

Herb enthusiasts in cities across the United States, and in a few other countries, exhibited their support of herbal education and appreciation during the first annual HerbDay, a landmark occasion for the international herbal community held October 14, 2006, and in the weeks preceding and following that date. Participating organizations and the public alike have applauded the many HerbDay events, demonstrating the success of the first HerbDay celebration and prompting early planning of the next year's activities.

"National days of recognition bring awareness, education, and interest to any event, person, or idea celebrated. By creating HerbDay, we now have an annual opportunity to spotlight herbs in a positive way in our communities and in the media," said Lynda LeMole, executive director of United Plant Savers (UpS), one of the 5 organizations that initiated and coordinated HerbDay (e-mail, November 8, 2006). The other organizations, which comprised the HerbDay Coalition, were the American Botanical Council (ABC), American Herbal Pharmacopoeia (AHP), American Herbal Products Association (AHPA), and American Herbalists Guild (AHG).

"This was a first effort, and we're amazed and surprised by how well it did take off," said Wayne Silverman, PhD, ABC's chief administrative officer (oral communication, November 6, 2006). "I think that everyone who was involved would characterize it as an unqualified success."

HerbDay was celebrated nationally at the United States Botanic Garden (USBG) in Washington, DC, on October 13 and 14. The first day featured lectures from internationally-recognized herbal experts James A. Duke, PhD, Aviva Romm, Bevin Clare, and Robin DiPasquale, ND. The second day offered visitors numerous opportunities to learn about herbs through various booths, activities, garden walks, and lectures. Presentations and demonstrations included "Kitchen Herbs: Spice up your Health," "Herbal Medicine Making," "Herbs for your Pets," activities specifically

designed for children, and presentations about particular plants, among many others.

According to the USBG, nearly 5,000 visitors attended the national HerbDay celebration—the number of attendees usually seen only at USBG's holiday events. "It was extremely exciting to have people here so engaged with plants in all of their different ways," said Holly Shimizu, executive director of the USBG (oral communication, November 7, 2006). "The general public was able to talk to herb experts about all different aspects of herbs—health, beauty, food, and on and on . . . It was superb to have this contact between the experts and the visitors. We think it was a huge success, and we look forward to doing it again!"

HerbDay was acknowledged through special events in many other cities and states, as well. In Ohio, 68 volunteers participated in a plant rescue as part of HerbDay, saving approximately 2,000 wild medicinal plants from future destruction at Wayne National Forest, where a state highway bypass is planned to soon cut through the area. Half of the plants were replanted in holding beds at the forest's headquarters for use in restoration and education projects. The remaining plants were relocated to other parks, botanical sanctuaries, and private properties. **Subsequent plant rescues in this area are planned to take place through the spring of 2007 by members of UpS and the organizations Rural Action and Frontier Natural Products Co-op.**

Another large HerbDay event, organized by the San Diego Herb Club and that city's AHG chapter, was held in San Diego's Balboa Park. Multiple booths featured information about herbs and national herbal organizations, and 20 booths enabled local herbalists to share their knowledge and promote their businesses directly with the public. Guided tours of the



Top photo: Robin DiPasquale, ND, Chair, Botanical Medicine Department at Bastyr University (third from right) leads a seminar called "Restoring the Sleep Cycle with Herbs" in the East Gallery at the USBG on HerbDay. This was one of 34 seminars offered on HerbDay.

Bottom photo: *Plumeria pudica*, a fragrant "New World" plant growing at the USBG. Some parts are used traditionally for salves and ointments.