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The Handbook Of Natural Plant Dyes: Personalize Your Craft With Organic Colors From Acorns, Blackberries, Coffee, And Other Everyday Ingredients



Synopsis

Artist and designer Sasha Duerr takes the do-it-yourself movement to the next level in her new book, *The Handbook of Natural Plant Dyes*. Duerr demonstrates how to create complex and complimentary colors by using plants grown or resources found in the garden or collected from sidewalks and vacant lots. Simple and sustainable, her methods will work on fabrics, paper, shoes, lamp shades, wood beads, leather, and even hair. This is a book for any gardener, sewer, fabric lover, or do-it-yourselfer interested in adding safe and spectacular colors from everyday ingredients.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Duerr's book stands out in that it includes some new techniques I hadn't heard of before combined with lots of outstanding color photographs. The beautiful photographed projects and plants throughout the book are great eye candy and inspiration. This is one of those craft books you won't mind leaving out in your living room when company comes over because it is inspiring and fun to look at the pictures. Duerr focuses heavily on current environmentally friendly practices. She gives general advice on composting, up cycling old items into new projects by dyeing them, and even using old rusty nails to create an iron mordant solution. The overall tone of the book is meant to be inspiring, and it succeeds very well in that regard. There are no heavy chemistry explanations of how the dyes work. Compared to some of the other natural dye books available, I found this book to be lacking in specifics. For example, Duerr may tell you that some natural dyes will fade in the sunlight easily, but then does not give a list of plant dyes that easily fade. The author tells you that

using different mordants on different fibers types will produce different colors, but she doesn't provide detailed color charts for each dye and fiber type. Of particular interest to me was Duerr's method for creating an iron mordant from old rusty nails. The instructions basically tell you to put old rusty nails in a large glass bottle with a diluted white vinegar solution. After storing the solution for a while, you simmer your fiber, yarn or fabric gently in this solution as a pre dye mordant. There are no specifics anywhere in the instructions telling the home dyer exactly how much actual iron should be added per weight or volume of fiber.

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