

Grow Fresh Herbs

Herbs such as sweet basil and chives are best used fresh so that their subtle flavor-filled oils can be savored. Otherwise, these oils will be lost during the drying process. Coriander leaf (also known as cilantro), when used fresh has a flavor completely different from the dried version. Apart from the superior flavor of fresh herbs, there are other reasons for growing your own.

With herbs in your garden, you can use them fresh when desired (in season). Small bunches picked fresh for addition to omelettes, soups or salads can save the time and money needed to buy them at the market. Gourmet products can be made at home by combining fresh herbs with oils and vinegars. Examples are French Tarragon vinegar and sweet Basil Oil.

Any of your surplus home grown herbs can be preserved by drying or freezing the leaves in water or oil. Throughout the winter, having one's own supply of fresh frozen herbs to cook with can bring back that special taste of summer that herbs represent.

Many gardeners grow herbs for their reputed medicinal value. Catnip is often dried for use as a calimative drink (in addition to being a treat for cats). All of the mints may be used fresh or dried as teas. For further information, consult any of the books available on the subject.

Some types of herbs are hardy enough to withstand even harsh winters; others can be kept over in protected cold frames or grown indoors, doubling as houseplants. Many varieties can serve as ornaments in an edible landscape—rosemary for example is an evergreen and has a delightful scent.

You can control what goes on a plant and in the soils when you grow your own; chemical spray and fertilizers can be avoided if you wish. Instead, organic methods can be utilized to supply the plants' needs and control pests and ideases.

In future articles for *What's Happening*, I will discuss various aspects of gardening with herbs—propagation, soil preparation, insect control, harvesting, preservation, and ways to get the most from your plants.

—John Karlik

For a free list of over 75 herb plants with their common and scientific names, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Sweetwater Nursery, 83035 N. Weiss Rd., Creswell, OR 97426.

STARS, STARS, STARS



The skies of Eugene and Springfield have now been recorded on a glow-in-the-dark star map. They are available for \$7 from Larry Deckman or Sloan Heermance at 2406 Lawrence St. in Eugene. Call 343-7166.

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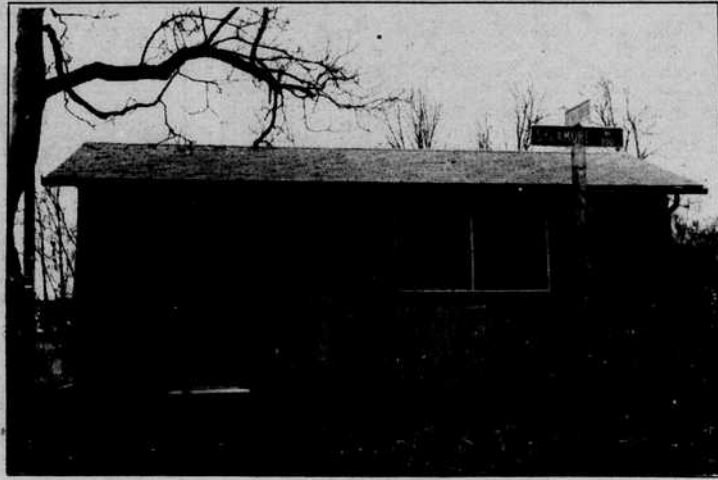
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Whiteaker Tool Library at North Ash and Sycamore.

Whiteaker Tool Library

Anyone who has ever tried to rent a rototiller come gardening season no doubt was shocked and discouraged by the outrageous cost charged by the hour. The alternative of buying such an item is expensive and it will likely sit in one's garage unused most of the year. Luckily, there is another alternative, the tool library.

The Whiteaker Tool Library provides low cost tool loans to all Eugene area residents. Once the \$12.00 per year membership fee is paid, members are entitled to free use of hand tools for one-week periods. Modest use fees are charged for high maintenance power tools such as rototillers, electric chain saws, or a builder's saw, etc. Special volunteer rates are available for members willing to staff and maintain the library and its equipment. We run purely on all volunteer energy.

The library is especially well-stocked with gardening and woodworking tools: rototillers, a shredder, hoes, shovels, trowels, pruners, clippers, and several types of saws, drills and sanders to name a few. For food preserving, there are food dryers and pressure canners.

The library is located near the River House just off the Bike path at North Ash and Sycamore. Operating hours are from 5-7 pm on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and 10 am-2 pm on Saturdays. The library's phone number is 485-3075 and our information phone number is 687-3556. Why pay those outrageous tool rental fees? Come and join your tool library and have access to tools all year around.

—Michael Schwarczkopf



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