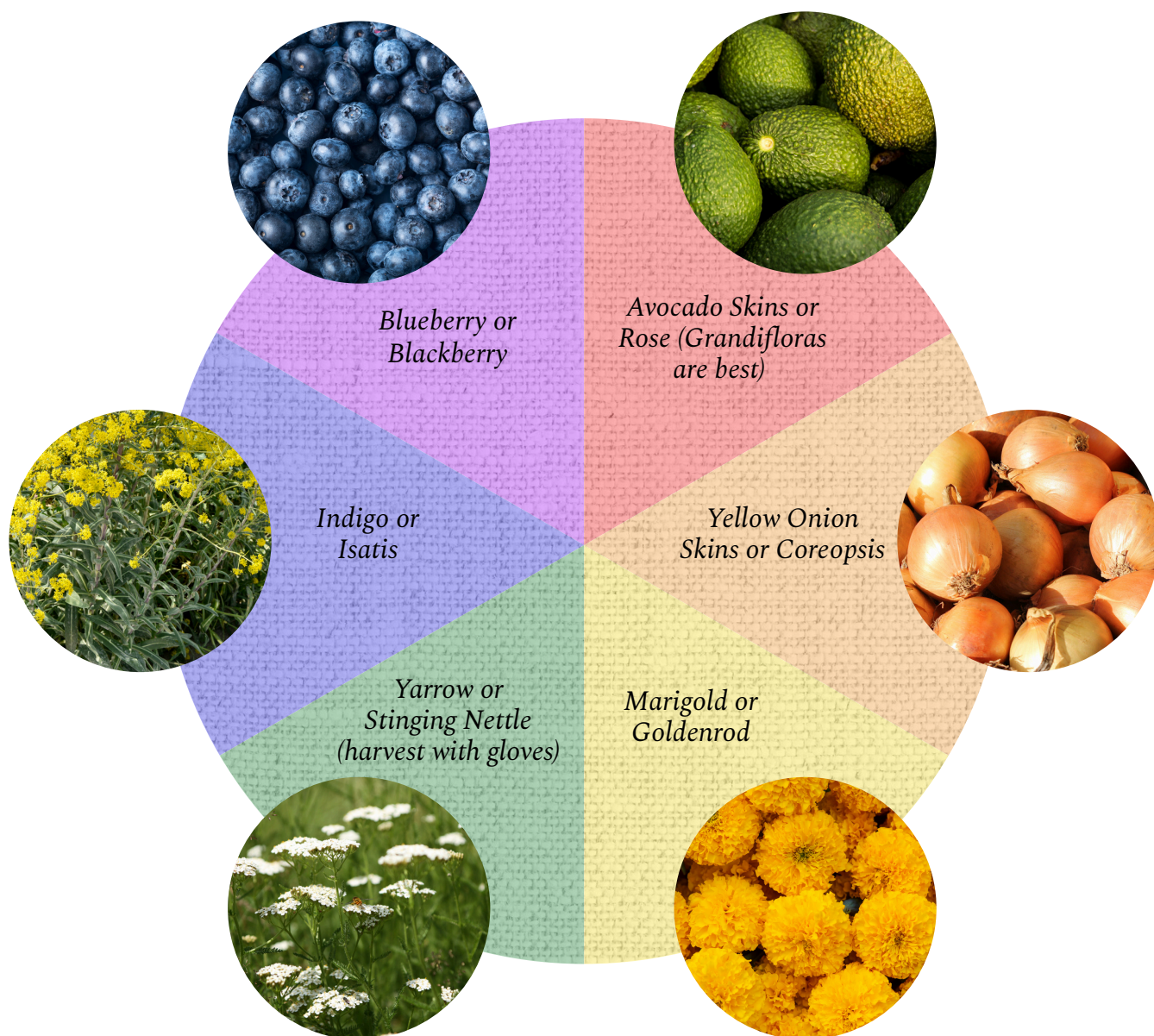


The Plant Lover's Guide to Solar Dyeing with Friday Feature Artist Lydia Miller



Imagine gathering goldenrod for sun-kissed yellows, or watching the magic of isatis leaves transform into ocean blue. Growing these plants yourself ensures a non-toxic, sustainable source of colour that is kind to you, our earth, and its pollinators. The process of harvesting, preparing, and dyeing with these plant materials is a cathartic and deeply rewarding ritual, resulting in rich, earthy hues brought to life by your hand.



I hope you enjoy exploring this process as much as I do in my practice. If you have any questions, including what to grow for hardiness zones 5-9, please feel free to send me an email: fibreoflamm@gmail.com.

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How to small batch solar dye:

What you'll need:

- 500ml Glass jar with tight fitting lid
- Large bowl
- Warm water
- Dye stuff (your chosen plant material)
- Natural Material: Fabric (approx. 1 sq. ft will fit in a 500ml jar) or Yarn (or 1 small skein) For example; Cotton, linen, silk, or wool
- Alum (potassium aluminum sulfate)
 - you can purchase this at your local grocer in the baking aisle
- Cheesecloth or fine strainer
- Kitchen gloves
- Laundry soap
- Sunshine

How to prepare your dye:

1. Chop your fresh or dried dye stuff, enough to fill $\frac{1}{3}$ of your jar.
2. Fill $\frac{1}{3}$ of your 500ml jar with chopped dye stuff.
3. Fill up to $\frac{2}{3}$ of your jar with warm tap water, and put the lid on.
4. Leave out for 24-48 hrs in full sun. You can swirl it on occasion.
5. Wearing your kitchen gloves, strain the liquid into a bowl – best to choose one you don't use for food.
6. Squeeze out as much liquid from the dye stuff as possible, and then return the strained liquid to the jar.
7. Add 1tbs of alum and stir to dissolve.

How to prepare your material:

1. Hand wash your material or yarn in hot water and laundry soap and wring out as much liquid as possible.
2. Wearing your kitchen gloves, add your material to your jar.
3. Stir the fabric to saturate it completely.
4. Fill remaining space with warm water (leaving around an inch of space from the top of the jar.)
5. Leave out for another 24-48 hrs in full sun, depending on how deep you'd like your colour to be. Shake the jar a few times during the day to ensure even coverage.
6. Wearing your kitchen gloves, remove your material from your jar, rinse with warm water until water runs clear, then rinse cold for fifteen seconds.
7. Hang or machine dry. Discard the remaining liquid down the drain.

