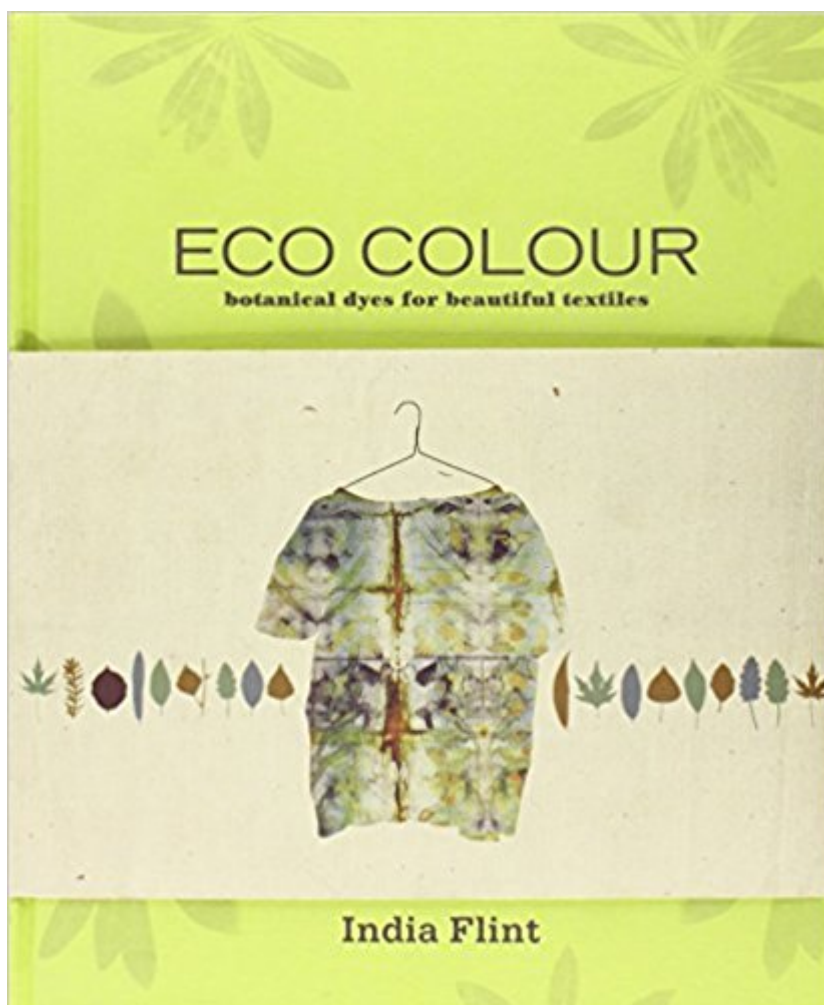




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# Eco Colour: Botanical Dyes For Beautiful Textiles



## Synopsis

The essence of plants bursts forth in magnificent hues and surprising palettes. Using dyes of the leaves, roots, and flowers to color your cloth and yarn can be an amazing journey into botanical alchemy. In *Eco Colour*, artistic dyer and colorist India Flint teaches you how to cull and use this gentle and ecologically sustainable alternative to synthetic dyes. India explores the fascinating and infinitely variable world of plant color using a wide variety of techniques and recipes. From whole-dyed cloth and applied color to prints and layered dye techniques, India describes only ecologically sustainable plant-dye methods. She uses renewable resources and shows how to do the least possible harm to the dyer, the end user of the object, and the environment. Recipes include a number of entirely new processes developed by India, as well as guidelines for plant collection, directions for the distillation of nontoxic mordants, and methodologies for applying plant dyes. *Eco Colour* inspires both the home dyer and textile professional seeking to extend their skills using India's successful methods.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

**\*Starred Review\*** One of the most elegantly designed crafts books to debut this year, with a sophisticated layout and color photographs that capture well the ecological sensitivities of the artist. Though the art of dyeing has long been associated with natural materials, South Australian first-time author (and creator of hand-made "slow" fashion) Flint maximizes the use of renewable resources while minimizing most harmful footprints. On occasion, she goes to extremes,

justifying, for instance, the use of wood to heat boiling-dye waters. Yet there's much valuable information on every page, in every illustration, throughout each chapter; the author's very careful orientation to the subject, beginning with collecting plants and finishing with special effects and fabric care and feeding, educates and energizes. Notes about history and practical applications (say, the production of indigo and the creation of natural blues through woad plants) are balanced with charts of traditional dye materials and specific details about processing, including plant oddities such as eucalyptus and St. John's wort, different effects from a range of techniques (for instance, hapa-zome, or beating color into cloth, as well as the familiar resist) and mordants (the stuff that fixes or makes color permanent). Urban apartment dwellers might be a bit challenged by the philosophy and processes; and a few materials indigenous to Australia are unavailable to those on other continents. Nonetheless, an excellent source.

--Barbara Jacobs

"If you've ever worried about the effect dyeing fabric has on the earth, Eco Colour by India Flint will teach you how to use botanical dyes to create beautiful textiles." - Cutoutandkeep.net  
"A beautifully presented book...if you are interested in botanical dyes, this is a definite must read." - Shuttle, Spindle & Dyepot  
"Slow dyes, like slow foods, require time and effort, but can generate extraordinary results. This book follows that same philosophy. If you take the time to delve deeply and absorb the wealth of information offered, you will find instruction and inspiration in abundance." - Surface Design Journal  
"This book is a significant and inspirational addition to the literature on natural dyeing and one which must be read by anyone interested in the topic." - Pam Borchardt, member of the Natural Dye Group, Plant Craft Cottage

I noticed others' complaints that this book lacked "recipes," and assumed they wanted very exact procedures with exact ingredients and amounts. Usually satisfied with more abstract instruction, I went ahead and ordered it -- expecting still to find outlines of generic procedures, some suggested effective combinations of mordants and plant materials, and a bit of orientation for those of us whose prior dying experience has been limited to commercial synthetic dyes on the stovetop. Be warned: What little this book offers in the way of instruction is buried in long, wool-gathering reflections and chatty anecdotes. If you can discern a complete process, you will have extracted it by flipping around scanning for hints, in rambling text nearly free of useful rubrics other than chapter headings. It may please you to know, from an amusing sidebar, that the ancient Scots considered little boys' urine ideal for dying with one particular material (woad). But I, for one, would like to know

for any of the mordants: how much, for how long, in approximately what dilution, for what fiber types, and when in the process? No-one is born knowing this stuff; we buy books in hopes of learning it. India's work is inspiring to look at and her beautiful book would grace an artsy coffee table, but her prose misses the tutorial mark pretty badly.

This is a great directory of plants with their botanical and common names and parts to use to extract colours. You'll find tips on how to collect, store and undergo experiments with colour extractions, as well as documenting your explorations. It is beautifully photographed and shows up India's work to full advantage. I find this book very hard and frustrating to use and whether this is intentional, you'll find yourself having to pick it up again and again to read and make sure you've understood correctly. Information is all over the place - for instance in the chapter 'mordants' you'll find some information about cotton - drips on one page, doubling back or forward (thankfully page numbers are indicated albeit not all pages are numbered) to find more drips - and you may wonder whether the author intended you to slowly extract the lessons, just as the eco-dyeing procedures are slow... Surely someone who's written a Master's thesis on the subject of eco-dyeing could have organized her material a lot better, or are we to blame the editors?

India Flint is the guru of natural dyeing, as far as I'm concerned! I've purchased several books on the topic, and this, to me, is the #1 sourcebook. She has so much information, and I've refined my techniques with excellent results. There is so much information in here, I've sticky-taped certain sections. There is ice-dyeing with flowers, using eucalyptus (which is ubiquitous here in SoCal), and how to prepare fabric for dyeing. There is so much information, written in an easily approachable style. I highly recommend this for the beginner as well as the more experienced dyer. Attending one of her workshops is on my bucket list.

My friend had a copy of this book and it intrigued me enough that I had to order a copy for myself. It's a visually beautiful book - from the 'hand friendly' feel of the cover to the pages that are designed as eye candy. India Flint's techniques are easy and unique. The book is replete with the information you need about a variety of plants and mordants. All of the information that you need to get started are right there in the pages of the. Since she is Australian the plants described are indigenous to that area - but many are easy to find in North America as well. The techniques described will work with any plant matter and the magic is in the trying and experimenting. I'm not sure that I could say that this is "the only book you'll ever need" for natural dyeing - but is the only

book you need for her "bundling" technique. I'm planning to try some of the techniques(adjusted a bit perhaps) on heavy watercolor paper. This book is an excellent addition to the library for any natural dye fan - or for any textile surface designer or admirer. I'm happy that I splurged and bought it !

Gorgeous book with gorgeous photos. This book is NOT for anyone looking for specific instructions on eco-dyeing, but it is very inspirational.

I found this book to be a great inspiration to play with what grows around me to coax out color on cloth. Now I never travel without my trusty boiling kettle, string and recycled scraps of fabric! I gather windfall plant material during my travels and simmer them in the hotel before bed. It is a like a fiber diary of where I've been... If you are into this sort of thing you will love the book!

Wonderfull book, I was just hoping for more DIY advices, but I like the book a lot, the photos are great and I like reading all the way along the intire book

Fantastic read my a fantastic artist, good reference.

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