

Common Name: **Garden Thyme**

Genus: *Thymus*

Species: *vulgaris*

Family: Lamiaceae

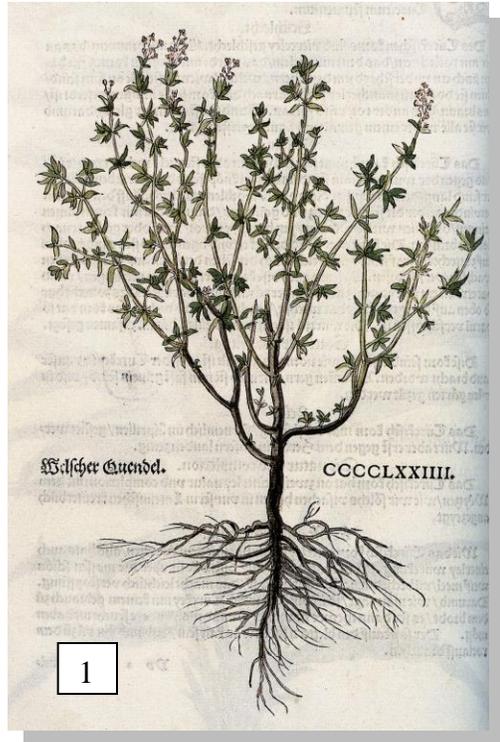
AKA: Common Thyme, Hard Time

Historical Uses:



Medical: “If someone adds thyme to good herbs and condiments, it carries off the foulness of the person’s suffering with it’s warmth and strength. If it is not combined with other herbs and condiments, it perforates ulcers with its strength and does not heal them if placed over them.. Let whoever has leprosy season this herb with other good herbs and condiments. Rub this on any type of leprosy, and it lessens the foulness. Take thyme and some earth around its root, and make it boil in a fire. Let the person prepare a sauna bath. The warmth and dryness of this herb heated with its earth lessens bad humors, unless God does not wish it.”(1)

“Time boyled in water and drunke with vinegar and salt purgeth flemge: and boyled in mede or methegline, it cleanseth the breath, lungs, reines, and matrix, and killeth wormes. Made into powder, and taken in the weight of three drams



with mede or honied vinegar, called Oxymel, and a little salt, purgeth by stoole and clamme flegme, sharpe and cholericke humours, and all corruption of the blood. It is good to be given unto those with the falling sicknesse to smell unto.”(2)

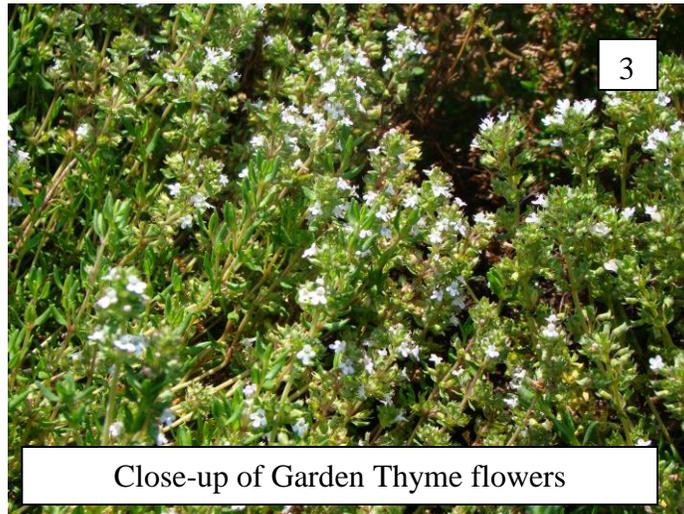
Culinary: Thyme was used by the Romans to

give an aromatic flavor to cheese and liquors (3).

Household: “The antiseptic properties of thyme were fully recognized in classic times, there being a reference in Virgil’s *Georgic*’s to its use as a fumigator. And Pliny tells us that when burnt, it puts to flight all venomous creature.”(4)

Folklore/Astrology: Hot and dry in the third degree.

Other: “The name ‘Thyme’ in its Greek form, was first given to the plant by the Greeks as a derivative of a word which meant ‘to fumigate’ either because they used it as incense for its balsamic odor, or because it was taken as a type of all sweet-smelling herbs. Others derived the name from the Greek word *tumus*, signifying courage. The plant was held in ancient and medieval days to be a great source of invigoration, its cordial qualities inspiring courage.”(5)



Contemporary Uses:

Parts Used: Whole plant, leavers, flowering tops, oil. Collect whole plant and flowering tops in summer as flowering begins.

Medicinal: “Thyme has antiseptic, antispasmodic, tonic, and carminative properties. It can be used internally for dry coughs, whooping cough, bronchitis, bronchial mucus asthma, laryngitis, indigestion, gastritis, and diarrhea and enuresis in children.”(6)
“Tea will arrest gastric fermentation. It is useful in cases of wind spasms and colic, and will assist in promoting perspiration and the beginning of a cold.” (7)

Culinary: “Fresh or dried leaves and flowering tops are used to flavor soup, fish, meat, sausages, marinades (especially for olives), vinegar, stuffing, and baked or sautéed vegetables. Retains its flavor well in slowly cooked dishes. Thyme is an essential ingredient of *bouquet garni*, *herbes de Provence* and many other classic French dishes.”(8)

“In England, primarily used for culinary use for flavoring stuffing, sauces, pickles, stews, soups, jugged hare, et. The Spaniards infuse it in the pickle with which they preserve their olives.”(9)

Economic: “Dried leaves are added to potpourris and moth-repellent sachets. Source of commercial dried thyme and essential oil of thyme. Thymol, from thyme oil, is an

important ingredient of toothpastes, mouthwashes, and topical anti-rheumatic preparations.”(10)

Other: According to Grieve, the dried flowers have also been used in the same way as lavender, to preserve linen from insects and is also used for embalming corpses (11).

Area of Origin: Mediterranean region, Southern Europe and Near East

Physical description: Aromatic, small herb with a woody, fibrous root

Plant type: Perennial

Form: Upright

Height: To 12”

Flower color: White to pale purple

Flowering period: Late spring to summer

Soil type/requirements: Well-drained soil

Hardiness zone: USDA 4-8

Sun requirements: Full sun

Propagation: By seed or division in spring, by cuttings in summer.

Sources

1. Von Bingen, p. 179-181
2. Gerard, p. 573-575
3. Grieve, p. 808-813
4. Ibid
5. Ibid
6. Bown, p. 390
7. Grieve, p. 808-813
8. Bown, p. 390
9. Grieve, p. 808-813
10. Bown, p. 390
11. Grieve, p. 808-813

Illustrations/Images:

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| 1. Fuch's Herbal | 1543 |
| 2. PSUMG | 2012 |
| 3. PSUMG | 2012 |