

May 2025

Saturday 17 May

Another busy day at the Guild's main meeting on Saturday - in the morning Pene Blogg ran an in-house workshop for members on 'How to Spin with Alpaca'.

Pene brought along a selection of alpaca yarn and samples made from the yarn.

Thank you Pene for running the workshop and also for the time spent in the preparation. It was appreciated.



The workshop in action, with progress being made by all those attending.



'Show and Tell' Table

There was a full to overflowing 'Show and Tell' table - with examples of coiled baskets and modular knitting, all created after two fantastic workshops in earlier months; a wonderful felted wall hanging and some solar-dyed yarn.



The competition this month was a new trophy for Dyeing and in memory of Gail Coldham. Her husband Randy came along to present the trophy - a coiled basket, made by Nicky Footer using yarn dyed by Gail. Our Speaker, Ria Burns judged the competition and the winner was Ali Pearce for her knitted cardigan using naturally dyed wool. Well done, Ali.



Ali's Cardigan

Unfortunately Ali had to leave before the judging and so Randy presenting the trophy to Fiona, who would be taking it to Ali after the meeting.

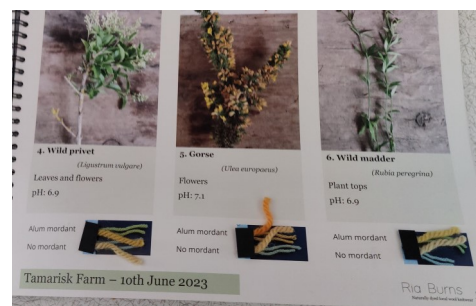


In the afternoon Ria Burns gave us a extremely interesting talk entitled 'A study of Natural Dyeing in the West Country'. This was a research project which she undertook in 2023 funded by South West England Fibreshed.

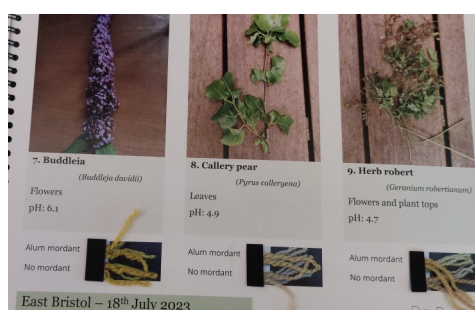
The aim of the project was to build a bioregional library of natural dye plants and colour samples from across the region, with a focus on wild rather than cultivated plants.

From a map of S W England four farming areas were chosen. Each area had a different soil component and the water used was that available on site and ranged from hard tap to soft spring water. The wool used came from the sheep bred on the four farms. Both the water and soil influenced the resulting dyed wool.

The four sites chosen were Tamarisk Farm in Dorset, Lower Hampen in the Cotswolds, Baddaford in Devon and an urban study where Ria lived at the time in East Bristol.



Pages taken from the South West Colour Library with some of Ria's results in all the four sites.



Natural Dyeing Workshop

Sunday 18 May

Ria led an inspirational workshop for 12 of our members.

It involved an introductory exploration into natural dyes, and how they can colour a range of native and rare breed British wool yarns. Each member worked with eight different wool yarns from a variety of breeds and dyed them with plants from Ria's garden, as well as food waste and other botanicals.

At the end everyone left with eight mini skeins of their own custom-dyed yarn in a range of vibrant colours.

It was an opportunity for those attending the workshop to purchase a copy of Ria's book 'dyeing yarn naturally'.



Above plants, food waste and other botanicals, used to create the dyed yarn above and on the right.



A range of truly vibrant colours created with the natural dyes Ria brought.



Out to dry naturally on a glorious sunny afternoon.

