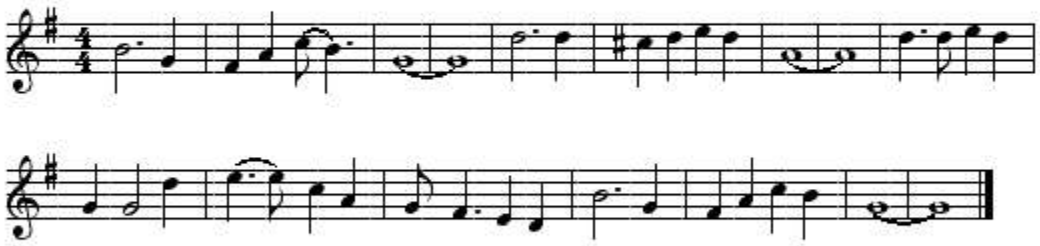
Thyme



Chorus:

Thyme it is a precious thing
Thyme brings all things to your mind
Thyme with all its labors, along with all its joys
And its thyme brings all things to an end.

1. Once I had a sprig of thyme
   I thought it never would decay
   Until a saucy sailor chanced upon my way
   And he stole away my bonny bunch of thyme.
   Chorus

2. This sailor, he gave to me a rose
   I thought it never would decay
   He gave it to me to keep me well minded
   Of the night he stole my bonny bunch of thyme.
   Chorus

3. So come all you maidens brisk and gay
   All you that flourish in your prime
   Beware and take care and keep your garden fair
   And let no man steal your bonny bunch of thyme.
   Chorus

Also known as "Sprig of Thyme", "The Seeds of Love", "Maiden's Lament", "Garners Gay", "Let No Man Steal Your Thyme" or "Rue" is a traditional British and Irish folk ballad that uses fairly obvious botanical and other symbolism to warn young people of the dangers in taking false lovers. The song was first documented in 1689 and the many variants go by a large number of titles.
"The Seeds of Love", sung by the gardener John England, is the first folksong Cecil Sharp ever collected while he was staying with Charles Marson, vicar of Hambridge, Sussex, in 1903.
I learned it from Michael Cooney.