

NYBG

Materials List for Botanical Dyeing

Cloth to dye:

Choose a smaller piece for this first project. A shirt, a few linen napkins, a light dress. The weight of the cloth you choose directly corresponds to how much plant material and mordant you will need to dye the cloth and how large your pot for dyeing needs to be. Feel free to choose a garment from your closet that needs refreshing or something from your local thrift store. Just be sure that the garment is 100% cotton, linen, or hemp. The garment should ideally be white or a very pale, neutral color to begin with.

In the week before class, please run your cloth through the washer using the hot/long cycle. Your item should be fully dry when you come to class.

Dye materials:

I recommend growing the flowers you need for this project yourself. Our class is in late August and these easy to grow dye plants will be in full bloom by then. Both dried* and fresh flowers work well for botanical dye, so you can use the blooms fresh on the day of class or harvest and dry them all summer in preparation for our class. The more you harvest the blooms, the more your marigolds, cosmos, and coreopsis plants will bloom. The weight of the cloth you wish to dye is equal to weight of flowers you will need to dye it.

We will be dyeing with Marigolds, Cosmos, Dyer's coreopsis, and Goldenrod. Below I have linked a few wonderful New York based seed companies from which you can obtain your seeds. In class you can use all of these flowers, or just one variety for your project.

I recommend the deep orange, large flowered marigolds for dyeing, this variety is a good one: <https://hudsonvalleyseed.com/products/crackerjack-mix-african-marigold>

For cosmos, I have found none better than the deep, dark Diablos Cosmos by Fruition Seed. This variety is very easy to collect seed from and have in your dye garden every year! <https://www.fruitionseeds.com/shop/flowers/cosmos/organic-diablo-cosmos/>

Dyer's coreopsis is a native plant with a latin binomial indicating it's long use as a dye plant, *Coreopsis tinctoria*. You can buy the seeds

here: <https://www.fruitionseeds.com/shop/flowers/coreopsis/organic-coreopsis-tinctoria-dyers-coreopsis/>

Goldenrod is abundant in the meadows surrounding my dye studio and should be in bloom around the time of our class. If you have goldenrod blooming near you, bring a fresh bouquet to class.

**Goldenrod is the only flower that does not dry well for botanical dye and should only be used fresh.*

Tools needed:

- Kitchen scale
- A stove top burner (you can work carefully in your kitchen or set up a burner outside in the open air, the latter is always my preference but either way works well)
- Access to water either from a sink or a hose
- Dyeing journal/notebook & a pen
- 3-4 buckets (3-5 gallon work great)
- A mesh strainer/sieve
- Aluminum or stainless steel pot with a lid* (large aluminum pots are easy to find at thrift stores)
- A kettle (you can use your kitchen kettle for this as it will not be coming in contact with any dye materials)
- Measuring cups & spoons
- A larger measuring bowl with at least a quart capacity
- Stirring spoons
- Tongs
- Cooking thermometer
- A timer (the one on your watch or phone will work)

**A note about the size of the pot you choose for this project. Your cloth will need to swim freely in the pot without being too scrunched up. Choose the size of your pot according to the size of your dye project.*

Most of these tools can be found at thrift stores, I do recommend starting there to build up your collection of dye tools so that you do not spend a small fortune.

Never use a tool for cooking that has been used for dyeing. Please keep your dyeing and your kitchen tools separate. If you use your kitchen tools for this, they will be forever botanical dye tools henceforth.

Mordanting supplies:

- Aluminum Acetate. The weight of the cloth you intend to dye will determine how much aluminum acetate you need. For every 100g of cloth you will need 6g of aluminum acetate. You can buy aluminum acetate from Botanical Color's website or Dharma Trading Company's website. If you don't understand how to calculate how much Alum Acetate you need quite yet and think you will continue botanically dyeing after this class, buy a pound.

<https://botanicalcolors.com/shop/mordants/aluminum-acetate/>

<https://www.dharmatrading.com/dyes/aluminum-acetate-mordant.html>

- + Rubber gloves
- + A mask (we all have one of these handy!)
- + 2 cups wheat bran (for up to 500g dried cloth)