. *Avena sativa*
12. *Eupatorium perfoliatum*
13. *Gaultheria procumbens*
16. *Verbascum thapsus*
17. *Althea officinalis*
18. *Symphytum officinale*
21. *Pilosella officinarum*
24. *Hypericum perforatum*
28. *Filipendula ulmaria*
29. *Trifolium pratense*

## Culpepper, Herbs & Astrology

By Lynn Marie Mattie

Recently some friends of mine suggested that I look into Culpepper. He was a Master Herbalist in the 1600's who published several books that are still widely used by herbalists today.

After reading about him on several websites, I recognize that there are two things in particular that pique my interest about Nicholas Culpepper (1616 – 1654). The first is that he was an astrologer, which is one of my favorite things. The second interesting thing is that he translated the London Pharmacopoeia from Latin to English.

Until his time only people who were very educated and medically trained had access to this information. His translation into English allowed more common folk access to the knowledge, so they could then pick wild herbs and make their own crude medicines without paying expensive 'prescription' costs. He was a man of the people! But for the same reason I like him, the College of Physicians didn't and they labeled him a quack. Now several hundred years later, he's the one name that everyone seems to know.

Below I have listed my own description of the major planets/bodies used in astrology in Culpepper's time and some of the plants, herbs and trees that he listed as having that particular ruling planet.

**The Sun** is our brightest light. Its energy is about our external nature, our extrovert selves, and how we shine in our own life. Culpepper associated the following plants with the Sun: Angelica, Ash Tree, Chamomile, Eyebright, Juniper, Lovage, Marigold, Mistletoe, Peony, Rosemary, Saffron, St. John's Wort, Walnut Tree

**The Moon** is our inner water. It is about our emotions, intuitions, and the tide. Culpepper listed the following in association with the Moon: Artichokes, Chickweed, Clary, Cucumbers, Lettuce, Poppy, Roses, Wall Flowers, Water Cress, Water Lily, White Lilies, Willow Tree

**Mercury** is the planet of communication and is associated with the truth and self-knowing. Culpepper listed the following as being ruled by the Mercury: Bittersweet, Caraway, Dill, Elecampane, Fennel, Hazel Nut, Honeysuckle, Horehound, Lavender, Licorice, Lily of the Valley, Marjoram, Parsley, Savory, Valerian, Woodbine

**Venus** is the planet of love, beauty, friendship and art. Its energy can be likened to the best of Mother Earth. Its no surprise that Venus was Culpepper's most common ruling planet for plants, including: Basil, Birch Tree, Burdock, Cherry Tree, Chestnut Tree, Coltsfoot, Fox Gloves, Golden Rod, Gooseberry, Ground Ivy, Ladies Mantle, Mint,

Motherwort, Mugwort, Peach Tree, Pear Tree, Pennyroyal, Periwinkle, Primroses, Plums, Roses, Sorrel, Strawberries, Thyme, Vervain, Violets, Wheat, Yarrow

**Mars** is the planet of bravery, sometimes to the point of aggression. It can feel like a fire being lit under your butt to get things moving along. Culpepper associated the following with Mars: All Heal, Bayberry, Chives, Crowfoot, Garlic, Gentian, Hawthorn, Mustard, Onions, Nettles, Plaintain, Radish, Rhubarb, Thistle, Wormwood

**Jupiter** is the planet of growth, opportunity and expansion. Its energy feels like your star is about to rise. Culpepper listed the following as being ruled by Jupiter: Agrimony, Borage, Chervil, Cinquefoil, Dandelion, Hyssop, Lady's Thistle, Liverwort, Maple Tree, Oak, and Sage

**Saturn** is the father-like teacher planet that brings us life's lessons. How difficult these lessons are depends on how willing we are to learn. Some of the plants Culpepper associated with Saturn are: Amaranthus, Barley, Beech Tree, Beets, Bucks Horn, Darnel, Elm Tree, Hemlock, Hemp, Horsetail, Ivy, Mosses, Mullein, Nightshade, Poplar Tree, Shepherd's Purse, Solomon's Seal, Winter Green

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### Answers to Puzzle

#### ACROSS

4.	Achillea millefolium	YARROW
6.	Agrimonia eupatoria	AGRIMONY
7.	Arcticum lappa	BURDOCK
14.	Equisetum arvense	HORSETAIL
15.	Tussilago farfara	COLTSFOOT
19.	Prunella vulgaris	SELFHEAL
20.	Solidago virgauria	GOLDEN ROD
22.	Alchemilla mollis	LADYS MANTLE
23.	Valeriana officinalis	VALERIAN
25.	Urtica dioica	NETTLES
26.	Rumex crispus	YELLOW DOCK
27.	Capsella bursa-pastoris	SHEPHERDS PURSE
28.	Artemisia vulgaris	MUGWORT
30.	Tanacetum parthenium	FEVERFEW
31.	Silybum marianum	MILK THISTLE
32.	Stellaria media	CHICKWEED

#### DOWN

1.	Arctostaphylos uva-ursi	BEARBERRY
2.	Bellis perennis	DAISY
3.	Euphrasia officinalis	EYEBRIGHT
5.	Taraxacum officinale	DANDELION
8.	Viola canadensis	VIOLET
9.	Viola tricolor	PANSY
10.	Glechoma hederacea	GROUND IVY
11.	Avena sativa	OATS
12.	Eupatorium perfoliatum	BONESET
13.	Gaultheria procumbens	WINTERGREEN
16.	Verbascum thapsus	MULLEIN
17.	Althea officinalis	MARSHMALLOW
18.	Symphytum officinale	COMFREY
21.	Pilosella officinarum	HAWKWEEED
24.	Hypericum perforatum	ST JOHNS WORT
28.	Filipendula ulmaria	MEADOWSWEET
29.	Trifolium pratense	RED CLOVER



Welcomes You to  
The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Herb Fair  
Saturday, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007  
on McNab's Island

*A Variety of Workshops to Choose From Including:*

Herb Magic \* Wild Walk Into Plant and Serpent Wisdom \* Seaweed Walk and Info Session \* Sprout Your Way to Health \* TCM \* Can you Name That Plant \* Herbal First Aid \* Plant Spirit Medicine \* The Epidemic of ADD and ADHD and Autism \* Laurie Lacey's Wild World of Plants Workshops

Cost: Members \$35.00 & Non-Members \$45.00

HANS will be co-ordinating ferry service at specific times – prereservation highly recommended. The cost of the ferry is \$15.00 return.

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HANS membership is \$25.00 a year (August 1<sup>st</sup> to July 31<sup>st</sup>). This is a great opportunity to meet with other herbal enthusiasts! Members are encouraged to join any of our four committees – Communications, Education/Events, Organizational Development and Politics/ Standards. For more information about membership or future listings, see our website [www.herbalns.org](http://www.herbalns.org) or e-mail [admin@herbalns.org](mailto:admin@herbalns.org)