




# Natural Dyes from the Garden

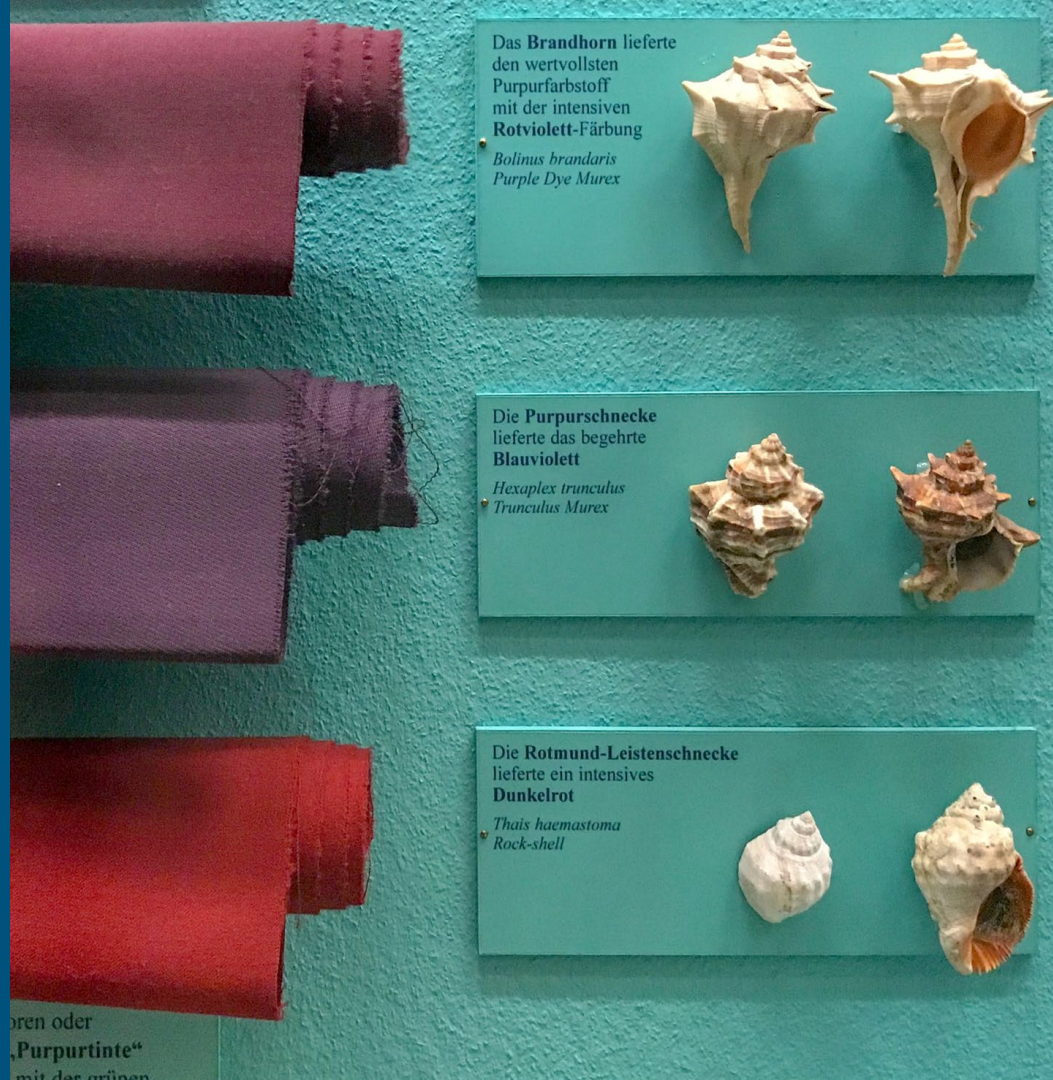


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Garfield Park Master Gardener Association



# History

- Dyes from minerals, animals, and plants
- Settled populations in Europe began the advancement of dyeing
  - Home craft for women and guilds for men
- Roman purple dyed silk for \$4,600 per pound
- The “devil’s dye” emerges from Asia
- Synthetic dyes are discovered in the 1800s



# Methods

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- Washing
- Mordanting
  - a substance, typically an inorganic oxide, that combines with a dye or stain and thereby fixes it in a material
  - Forms of aluminum, tannin, copper, iron
- Dyeing
  - Cool dyeing
  - Hot dyeing
  - All-in-one
- Rinsing



# Materials

- **Fibers**
  - Silk
  - Cotton
  - Linen
  - Hemp
  - Wool
- **Patterns**
  - Clothespins
  - Yarn
  - Stones
  - Dowels
  - Rubberbands

## Plant-Based Natural Fibers

Cotton



Hemp



Linen



## Animal-Based Natural Fibers

Silk



Wool





# Equipment

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- Stove or burner
- Various pots
- Wood utensils and tongs
- Buckets or vats
- Sieves or strainers
- Apron and rubber gloves
- Kitchen scale
- Dye bags
- Twine and scissors



# Safety

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- All equipment for dyeing should be used for dyeing only
- Safety glasses and gloves
- Proper ventilation
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke while dyeing



# Level of Difficulty

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- Decide on use of mordants
- Sewing or crafting with the dyed fiber
- Indigo methods



# Summer and Fall from Seed

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- Flowers
- Leaves
- Roots
- Seeds
- Fruits

The color you see is not necessarily  
the color you get!





# Japanese Indigo

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- Day 1

- Hand wash silk square.
- Harvest indigo leaves early in the day and place into cold water.
- Add silk and leaves into a bowl with a heavy sprinkling of coarse salt.
- Crush leaves with silk wrapped inside for 30 minutes to 1 hour.
- Remove silk and rinse off leaves and extra dye.
- Allow to air dry.



# Dyer's Coreopsis Mix

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- Day 1
  - Machine wash cotton square.
  - Dissolve alum (15% wof) in warm water.
  - Soak cotton for >3 hours in bowl of water with alum then rinse.

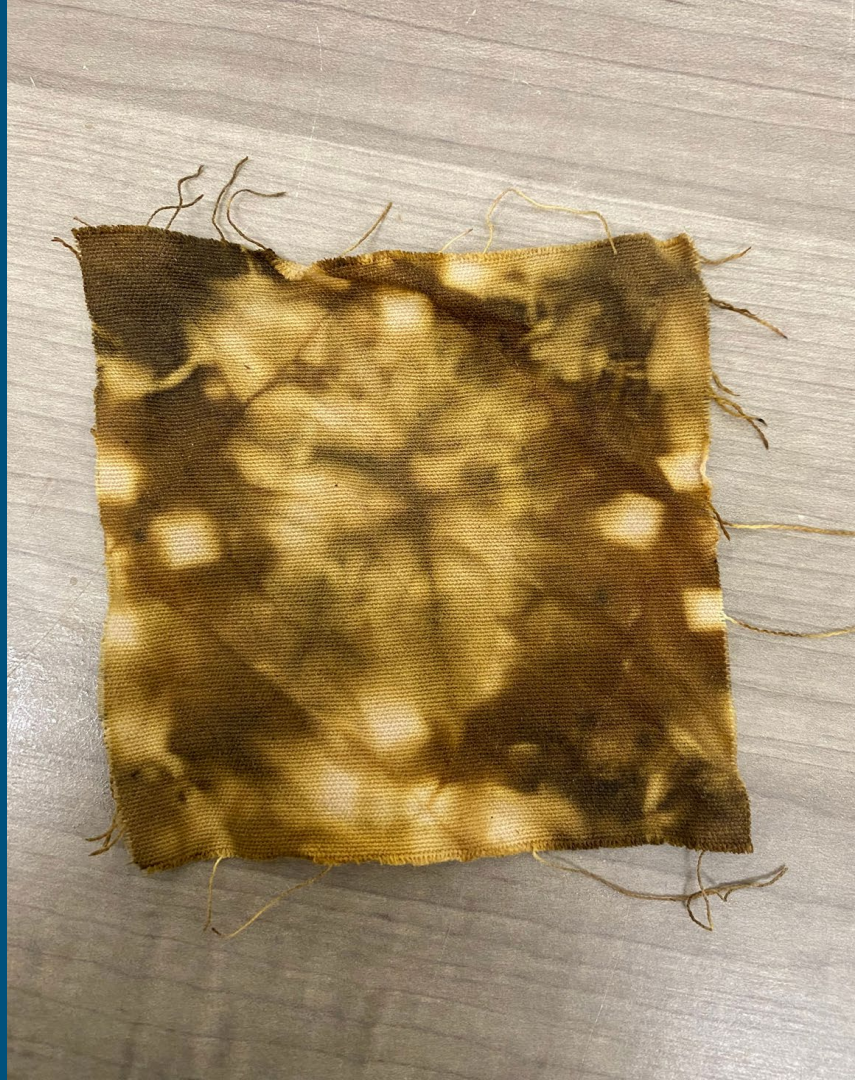




# Dyer's Coreopsis Mix

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- Days 2 - 5
  - Harvest coreopsis blooms (or use dried).
  - Fold fiber and use popsicle sticks, rubberbands, clothespins etc to create design.
  - Add cotton to jars with blooms and fill with water.
  - Place jar in the sun for >3 days.
  - Remove cotton from jar.
  - Rinse thoroughly and allow to dry.



# Hopi Red Dye Amaranth

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- Day 1
  - Fill half of a 5 gallon bucket with leaves and seed heads
  - Cover the material with vinegar and leave to sit overnight
- Day 2
  - Strain off plant material and add wool yarn
  - Keep in a cool, dark place
- Day 3
  - Remove yarn and rinse





# Winter or While You Wait

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- Osage orange
- Acorns
- Coffee grounds
- Avocado pits
- Henna
- Lac or cochineal



# Acorns

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- Day 1
  - Machine wash cotton square.
  - Soak acorns for 1 hour in cheesecloth.
  - Simmer for 1 hour and remove acorns.
  - Fold fiber and use popsicle sticks to create design.
  - Soak cotton for 2 hours in dye bath.
  - Remove cotton and add iron.
  - Add cotton in and stir until dark.
  - Rinse thoroughly and allow to dry.



# Osage Orange

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- Day 1
  - Soak wood chips overnight.
- Day 2
  - Machine wash cotton square.
  - Mordant fiber in warm water with alum for 2 hours.
  - Strain woodchips out and add fiber to simmer for 1 hour.
  - Let cool and remove fiber.
  - Rinse fiber and allow to dry.



# Coffee Grounds

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- Day 1

- Wash silk in hot tap water with dish soap and let sit for 30 minutes before rinsing.
- Dissolve alum (10 g per 1 gallon) in warm water.
- Soak silk for 3 hours in bowl of water with alum then rinse.

- Day 2

- Boil coffee grounds for 30 min.
- Use folding and clothespins to create pattern on handkerchief.
- Add fiber and simmer for 30 min.
- Rinse thoroughly and allow to dry.





# Additional Plants to Consider

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## Flowers

- Hollyhock
- Safflower
- Marigold
- Dahlia
- Daffodil
- Coneflower
- Goldenrod
- Dandelion
- Scabiosa

## Roots

- Rhubarb
- Flag iris
- Bloodroot
- Burdock
- Onion

## Fruits

- Blackberry

## Seeds

- Hopi black dye sunflower

# Layouts



## Botanical Dyer's Garden *Spiral Plan*

LEARN MORE



hopi red dye  
amaranth



hopi black  
dye  
sunflower



safflower



hawaii  
marigold



indigo



dyer's  
coreopsis



corn poppy



bachelors  
button



## Botanical Dye Raised Bed Layout



black hollyhock



indigo



dyer's  
woodruff



cosmos



woad

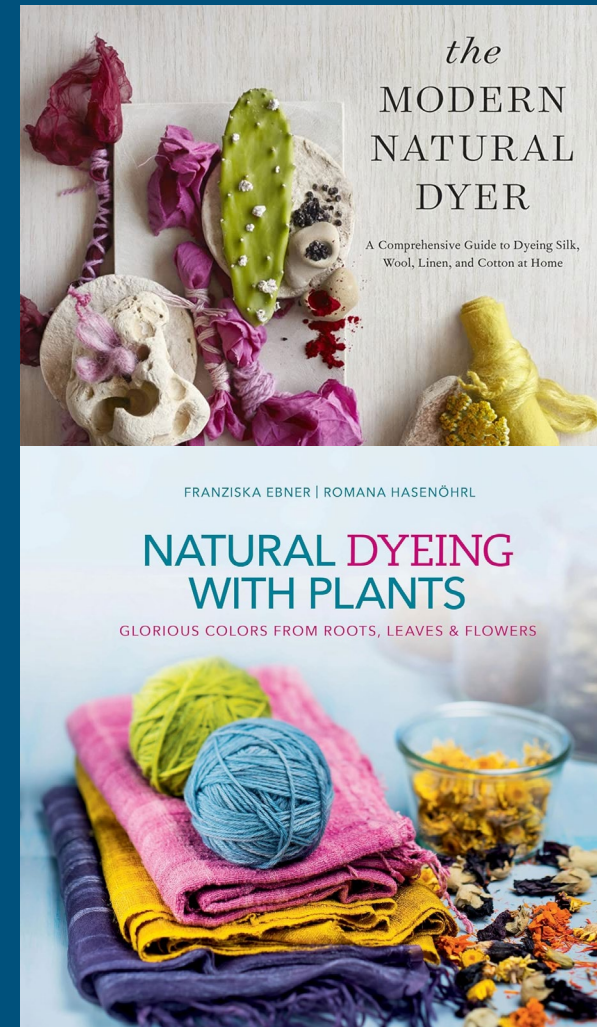
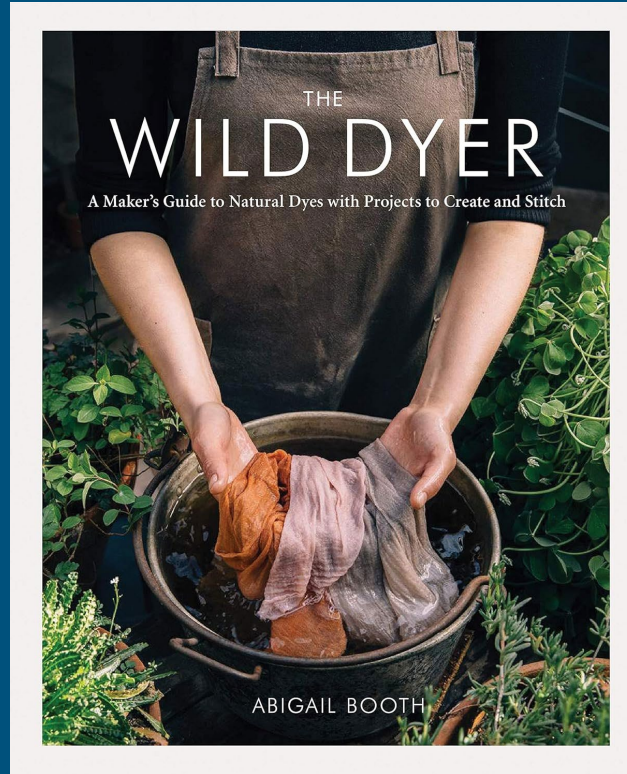
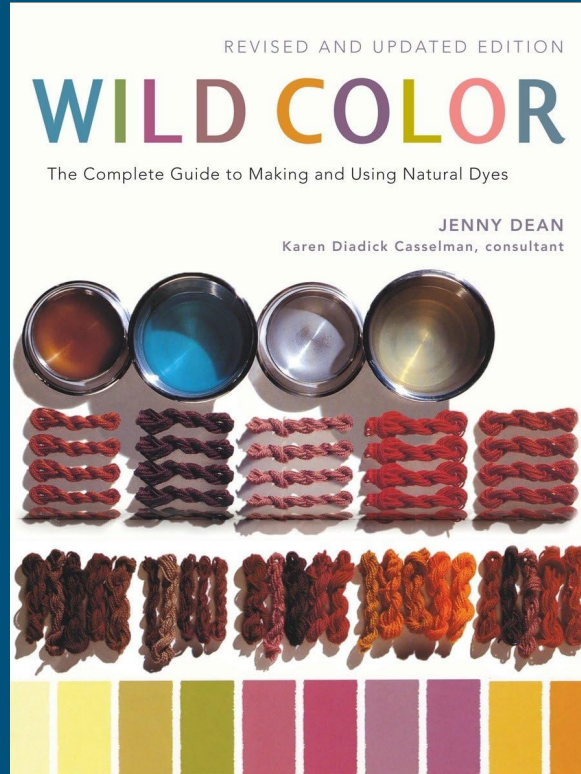


safflower

black  
scabiosa



# Book Recommendations





# More Projects

## How to Naturally Dye Easter Eggs





# Website Recommendation

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- Botanical Colors
  - Shopping
  - Workshops
  - Blog
- Grand Prismatic Seed
  - Dye plant specific seeds
- Youtube
  - Margaret Byrd: Color Quest

Thank you!