

Dyeing with various wild flowers and “weeds”

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Species might include: Bull Mallow (*Malva nicaeensis*), Black Mustard (*Brassica nigra*), Wild Radish (*Raphanus sativus*), Ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Sea Fig (*Carpobrotus chilensis*), Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) etc.

Type of dye: Flavonoids (mostly flavones and flavanols). The flavonoids give the plant color and help with photosynthesis. They are often very healthy for humans.

Colors: yellow, greenish yellow, bright yellow, dull yellow (did I say yellow? .. Flavus is the Latin word for yellow), dull greens, brownish.

Textiles:

Mordanted Wool (Alum), Silk (Alum) and Cotton (Aluminum Acetate)
(Don't waste the dye bath on un-mordanted samples. Maybe try a small piece of an un-mordanted material just to see the difference, will not dye much.)

Modifiers: Several will react with Iron Sulfate, some might react with Citric Acid (Acid) and Soda Ash (Alkali)

Process

Work in groups of 4

In the field

Pick 4 or more kinds of plants/parts of plants, enough to fill a jar.

Dyeing

1. Fill a jar with plant matter
2. Place the jar in a pot with water.
3. Bring the water to boiling point then let simmer.
4. Leave the jar in the simmering water for 30-60 mins.
5. Prepare your fabric samples (cut, label, tie to clothes pin etc.)
6. Put fabric samples in the jars. Leave for 10-60 mins.
7. Rinse or dip in an afterbath.

Afterbaths with modifiers

1. Make iron, acidic, alkaline solutions. Use ¼ - ½ tablespoon of chemical to start with, mix it with hot tap water in a jar.
2. Put your un-rinsed samples in acidic, alkaline and iron solutions. Experiment with different pH levels and time in the bath.
3. Rinse