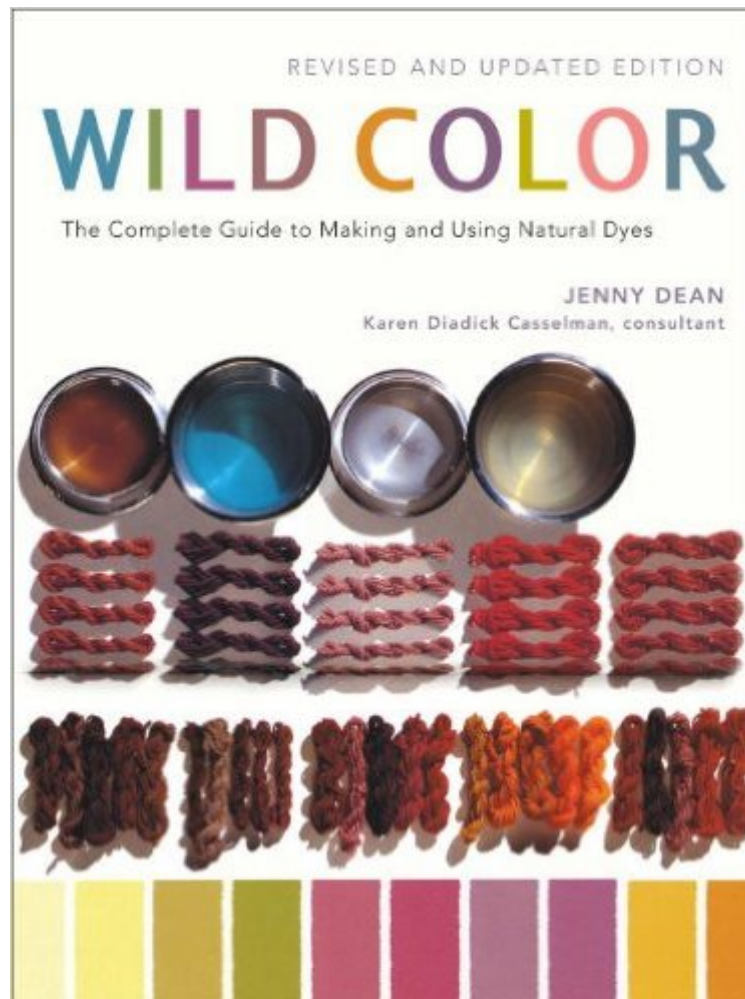


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# Wild Color, Revised And Updated Edition: The Complete Guide To Making And Using Natural Dyes



## Synopsis

The best resource on natural dyeing is back, updated to make your colorful hobby even more beautiful and rewarding. A practical and inspiring guide to creating and using natural dyes from plants, *Wild Color, Revised and Updated Edition*, offers the latest information on current environmentally friendly dyeing techniques and more than 65 species of plants and natural dyestuffs. This comprehensive book outlines all the necessary equipment, how to select fibers and plant parts, choose the right methods for mordanting and dyeing, test color modifiers and the fastness of dyed colors, and obtain a range of gorgeous colors from every plant, from alder to woad, shown in more than 250 swatches. *Wild Color, Revised and Updated Edition*, is the all-in-one resource for fiber enthusiasts, including knitters, sewers, and weavers; gardeners who are interested in new uses for traditional dye plants; and eco-conscious DIYers who want authoritative information about the natural dyeing process and the plants that are essential to it.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

There is no question that this one is useful. It gives the specifics of what to use and how. The day this book arrived was a garbage day and I had just dug up my dahlia tubers and put the stems in the recycle and out to the curb. Then I sat down browse through the book. At 10 O'Clock that night I was out at the curb in my bathrobe digging through the recycle bin to reclaim my dahlia stems. The dye from those came out just great. I tried them several ways on different wools and then spun yarn. I have also used other materials from the garden that were covered in this book, all with good results. If you want to try your hand at dyeing with natural products, this is the book you want. Bill Isakson Richmond, CA

I bought this book as an introduction to natural dyeing based on several recommendations. I have been mostly pleased with the information in the book. It's not perfect, and I think the title is slightly misleading, but it's a solid introduction.

**The good:** It has a good list of natural dye sources along with color swatches that show the colors achieved using the plant alone, plant plus mordant, plant alone plus modifier, and mordant, plant, and modifier. Very very useful! It has a very clear introduction to dyeing that covers techniques and steps in the dyeing process (it even has a small section on using urine to dye with indigo and woad). Pretty thorough for a relatively small book. The illustrations are well done and in full color.

**The bad:** Organization - the key for the plant sections is located on page 20, which is 2 sections away from the plant section. It's located in a small sidebar that is easily overlooked. Why couldn't the sidebar be located in the chapter it's actually related to? I was expecting more of an emphasis on plants native to North America. From the title I expected it to be a book of dyes that \*I\* could collect from the wild. While there are several that grow wild either as native plants or as imports, that is not at all the focus. The focus is on natural dyes, and the plants listed are largely cultivated species grown in various locations in the world, not wild plants you can find in your backyard.

**The conclusion:** This is a good book, you will not go wrong in buying it as an introduction to natural dyeing. The organizational quibble can be overcome (remember, key to the plant section is on page 20). Once you've read through this book and practiced you should be well equipped to begin experimenting with plants that do grow wild in your own yard!

This is an update of the 1999 edition of this very detailed, very thorough book on natural dyeing. I don't have a copy of the original, so I can't tell you exactly how or why this is different, but what I can tell you is that this is an exhaustive overview of the dyeing process. Starting with a history of dyes, and moving into the techniques, it explores everything you could ever want to know. Or so I assume. The book goes into great detail about how to prepare your leaves, roots, barks, and petals for dyeing. What kind of water to use (and how your water's pH balance affects the process). Whether to use mordants, and which ones. The differences in dyeing animal fibers and vegetable fibers. The effects of color modifiers ... all of this is explained in depth. Then she gets to specific plants. She provides a photo of what they look like, where to find them, and color swatches for the colors you can expect from them, depending on the process you choose. The photos are lovely to look at, and the swatches clear-they're of the "paint chip" variety, not photos of actual, dyed yarn. This section is sorted alphabetically by the Latin name for each dye, and it took me a while to figure that out. Each page lists the Latin name in small type at the top, and then the common name

(Hollyhock, Madder, etc.) after, in a larger typeface, so that it's the familiar name that catches your eye. It took me a couple passes to realize that the book wasn't sorted by color themes or by the easily-read names at the top of the page, but the smaller, easy-to-ignore Latin names. I wonder why they went this way, or at least why they then kept the Latin so small, but ... that's what Indexes are for, and this has a good one. Ultimately, this is a beautiful book. If you're at all interested in dyeing-especially with natural sources rather than bottles of store-bought stuff that is harsher for the environment-you owe it to yourself to take a look.

Having eagerly anticipated the arrival of this book, I was a little disappointed that the pages detailing different plants, etc, did not have any pictures of actual yarn or fabric, but only a series of paint-chip type colors, with a small legend next to each referring to the mordants and modifiers. The key to the legends is hidden earlier in the book and hard to find. Having said that, the first part of the book, dealing with techniques, safety, equipment, etc., is excellent. My favorite pages were 62 and 63, "25 colors from one dye bath" which I felt were the best illustration of the wonderful possibilities using actual yarn. The variety of plant sources was an eye-opener, and the color possibilities enticing. Overall well worth the money.

I just got this for Christmas today! :D And I had to stop opening everything else as I flipped through to discover the number and vibrancy of colors you can get out of plants I never expected there to be abundant pigment in. I am a budding medieval recreator, and a college student on a budget, so I'm definitely looking forward to being able to save money on making garb by buying white natural fabrics in bulk and snagging a few plants so I can achieve period dyes. (Not to mention one day save money by just dyeing and making my own modern clothes.) I also watch Jenny's blog through an RSS feed (that's how I found out this was being updated and reprinted and threw it on my wishlist the moment it came up on ). She talks about some interesting little projects some times, very informative. Check it out! [...]

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