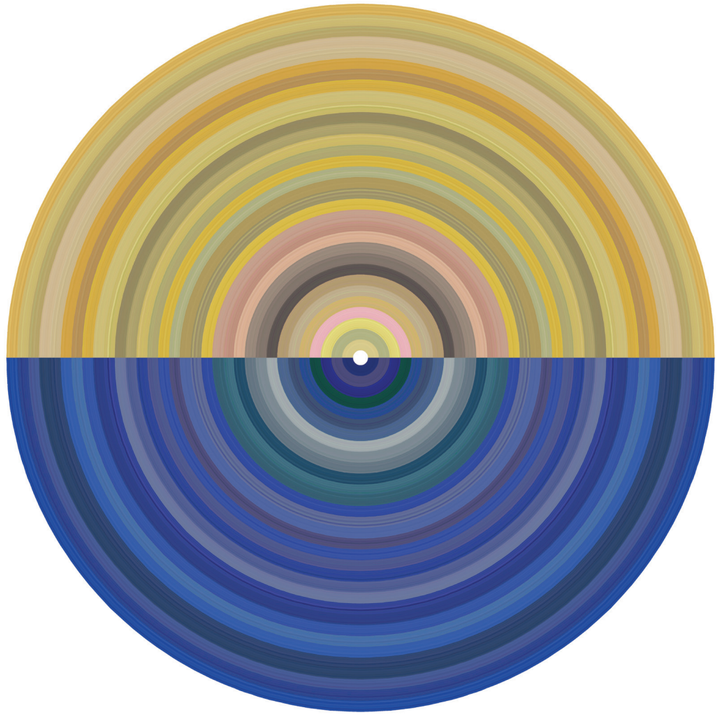
We are dyeing wool with dyestuff from invasive and non-native organisms living on Santa Cruz Island in the Channel Islands archipelago in California, investigating the complex and intertwined influence humans have on our ecosystems, and the aesthetic, emotional, magical, and medicinal interrelationships between humans, plants and color. The wool is spun into yarn, the yarn woven into shawls. In addition, we are constructing a database of natural dye colors and various methods for visualizing and organizing that data, using a wide range of systematics, from scientific to alchemical.

The organisms (many plants and one insect, cochineal) we are working with, were brought to the island over an extended period of time, starting when it was first colonized by Europeans. New organisms were still consciously introduced in the late 20th century. For example, cochineal (coincidentally a very important source of red dye) was brought to the island in the late sixties to help kill off the cactuses which were considered a hazard to the cows grazing on the island.

The human immigrants had a relationship to these organisms in their home lands for millennia, many of these plants have been used for food, medicine, magic and dyes. Just as with humans, some behave better than others when arriving in a new land. Robin Wall Kimmerer, botanist and member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, writes about Broadleaf plantain with affection in “Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants.” To her, plantain is a model citizen, a foreign-born who is not colonizing. It’s a generous and healing newcomer, who is truly listening to the new environment. Other plants are infamous for wreaking havoc in the eco-systems they “invade.” On Santa Cruz Island, fennel, a sweet smelling, delicious plant, which is highly medicinal, traditionally used for protection magic and yields a magical yellow color, has taken over large swaths of land to the detriment of the native flora. It is now one of the many plants targeted for eradication from the island in a major conservation effort aiming to restore it to a more (real or perceived) natural state.

The sheep breeds producing the wool and yarns we are working with have an historical connection to Santa Cruz Island. It’s believed that the Santa Cruz Island sheep breed stems from sheep of several breeds, potentially including Merino, Rambouillet (a French version of Merino), and English Leicester, brought to Santa Cruz Island in the mid 19th century for wool and meat production. Over the years, the sheep increased in numbers and became feral, causing massive erosion to the landscape. In the nineties, consistent with restoration efforts on the island, the sheep, then in the tens of thousands, were eradicated. Due to the methods used (very few sheep were brought to the mainland, most were shot on the island) the endemic Santa Cruz Island breed has ironically become one of the five most critically endangered breeds on the Livestock Conservancy's conservation priority list.



The wool from these sheep speaks about the landscape where the individual sheep lead their lives and the breed emerged. Its staple length and crimp, the soil and vegetable matter trapped in it, reveals something about the sheep, the breed and their environment (craftspeople now speak of the 'terroir' of wool.)

Interlopings is a process-based collaborative art project combining traditional techniques such as dyeing, spinning and weaving, with data visualization and ‘performative science’ and ‘relational aesthetics’ strategies. The public is invited to participate in the process through workshops and exhibitions and to have a direct visual, olfactory and tactile experience with animals and plants that have been introduced to the island. By smelling and touching the wool, inspecting the insects and vegetable matter stuck to it, getting dazzled by rich and subtle colors given to us by the plants and sensing the warmth from weavings, the audience-participants inadvertently explore a wide array of topics. They might gain insights into issues ranging from aspects of the natural and cultural history of the Channel Islands and conservation, to topics related to the Anthropocene and chemistry. Some of the questions this project asks are: How do we define what a “native” species is? When was 'wild'? How do we decide where species belong? What organisms 'deserve' our protection? What is the goal with conservation? What ends justifies what means? (Growing up in Sweden in the seventies, we marched to the catchy chant “sluta spruta” - stop spraying, while the children today learn that one of the most significant dangers to our natural environment are alien species.) While these issues will be discussed in workshops and exhibitions, the most important questions are asked, and maybe answered, in the direct experiences of hands, noses, and eyes and in the relationships created between people, processes and materials.

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rosebud.arts.ucsb.edu/~jevbratt/interlopings/

Interlopings

The Warp and Weft of Ecological Entanglements

Helén Svensson and Lisa Jevbratt

12/11/2022 – 03/12/2023
Interlopings: Colors in the Warp and Weft of Ecological Entanglements
Pritzlaff Conservation Center Gallery, Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, California

2023
Interlopings: Experiencing the Warp and Weft of Ecological Entanglements
Chrisman California Islands Center, Carpinteria, California

[1]	Fennel *Foeniculum vulgare* (seeds)	[59]	Curly dock *Rumex crispus* (roots) ♀
[2]	Fennel *Foeniculum vulgare* (fronds)	[60]	Curly dock *Rumex crispus* (roots)
[3]	Ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* (leaves)	[61]	Curly dock *Rumex crispus* (seeds)
[4]	Ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* (leaves) ♀	[62]	Monterey cypress *Callitropsis macrocarpa* (needles)
[5]	Ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* (leaves)	[63]	Blue gum *Eucalyptus globulus* (leaves)
[6]	Persian walnut *Juglans regia* (leaves)	[64]	Fig *Ficus carica* (leaves)
[7]	Persian walnut *Juglans regia* (leaves)	[65]	Fig *Ficus carica* (leaves)
[8]	Olive *Olea europaea* (leaves)	[66]	Blue gum *Eucalyptus globulus* (all) ♂
[9]	Artichoke *Cynara scolymus* (leaves)	[67]	Cochineal *Dactylopius coccus* +
[10]	Artichoke *Cynara scolymus* (leaves)	[68]	Monterey cypress *Callitropsis macrocarpa* (stems)
[11]	Artichoke *Cynara scolymus* (leaves) ♂	[69]	Monterey cypress *Callitropsis macrocarpa* (stems)
[12]	Artichoke *Cynara scolymus* (leaves)	[70]	Grape *Vitis vinifera* (all)
[13]	Artichoke *Cynara scolymus* (leaves)	[71]	Cochineal *Dactylopius coccus*
[14]	Artichoke *Cynara scolymus* (leaves) ♂	[72]	Blue gum *Eucalyptus globulus* (leaves)
[15]	Olive *Olea europaea* (leaves)	[73]	Grape *Vitis vinifera* (all) ♀
[16]	Olive *Olea europaea* (olives) +	[74]	Grape *Vitis vinifera* (all) +
[17]	Olive *Olea europaea* (leaves) ♀	[75]	Purple vetch *Vicia benghalensis* (all)
[18]	Olive *Olea europaea* (leaves) ♂	[76]	Purple vetch *Vicia benghalensis* (all) ♀
[19]	Wild radish *Raphanus raphanistrum* (leaves)	[77]	Purple vetch *Vicia benghalensis* (all) ♀
[20]	Sea fig *Carpobrotus chilensis* (dead leaves)	[78]	Bindweed *Convolvulus arvensis* (all)
[21]	Sea fig *Carpobrotus chilensis* (dead leaves) ♀	[79]	Bindweed *Convolvulus arvensis* (all)
[22]	Sea fig *Carpobrotus chilensis* (dead leaves) +	[80]	Horehound *Marrubium vulgare* (all)
[23]	Sea fig *Carpobrotus chilensis* (all) ♂	[81]	Bindweed *Convolvulus arvensis* (all) ♀
[24]	Blue gum *Eucalyptus globulus* (leaves) ♂	[82]	Horehound *Marrubium vulgare* (all)
[25]	Blue gum *Eucalyptus globulus* (leaves) ♂	[83]	Curly dock *Rumex crispus* (roots) ♀
[26]	Curly dock *Rumex crispus* (roots)	[84]	Cheeseweed *Malva parviflora* (all)
[27]	Curly dock *Rumex crispus* (roots) ♂	[86]	Fennel *Foeniculum vulgare* (fronds) +
[28]	Mullein *Verbascum thapsus* (leaves)	[88]	Bull mallow *Malva nicaeensis* (leaves)
[29]	Cochineal *Dactylopius coccus*	[89]	Wild radish *Raphanus raphanistrum* (leaves)
[30]	Artichoke *Cynara scolymus* (leaves)	[90]	Bull mallow *Malva nicaeensis* (leaves)
[31]	Hollyhock *Alcea rosea* (all) ♀	[91]	Bull mallow *Malva nicaeensis* (all) ♀
[32]	Hollyhock *Alcea rosea* (leaves)	[92]	Bull mallow *Malva nicaeensis* (all) ♀
[33]	Persian walnut *Juglans regia* (leaves)	[93]	Ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* (leaves)
[34]	Wisteria *Wisteria sinensis* (leaves)	[94]	Blackwood acacia *Acacia melanoxylon* (roots)
[35]	Wisteria *Wisteria sinensis* (leaves)	[95]	Ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* (leaves)
[36]	Wisteria *Wisteria sinensis* (stems)	[96]	Cochineal *Dactylopius coccus* +
[37]	Island mallow *Malva assurgentiflora* (all)	[97]	Bull mallow *Malva nicaeensis* (leaves) ♀
[38]	Curly dock *Rumex crispus* (leaves)	[98]	Bull mallow *Malva nicaeensis* (leaves) ♀
[39]	Blackwood acacia *Acacia melanoxylon* (stems)	[99]	Blackwood acacia *Acacia melanoxylon* (leaves)
[40]	Blackwood acacia *Acacia melanoxylon* (all)	[100]	Blackwood acacia *Acacia melanoxylon* (leaves)
[41]	Yellow star-thistle *Centaurea solstitialis* (all)	[101]	Blackwood acacia *Acacia melanoxylon* (leaves)
[42]	Yellow star-thistle *Centaurea solstitialis* (all)	[102]	Blackwood acacia *Acacia melanoxylon* (leaves)
[43]	Yellow star-thistle *Centaurea solstitialis* (all)	[103]	Blackwood acacia *Acacia melanoxylon* (leaves)
[44]	Blue gum *Eucalyptus globulus* (leaves) ♂	[107]	Cochineal *Dactylopius coccus* +
[45]	Blue gum *Eucalyptus globulus* (leaves) ♂	[108]	Cochineal *Dactylopius coccus* +
[46]	Ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* (leaves)	[109]	Cochineal *Dactylopius coccus* ♂
[47]	Ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* (leaves)	[110]	Cochineal *Dactylopius coccus*
[48]	Fennel *Foeniculum vulgare* (all)	[111]	Cochineal *Dactylopius coccus* +
[49]	Curly dock *Rumex crispus* (roots) ♀	[112]	Cochineal *Dactylopius coccus* +
[50]	Black locust *Robinia pseudoacacia* (leaves)	[113]	Peruvian pepper *Schinus molle* (leaves) ♂
[51]	Black locust *Robinia pseudoacacia* (leaves) ♂	[114]	Peruvian pepper *Schinus molle* (leaves)
[52]	Garden geranium *Pelargonium X hortorum* (leaves)	[115]	Peruvian pepper *Schinus molle* (leaves)
[53]	Garden geranium *Pelargonium X hortorum* (lea.) ♀	[116]	Peruvian pepper *Schinus molle* (leaves) +
[54]	Garden geranium *Pelargonium X hortorum* (leaves)	[117]	Peruvian pepper *Schinus molle* (needles) +
[55]	Chicory *Cichorium intybus* (all)	[118]	Norfolk Island Pine *Araucaria heterophylla* (needles)
[56]	Curly dock *Rumex crispus* (roots) +	[119]	Norfolk Island Pine *Araucaria heterophylla* (needles)
[57]	Curly dock *Rumex crispus* (roots) ♂	[120]	Norfolk Island Pine *Araucaria heterophylla* (n.) ♂
[58]	Curly dock *Rumex crispus* (roots) ♀	[121]	Blue gum *Eucalyptus globulus* (leaves) ♂

Modifiers: + Acid ♀ Alkali ♂ Iron ♀ Copper