



Juliet Howard:

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Rosalee de la Forêt:

Welcome to the Herbs with Rosalee Podcast, a show exploring how herbs heal as medicine, as food, and through connecting with the living world around you.

This episode has story time, not kidding. It's awesome, so you might want to brew yourself a little cup of, say, nettle tea, settle in, and listen with that part of you that enjoys a good tale. Because while nettle is often talked about as a simple nourishing herb, there's something deeper here; something about how healing actually happens over time, not in quick fixes but in the steady daily relationship.

In this conversation with Juliet Howard, we explore how nettle has been used not just for nutrients, but for rebuilding, for restoration, and for those moments when life has taken more out of you than you might have expected.

If you enjoy this episode, please give it a thumbs up so more plant lovers can find us, and be sure to stay tuned until the very end for your herbal tidbit.

Juliet, thank you so much for being here. I'm really looking forward to this.

Juliet Howard:

Me too, super excited.



Rosalee de la Forêt:

It was so lovely to meet you a month or two ago. Man, time flies, but we got to meet each other in Portland. You just radiate so much joy and vitality, and I just knew I wanted to spend more time with you, and here we are. I'm just so grateful, so thank you.

Juliet Howard:

Thank you, Rosalee. I just like—I was so thrilled that we got to meet at that Folk Methodology Meetup, that was super lovely. I just have to say, at the top of this, just how inspirational I think you are as an herbalist and a person. I'm so, so grateful for the work that you do and all of the voices that you highlight, and just all of the current work you're doing on your own, and all this fun work that you're doing with Mason. I just think that you're constantly inspiring and really pushing things in the herbalism community in such a positive way, so I'm just super, super stoked to be here and talk to you, and get to know you better.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Well, that's my favorite way for a podcast to start is flattery!

Juliet Howard:

Definitely! It's nice, you know. You got to-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you.

Juliet Howard:

It's important to tell people you know what they mean to you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you so much. I did—as I said, I had a chance to meet you at the Folk Methodology Meetup, but I don't know your story. I don't know how the plants called to you and I'm looking forward to hearing how that unfolding has been for you.



Juliet Howard:

Yeah, yeah, it's—there's isn't—definitely, there's no one catalyst that brought me to the plants, but I always think about I got the privilege of getting to move to the Oregon Coast when I was six years old. We lived on this pretty majestic—we lived on a cliff overlooking the ocean in a small cove, so we got to actually see whales. We got to—my mom and I would go hunt for agates when the tide was out. It was—as a kid, I mean—and still as an adult, such a magical place to grow up, had a lot of freedom. It was the '90s, so I could bike everywhere, and make forts, and do all of that. I think very early on, without knowing it, I developed a really strong sense of place, and felt very, very held by that place. I was—when I look back now as a mom with a seven-year old, I was out on the cliffs and near the ocean, and now I would, of course, be terrified, but I was never hurt, and it was always such a beautiful space to be in. And again, I felt so deeply held and supported by that land and the plants that were on that land.

I think that in going back, I feel that sense. I feel a coming home and remembering from the land, which is such a beautiful way to feel. Now, when I go back, I can be like, “There's salal, and there's coastal pine. There's plantain and all of these plants I grew up with and were familiar with, but now, I actually know more about them—know their names. So that, I think, was kind of the first for it—foray into this love of plants, is that deep, deep connection to place. And then I like to mention this—but did you—were you into “Return to Oz” at all when you were younger? That movie?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Uh-umm.

Juliet Howard:

Did you ever see—okay. It's a really—it's, first of all, it's very wacky and weird. I highly recommend watching it. Part of it is that when they get to Oz, there is a lunchbox tree. It's like—the tree grows these little plant-like lunchboxes. They peel them open. There's a little sandwich and these little snacks, and I was floored, just fascinated by this concept. I love to



link that back because that is exactly what herbalism is. It's like these plants are providing us with our food, our nutrients, our clothing, our home. They provide everything. I feel like the lunchbox tree is a perfect, little microcosm in a wild, wacky movie that really illustrates that. It makes sense now that I was—that part of the movie is what always stuck with me.

I think that little thing—yeah, in growing up, in my 20s, I worked in a teahouse. I managed a teahouse and was really, really interested in all of the herbal infusions. There were these apothecary blends for liver support or immune support, and I was just very interested in that. I started making my own blends and trying things out. That, of course, inevitably led to wanting to really step into it deeper, and so about ten years ago, I got to do Rosemary's course through a local naturopath. It was really neat to—and she's a naturopath, an herbalist, JJ Pursell, facilitated it. We had a small group and we would meet monthly and then, in the meantime, do all the homework and do a lot of stuff on our own. That was the first formal entrance into education, and of course, starting with Rosemary Gladstar's program, which so many herbalists have, was such a gentle and beautiful way to get to know—start getting to know the plants, and so, that started a path.

Since then I haven't really stopped and started studying with a lot more teachers, and started going to plant gatherings and teaching at some, and going to a lot of one-off classes and teaching my own little one-off classes, and then just deeply communing with the plants in various ways. Some I just love working with the plants with scent medicine. I'm very, very into making hydrosols. I got a copper still probably four or five years ago. That's such a beautiful seasonal practice that I love. I'm also making herbal oils, another way to really work with them and more scent medicine. And then also, really enjoy creating and making flower essences. Yeah, I've done lots of product-making as a way to commune with the plants.

Most recently, that just kind of led to writing this book—a book of—for kiddos, all about plant connection. Yes, thank you. *The Girl Whose Garden Comes Alive*. That's the most recent project. Just felt like having a seven year old myself, getting to see her interact with the plants was



really inspiring and wanted—made me want to create something to give around—yeah, how to—how to begin those connections.

So, the path I feel like it's—it really—there are lots of little—little sparkles, little things that were happening throughout my life that led me to the plants, and just—I'm so grateful. So yeah, I would consider myself a kind of seasonal, bioregional, backyard herbalist, and a big proponent of a lot of the plants that you need are usually growing nearby, and that when we're able to connect and notice, we start really getting a lot of gifts from the natural world.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Hey, there. Just a quick note: if you'd like to hear from me in a more personal way, I'd love to have you in my free text community. I send a couple of texts every week, things like behind-the-scenes updates, herbal thoughts that I'm chewing on, and little sparks of joy I don't always share anywhere else. To join, just text the word ROOT to 1-509-383-8398, and if you ever want to break up, no hard feelings. Just text STOP to the same number and you'll be opted-out immediately. My goal is to make it so juicy and so fun that you look forward to getting my texts each week. Okay, now, back to the show.

It's very much reflected in your book. I'm looking forward to diving into that a little bit later. I love that you chose nettle for today, and-

Juliet Howard:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, especially, I know you're going to take us in some different directions with nettle too, so I will leave that open to you after that beautiful introduction. We'll just dive into the world of nettle with Juliet.



Juliet Howard:

I know—this very rare plant, nettle. I was, of course, when we first spoke, I was thinking about all these different plants to talk about, and ones that I love also common like yarrow and elder, rose hips and all these plants and nettle kept being like “Oh, it’s me!” Of course, most herbalists know nettle and it’s talked about all the time, which makes sense. It’s such a gateway herb for so many people because of how healing and how restorative nettle is.

But since it’s been talked about so much, I was thinking that we could approach it from the way that nettle shows up in story. I’m a big fan of how plants show up in fairytales and folklore and mythology because I think that it really teaches us about the plant in both a symbolic way, but that symbolic way can lead to practicality and these practical uses of the plant. It also shows how different cultures revered different plants for various reasons and I just find that all so, so fascinating, thinking of plants like—there’s a story of when Prometheus steals fire from the gods, and he steals it to give to the humans and hides it inside of dried fennel stalk. What does that tell us about fennel? It’s like when you dry it out, there’s that pith inside that can still burn, so it can physically hold an ember. Just like mullein, it can be dipped into animal fats or wax and be a torch plant. So, there’s a literal fire component, like bringing fire using fennel. But then the way that fennel acts in the body as like this carminative—this helper in digestion and bringing that in the digestive fire and helping that energy. I think it’s such a cool way to look at the way plants show up.

Or, of course, the tale of Achilles and yarrow—little Achilles—baby Achilles being dropped into the River Styx that was imbued with yarrow, making him indestructible except for his heel—Achilles’ heel where he was being held, and how much that teaches us about yarrow – the practical uses where it can, in many ways, make you indestructible. I had a time where I nearly cut off this finger. The first thing I did was go to the garden and pack it with yarrow and wrap it up and go to the hospital, and it immediately stopped the bleeding and helped with infection, so that makes me feel indestructible with the help of yarrow. And then just the protective feel of yarrow. Energetically, yarrow is such a protective plant, and I think that



that's also really coming across in that story. So, just like two little examples of plants in story. There are so, so many. It's such a fun, fun thing I want to continue to research.

With nettle, I thought it would be fun to tell the story of the Wild Swans with Eliza and her eleven brothers. It's a Hans Christian Andersen story from the 1800s, but I think it's a bit older than that. I think he pulled parts from other folktales, but nettle plays a really big role. I was thinking I could tell the story. It's very long, so I'm going to try to condense it in parts, and then I could chat about how nettle shows up, and then how nettle's shown up in my life. I love to also know how it has shown up in your life.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That sounds lovely. I wish I had a bowl of popcorn. Probably no one else needs to hear me chewing popcorn while you're telling the story.

Juliet Howard:

I know, I was like, "Should I put on a theatrical performance? Once, long ago!"

Alright, so, long ago, there was a king who had 11 sons and one daughter, Eliza. They lived in a beautiful palace and they had everything that they could ever desire. Unfortunately, as these tales go, the mother died and the father married a very, very wicked, wicked woman who very quickly banished Eliza to live with peasants outside of the village, and turned all 11 brothers into swans who had to fly away from this beautiful kingdom. When this happened, Eliza was with the peasants. When she was around 15, she was finally able to go back to the palace and search around. Of course, all she could think about were her 11 brothers and how she missed them and wanted to reunite with them.

She was asking around and she met an old woman in the woods who had a bowl of berries that she offered to Eliza. Eliza asked, "Have you seen 11 men, princes riding through these woods? I'm looking for them." She said, "No, but I've seen 11 swans with little golden crowns



flying into the river just down the way,” and so Eliza decides she’s going to go check out these swans.

She walks over there and it’s nearing the end of day, so we’re at sunset. She’s hiding a bit and watching this river and she sees these 11 swans fly in. As they hit the ground and the sun sets, they turn back into their human form. They shed all of these swan feathers and they’re back to her brothers. She runs out and she reunites with them, and they all, of course, now understand what this wicked woman has done to all of them; that these brothers are under this deep enchantment that they can only come into their human form in the night. So, they commune and Eliza wants so deeply to know how to heal her brothers, how to break this enchantment. She asks and she prays and she hopes that she can find a solution.

She has a dream. In the dream, she’s visited by a fairy, some mythical creature that reminds her a lot of this woman she met in the woods. When she meets this woman, the woman says, “There’s a way to save your brothers. There’s a way to break the spell. What you have to do is you have to find nettle. You have to gather it and you have to turn it into thread and make 11 tunics for your brothers. Each one, when the tunic is placed upon them, will turn back into their human form, but you’re going to endure a lot of pain from the nettle and you cannot speak. You must have a vow of silence, for if you speak, laugh or anything during this time before these shirts are done on all your brothers, you will die.” She’s got a major, major task ahead of her, but she—when she wakes, she knows that this can be done. She has the answer. She can actually save her brothers from this wild spell.

She gets to work and she starts gathering the nettle and making the thread, and spinning the thread. As she’s doing this, of course, her hands and her feet from breaking up the stems are just so blistered and red and inflamed, but she continues on. She’s devoted to the task because she knows that this will save her brothers, which is all she cares about. So, she continues and she continues.



And then as fairytales go, she hears a huntsman horn and some king and men show up at her door. The king finds her beautiful and says, “Come with me. You’re going to be my queen.” He just thinks she’s this beautiful, mute young woman who’s—he has no idea why she’s spinning or what’s going on, but he takes her and brings her to his palace and has created a little room that looks like the cage she’d been spinning in. Luckily, some of the men brought her the tunics that were completed, and the rest of her nettle that had been turned into yarn. She continues and just continues. She can’t speak. She can’t laugh. She continues on her task.

When she gets near the end, she has run out of nettle, so she knows she has to go to the churchyard at night and gather more nettles. Of course, as she does this, the archbishop sees her and is like, “She’s a witch! We got to get rid of her. She is here to ruin the kingdom. She doesn’t speak, all she does is spin. Now, she’s out at night gathering nettles with the witches,” essentially. He tells the king. At first, the king is like, “Umm, I think she’s alright,” but then he showed the king at night she’s gathering nettles. She’s continuing to spin. He finally says, “Okay, let the people decide.” The people, of course, say, “She’s a witch. We need to get rid of her.” On the day that she is about to be executed, she’s continuing the task. She’s still so devoted to this. She’s going to finish. She’s continuing, continuing. She ended up getting pretty much all of the tunics done. The final tunic, the 11th tunic, was missing a sleeve, but as she’s there, about to be executed, cannot speak, 11 swans fly in and they surround her. The crowd is whispering, “This must be a good omen. Maybe she is innocent,” but no one is really saying anything. It’s just whispers.

The swans fly in, and at that moment, she throws these tunics on to them, and they immediately change form and turn back into her brothers. As this happens, she says, “I’m innocent! Now, I can speak!” The eldest brother tells everyone what had happened—this wicked queen that turned them into these swans and banished Eliza and what’s been going on. Everyone is thrilled. Sadly, the youngest brother, though his tunic was not finished, so he maintained one swan wing as a vestige of this—this enchantment. The story ends with, of course, a wedding. After all this mania, a wedding procession, and that’s the end of the tale. So, yeah-



Rosalee de la Forêt:

That was so beautifully told, Juliet. This is one of my very favorite tales.

Juliet Howard:

Oh, good!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

In part, I think, because it involves nettle. Also, do you know—oh, my gosh—*Daughter of the Forest*?

Juliet Howard:

I don't know if I know *Daughter of the Forest*.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

This is my favorite author and I'm just blanking on her name right now.

Juliet Howard:

Okay, I'll find it. Okay.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I know—I know it because I've read every single book of hers a thousand times.

Juliet Howard:

You're like, "it's right there!"

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I almost want to say it's Juliet Marillier.

Juliet Howard:

Oh, interesting!



Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, I'm pretty sure that's it. I'm like second guessing myself, like "Is it Juliet? Or are you Juliet?" I don't know.

Juliet Howard:

Who is Juliet? We don't know anymore.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

She really is my favorite author so this is just, obviously, a brain blip, but she wrote *Daughter of the Forest*, which is a retelling of this tale as well.

Juliet Howard:

Oh, awesome.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's one of my favorite books of all time and it's one of my favorite fairytales, so I've read that book probably seven times, if not more. I was still enraptured listening to you. So thank you, thanks for bringing the story.

Juliet Howard:

Thank you. Thanks so much for saying that. I definitely—now, I really want to immediately get that book. I want to read it.

Thank you for listening. I'm glad it was fun. I just—yeah, it's such a cool fairytale. The way that nettle shows up—we know nettle as a fiber—is a fiber, is a textile. That in itself is a whole world of information and lore and spinners and all the mythology around spinning. What I think is so cool is that first part of when she's actually working with the nettle—the pain of working with the nettle. But this devotion—I think there's something around nettle where when you do devote yourself to that plant, there—it can bring up a lot. It can really shift things



a lot. That devotion piece is really important. It's like committing to working with that plant for months, years, or lifetime, I think that devotion is really a key piece. It's such a plant—and in the next part, the fact that nettle is the savior—nettle is the plant that breaks the enchantment. That alone gives me chills. It's like nettle is the plant that protects and breaks an enchantment. I feel like that with nettle. It's like when we're coming back from states of depletion or just exhaustion, maybe that's just life, maybe that's birth, maybe illness—nettle is that plant that restores our vitality over time, but gently.

Sometimes I feel like energetically, that can be intense things that come up, but on the body level, it just restores your minerals, your vitamins, your vitality, who you are. I think nettle has that capacity to just break any enchantments that you have on yourself, or these things that you no longer need to carry and just revitalizes you and brings you back to your core, and allows you to remember who you are and why you are here. I think nettle, that in itself is a massive enchantment, but we often are walking around without presence or without purpose, without connection. I feel like nettle is that plant that really re-instills that. There are a lot of plants that can help with that, but nettle is pretty special. I love that the story says that. Nettle—it's a hex breaker. It's an enchantment breaker. That's pretty powerful—pretty powerful stuff.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I love that correlation. I was wondering where you're going to go with that. I love that—the hex breaker, and also, just how completely restorative it can be for us.

Juliet Howard:

Definitely, yeah. I just think it's such a powerful, powerful plant in those ways.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Hey, friends. It's Rosalee. If you've been nourished by this podcast, if it has helped you feel more connected to the plants or more grounded in your own herbal path, then I'd love to invite you to join the Herbs with Rosalee Podcast Circle. This special membership helps make



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Juliet Howard:

Have you—in your experiences with nettle, have you found that to be true either on the physical or energetic level how it's been helpful for you?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I feel like right now I can't live without nettle. That's where I'm at in my nettle infatuation stage. You know, after 25 years of working with this plant, it feels like a cool place to be. I've never gotten over nettle. There's been some ups and downs of the intimacy that we experience together, but right now, I've been drinking nettle infusions everyday. Sometimes missing when traveling a bit, but for the most part, drinking nettle everyday for many, many months now. Maybe even approaching a year, actually. I think that's the longest that I continue—mostly continuous stretch that I've ever done. I've often done just seasonal. I'll feel like in the springtime, I'll feel called to drink lots of nettle, but then it'll kind of wane as the fall comes, but not this time. I've just been like I can't get enough of nettle right now. That's my—that's my feelings. Brought my nettle infusion. Yeah, cheers.

Juliet Howard:

Cheers. So good. You can feel it. You can feel it revitalizing the body.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, that's what it feels like. Every morning, I've been—I've actually started drinking it first thing in the morning. That's one of the first things I do. After meditating, I'll strain off my nettle and drink it first thing. I love that it's—I actually got that from a previous podcast that I did.



Somebody recommended nettles first thing in the morning, and so now I am. I think that was Constanza that recommended that if I remember correctly. It's been just this very big daily ritual for me right now, and it just does feel revitalizing—revitalizing. I feel like my whole body is like, “Yes, I need this.”

Juliet Howard:

Definitely. Yeah, like you said too, it's seasonal. Like spring, of course, like after sluggish winter when we really feel it. But it is true, taking it over long-term like months or years, you really—it does become a plant that you're like, “How could I ever not drink you? How could I ever let go of this feeling?” It's like—it's pretty—pretty wonderful in that way.

I have a very funny relationship with nettle. When I first experienced nettle, I was—I immediately had this kind of like, “I don't know. I don't think this is going to be an ally for me. I revere it. It's incredible. This would probably be really wonderful—wonderful plant for my mom or my friend, but I don't know, my constitution—I don't know if this is right.” For a long time, I kind of had that resistance with nettle. I had this weird block with nettle. I also think it's like when the student is ready, the teacher arrives. I probably wasn't ready to work with nettle at that point for whatever reason. It's funny how that happened, and then all of a sudden—do you know Liz Migliorelli from —Sister Spinster is her company?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I don't, no.

Juliet Howard:

She's an incredible herbalist and flower essence maker and folklorist, just really fascinating herbalist. She does—she was where I learned a lot about flower essences. She had made me a custom essence once. She had said, “Are there any plants that you don't want in here?” Of course, this was years and years ago—nettle popped in. I was like, “I'm not going to say anything, that's ridiculous. If nettle shows up, great. I need nettle.” Of course, it was in the blend. It showed up. I was like, “That's interesting,” and then I ended up having some major,



major health stuff. I think it was mainly caused from depletion, not to go too into the weeds, but I'd done blood work, and of course, low iron and those things. I had very reluctantly taken an iron supplement. I think that was a big—really messed me up. I ended up having a tachycardia episode that put me in the ER. It was a whole, horrible thing, but it ended up—I immediately got off of that and just was like, “Wait, I’m an herbalist. Probably nettle. Why don’t I just actually replenish myself with nettle? Duh.” And so I started doing that and I got really excited to commune with nettle. I was actually in a course where we were going to be working exclusively with nettle for about a month, so I was very excited. This is the time. I’m ready.

I ended up just starting these nettle infusions and have now been drinking them for probably a little over two years. I did—it was that slow and steady where I really felt my body come back. I felt that depletion and that fatigue start to wane and this revitalizing energy come back. There’s just something so powerful when that happens. When a plant affects you in that way, it’s like you can’t ever go back. There is no—it’s like it’s such a massive shift.

It was funny too because I had randomly gone back in my notes. I found something in my phone. I saw that—this happened in 2023, 2024, this whole situation. Yeah, and I found this note about a dream from 2020 where—the dream was really lovely. I was with my partner, my mom, and my daughter in this beautiful, warm river at night, and there were stars. At the end of the dream, *Urtica dioica* was written. I saw it written. I was like, “That’s weird.” I woke up being like, “huh.” I wrote it down. I was like, this was very symbolic and interesting, but, “Huh. Nettle.” At the time it was like, “Huh. That’s weird.” Now, I think, wow, had I maybe taken heed or listened to that dream and just been like, “I’m going to start taking nettle.” Who knows? Maybe I never would have gone through that kind of depletion or whatever happened. We don’t know, but I think that that’s like—when the plants start showing up in that way, these little—little nudges. It’s like, “Oh, it’s in this essence,” “Oh, it was in this dream,” “Oh, it’s showing up here.” It’s clearly the way that it’s communicating, “Okay, it’s time—time to get rid of whatever barrier you have here and get to work.”



Rosalee de la Forêt:

Who knows, that state of depletion feels like you would have—because of that, you fell in love with nettle so hard.

Juliet Howard:

That's true! That's true. It's a hard way to fall in love, but it's true. It's like—it is. It was, for me, a savior herb. It really, really—it broke that—that enchantment of feeling really disembodied and really not—not like myself, so yeah, very grateful for nettle.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

One thing that really struck me about that too is that nettle is such a nutritive plant, but one that works in the long-term. I feel like, at least, work with it for six months, turning back to nettle over and over again. It's not one that's take-it-once-and-now-done.

Juliet Howard:

Yeah, like, “All good.”

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I guess in that way, it's very much a relationship herb—as I think all herbs are. I think nettle really invites that deeper relationship.

Juliet Howard:

Yeah, I think so too. That's a beautiful way to put it.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's like nettle saying, “Come play. Let's hang out for a while—for a long while.”



Juliet Howard:

Yeah, yeah. It is. It feels like that kind of herb where so many herbalists and folks you talk to who love the plants, nettle is one of those. It's just like, "It's in my daily infusion and has been for decades." It's like you can understand why, but yeah, yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

In that way, I often feel like it is a community plant. I often say that falling in love with a nettle—long nettle infusion is like a rite of passage within the herbal world. It's something I feel like most people go through, at least, in the grass-roots herbalist community, that's what—it's kind of a—an often earlier part of our stage of learning that we learn about it. We fall in love with nettle infusions. We welcome them into our life over and over again. It feels like something that—this would be an interesting poll. Take a big room of herbalists, 100 people. How many—how many of those people have fallen in love with the nettle infusion and have it a big part of their life?

Juliet Howard:

That would be really—that would be really fun to do. That would be most—most of the room. I feel so late to the party. I was like I'd been really deeply engaged with the plants for a long time when all this happened, so it was funny to be—a lot of folks that were in this cohort with me were like, "You're so lucky. You get to experience nettle in this way." It was like first time.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's so true though. It's so great in the herbal world we get that opportunity. I was like that with violet. I kind of came to violet later. It was so much fun of just like, "That's why we never get bored because there are new plants, new relationships, new insights and new ways to play.

Juliet Howard:

Definitely. It's pretty awesome.



Rosalee de la Forêt:

Since we've been talking about the nourishing infusion, you've shared a recipe with us. Let's talk about that and it's—you call it your "Heavy Nettle Daily Tonic."

Juliet Howard:

Yes. Yeah, I tend to work with nettle—pretty much, yeah, daily have an infusion. A lot of times it's simple. Sometimes it's just nettle or nettle with a little licorice root to sweeten it up as a little corrigent. This recipe, I thought we should do something like extra action-packed. I was, at first—with recipes it's so fun to have, like really exciting ones. I was like, "Ooh, maybe a puff pastry with nettle, and like a sheep's feta or something," which sounds lovely, but I need to hone in that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I'll be right over.

Juliet Howard:

Right? Let's make that. But then I was like, truly the way I work with it the most, of course, is these infusions, and that's what's been really such a boon in my life. With this recipe, it starts out with nettle. It's primarily nettle, and then I add a bit of oat straw. With nettle, obviously, it's like nature's vitamin, so we're getting so many vitamins, so many minerals like magnesium, calcium, and iron—and just so much. And then we've got oat straw which has silica, calcium, and magnesium, but also is like a really gentle nervine and so soothing, and so it's adding in even more vitamins and minerals. And then I love to add some rose hips. I love rose hips in almost—pretty much everything for their—I love the taste, that kind of sour-sweet, and that vel—it feels velvety to me, the mouth feel of—especially a cold infusion or just like rose hips once they've gotten cold. It just feels like so velvety and delicious. It also is helpful, that Vitamin C in the rose hips helps you absorb the iron in the nettle, with any non-heme plant irons. They can be harder to absorb, so that Vitamin C from the rose hips really helps that process, and the Vitamin C that's already in nettle. Yeah, so that's really helpful. I like to



add sometimes a little bit of that licorice—just add a little bit of sweet. Of course, that’s got all of its own benefits, but in this, I tend to just use a little for that taste.

This is just a really nice blend to just treat as your daily vitamin and mineral source. My little one likes it. She has luckily developed the taste for—for herbs. She drinks it and likes it. It’s a nice flavor. I feel like the rose hips and the—I don’t know if you use licorice, but even just the rose hips on their own offset a bit of the earthiness. I know sometimes nettle can be—it’s not everyone’s favorite, favorite taste. For some people, at least, for me, I now have grown to love it on its own, but the rose hips are a nice addition there. For me, I love it. I love to brew it for four to eight hours, and then stick it in the fridge—strain it and stick it in the fridge because I just—I like cold drinks. I especially love this one cold. So, yeah, it’s a tasty, tasty daily tonic. And you can just mix and match so much too with whatever plants you’re wanting.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I love this—my staple everyday is three quarters nettle, one quarter oat straw, so-

Juliet Howard:

Oh, great.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Adding rose hips, I have done that before but it’s not something I’ve been doing at all recently, and now, I’m just like I want to do that because as soon as you talked about that velvety mouth-feel, it’s like, oh yeah, I know that.

Juliet Howard:

It’s so good, yeah. Just cold infusion rose hips, oh yes, it’s so good, so yeah, a very nice, nice addition. That’s—it’s a fun one to have and it’s so simple to make, and just such a lovely ritual to just do for yourself. It’s that way to really take care of yourself and you’re getting to do it on your own, which I always find so empowering to be able to be like, wow, I can grow these plants or I can obtain these plants from a lovely local organic farm. I can create this beautiful



drink that's going to support my—my vitamins, my minerals, my vitality. It's pretty, pretty special.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yes, and it's—as we said, it's a drink to fall in love with day after day after day. For the listener, you can download your beautifully illustrated copy of this recipe either by going to herbswithrosaleepodcast.com and looking for this episode, or just check out the show notes, it's in there as well. Thank you so much, Juliet, for sharing that recipe with us.

Juliet Howard:

Thank you and thank you. Those beautiful recipe cards—I feel so honored.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

They are very fun. Tatiana is our botanical illustrator, she creates those, and then Jenny is our graphic designer who puts it all together. I love them too, just a super fun thing to do.

Juliet Howard:

Yeah, it's wonderful.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Is there anything else that you would like to share with—about nettle?

Juliet Howard:

Yeah, I mean there are so many things. Like what we're talking about, I think it's worth giving nettle—for everyone, to give nettle a try for at least three months—three to six months, longer, to give it a go. One thing that I thought was fun—we're talking a lot about textiles and nettle within the story—is that—have you ever done a plant dye with nettle?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

No, I haven't.



Juliet Howard:

Okay, so it's really—it was very fascinating to me how nettle showed up, the colors that it provided. It's this—I'm going to show if it'll come through—this very beautiful kind of luscious golden color, which for me, was just so unexpected with such a verdant plant. I found it really interesting too because in a lot of—I do a lot of plant sits and plant meditation with—either tasting the plant or an essence or a tincture. With nettle, a message that I was given once was like, “giver of golden time.” It was such a beautiful way of thinking of nettle because again, it's golden time. What is that? I think of it as like a time where you do feel vital and you feel present and you feel alive, and that is what nettle does for us. I thought it was so cool to see that signature show up in a plant dye. This plant I would never expect to turn this golden yellow just did that. I love when those little nuances happen where you're like, “Oh wow, gold!” and that makes me want to go down a gold rabbit hole of the symbolism of gold and nettle, and how those two interact, but yeah. I'd say, just with nettle, try to enjoy it in all—all ways and forms.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, beautiful. Thank you for sharing that about the dye. Thank you for the story, and yes, all the love that we're pouring into this wonderfully nutritious plant.

Juliet Howard:

Yeah, thank you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Well, I would love to talk about your book, which I adore.

Juliet Howard:

Thank you.



Rosalee de la Forêt:

This is such a beautiful book. The illustrator did such a lovely job both in the artistry, and also, there's so much to see in here. There are so many different little—I'm trying to think of the frames-

Juliet Howard:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

-have a lot going on in them that's almost like a—like insider's look if you know what's going on you can take a look at those. One of my favorites was elder, and then having the wood, and then the flute. If you know elder, there are so many things in there that we can think about —little berries strung up on top. I'm probably getting ahead of myself though. Let's just start back from the beginning. This is a book that you wrote, *The Girl Whose Garden Comes Alive*. What inspired you to write a children's book in the first place?

Juliet Howard:

Yeah, I mean, a lot had to do with my daughter. At the time, kind of the inklings of the book were coming in, she was four or five. She's a big inspiration. Of course, growing up with me, she's out in the—in the yard a lot and knew very young, she was—how to find plantain and yarrow. Her first story was actually—I think she was two and she got stung by a bee. Her dad had ice and I went and found plantain. She would tell people that story. I just—she was a big inspiration. She was at kindergarten giving—she'd call it “herbie consults” where she tell her friends-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh my gosh, I love that so much!



Juliet Howard:

I know. It's pretty great, and so she was a big inspiration. The story in the book of the bee sting is her story. The character's name, Freyja, which is her name. Not a big jump! So she was a big inspiration. It's just—it's her and really just thinking about the magic of childhood and how so often as we grow, when we have to deal with the difficulties of life that a lot of that magic and that wonder can be lost. In writing this, the inspiration was to really—really just like—I don't even want to say "bring back magic" because for children, I think the magic is closer to them. It's there, but to really solidify that—that magic and that connection to the plant world, and also secretly hoping that the parents and caregivers and grandparents who are reading it are like, "Ooh, let's"—are getting excited too. I wanted it to be a really simple way for children to be able to connect with plants that grow pretty abundantly in a lot of places; really, a focus on kind of backyard herbalism with plants like yarrow and plantain. There's lavender and elder and lemon balm.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Every plant in here is my favorite plant. Every single one.

Juliet Howard:

That was so hard too. They are all so great, and then nettle—nettle did not show up in the book. I would, of course, love that, but I was like—when I kept writing, I was like, I got to stop at a certain, manageable amount of plants, so I ended up with seven.

It's just all about teaching the children—in the book the main character, the plants start talking to her, so she starts to understand these plants and the gifts that they offer, but it's also just about building reciprocal relationships. In each chapter where she meets each plant, she's always bringing a gift. At the end of each chapter, you get to do a recipe or preparation that was in that chapter, and then by the end of the book, there's some fun, mindful ways for kids to connect with plants, whether it's just through their senses or breathing with the plant, or drawing a plant – just fun ways to start to deepen that connection. But, yeah, and I—the illustrator, Danielle—just like you were saying, I got so lucky. I was so, so picky. I knew the look



and feel I wanted for the book. I just was like, “Maybe I have some art talent.” I was like, “I’ll just try.” I was like, “No, what am I thinking? I can’t. No way!” Immediately, I need to find an artist and it was so hard. I was just scanning through all sorts of sites and Instagram and all these places. When I came upon her work, I was just like, “This is so beautiful. Who knows if this will happen,” but ended up reaching out, and luckily, she was interested in the project. She was like, “I won’t be able to do this for”—I think it was like six or eight months or something like that or—but I was like, “Cool. Whenever you can do it I’m in,” because I just—she is an herbalist in her own right and just so connected to the land where she is. She’s in England. Again, what I love about her artwork is all of that symbolism that’s imbued, like you said, on those borders. It’s like, if you know you know. She had ideas for the pictures, but I trusted her pretty completely because her—her work is stunning. That elder image was actually the first image she showed me completed, and I was blown away.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Wow, that’s so fun.

Juliet Howard:

So, yeah, it’s pretty, pretty special, and then yeah, I mean it’s just-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Here we have the yarrow and you talked about the Achilles’ heel in the story, so we have that. That’s like if you know, you know. I feel like—I’m going to maybe just go over some of the things you said—but I wanted to because it’s the things I love about this book as well. Each chapter is like its own little mini essay about plant medicine that’s delightful and joyful and fun with the medicinal things. I love that all of the—the challenges that Freyja comes up against are very relatable for a kid, from bee stings to having an overactive mind at night, to being grumpy and annoyed. The first time I read this, I was grumpy and annoyed that day, and then she finds lemon balm. I was like, “Okay, I hear you. I get it, I get it.”



Juliet Howard:

You're like, "Alright, okay. Lemon balm, where are ya?"

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So, yeah, there are just so many different layers. I absolutely adored the reciprocal aspect of it. I loved the stones, and then I just loved that there was dancing and singing as reciprocity too, which I found really joyful. And then it was like, when I couldn't love the book anymore, I loved the ending of the connection practices, which—that was really lovely too, and just how you tied that into, "Here's—here's how we can communicate with plants." There are just all these different layers to this book from just being gorgeous, to being the story being engaging and informative and fun and joyful, so it's absolutely lovely.

Juliet Howard:

Thank you, that means so much. I really, really appreciate that. Thank you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And then you just got this—this herbalist on the back saying it's cool.

Juliet Howard:

No biggie.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

"This book is a perfect way to teach children about the healing power of plants in a way that is enchanting and practical. – Rosemary Gladstar."

Juliet Howard:

Yeah, that was—one of those dreams where I was like, "Oh, wow. What if—what if Rosemary could read this and say something?" I was just, of course, again, the magic around this book, like getting Danielle to be the artist and having Rosemary Gladstar not only read it, but say such beautiful things about the book. It just—my heart just melted so I feel so, so grateful for



that. I know that she's so kind and is—I wasn't shocked that she would do something like that for someone she doesn't—doesn't really know.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I noted earlier when you said you studied with Rosemary's program how your face lit up. I was like, I hope every one of us that's how our face looks whenever we think or talk about Rosemary—just our face lights up.

Juliet Howard:

Yes. What a gift to the world to create that feeling for people. It was just such, too, like a cyclical moment where it's like, her program is really what set me on a more dedicated plant path, and so to be able to ten years later have her read this book, it just means—mean so much.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's absolutely lovely. Thank you so much for sharing this with the world. I highly recommend that people buy it. I don't have young kids in my life right now and I needed to read this book for the lemon balm in it, so [crosstalk]

Juliet Howard:

That's awesome.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Where can people—where's the best place for people to find your book and you?

Juliet Howard:

They can find it at—it's very long—TheGirlWhoseGardenComesAlive.com. That is a great place because you can just order it directly from me. There's also an email form if you want to get in touch, that's a nice little spot to do it. I'm on Instagram under Daymoon Botanicals. I am a fair-weather social media person, which I'm—I always feel like I need to commit or leave, to do



one or the other because I'm a little wishy-washy there, so the website is probably the best place to get a hold of me.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

We'll be sure to get that in the show notes as well. Before you go, I have one last question for you, and that is, what's something that the herbs have taught you that maybe you weren't looking to learn?

Juliet Howard:

I love this question. Many, many, many things, but the first thing that pops up is that—that we're never alone, and that we are deeply connected and interwoven into the natural world. *We are* the natural world. We forget that, but we are a huge part of it and we are connected. I just—I think of it—it's like when you're getting to know plants, think of it like if you're in a big crowd of people, and then you see a couple of friends, and you're just like, "There are my friends. Yay! Okay, great!" It's like that with plants—once you start seeing them, that green wall becomes a space that's holding these dear friends that have impacted your life in beautiful ways.

There's a story I think of where a few years ago, I got—I got to go on this trip to England. I was out with a group of people that I didn't—didn't know, but I went. Leading up to the trip and at the beginning of the trip, there were a lot of things that were happening. I was like, "I don't know if this was the right decision or were these bad omens? Was this the universe telling me not to go?" Also, my daughter, Freyja, was much younger at the time—I had guilt around that. But I felt this call to go on this trip and was lucky to be in a space to be able to do that.

I got to the place, and like I said, I had this I-don't-know-if-this-was-right, so I immediately went on a walk. It was a beautiful English countryside. I went on this walk alone and immediately saw hawthorn. I saw a mugwort. I saw red clover. I saw yarrow and it was like nervous system just—complete reset. It was like, "Wow, my friends are here! I'm okay no matter what. I am connected to this place. I know these plants. They know me." It doesn't



matter where they are in the world. It's like you feel that sense of familiarity and depth and care, and that being—being connected and cared for.

That really shifted things for me, and then, of course, the trip was great. It was fine. There were hiccups as there always are, but it was like the trip itself after that was great. The people were wonderful. The experiences were wonderful, and it was so—just great to also be reminded that—how held and how connected and how truly interwoven we are with these plants and with our—with our natural surroundings. I think that's a big lesson that you might not expect to learn, especially when you're starting out, you're like, "Oh, materia medica and all these terms! There are so many plants," is that—such a huge lesson from the plants is that you're a part of this and we're—they're here to take care of us and we're here to take care of them. It's this beautiful relationship that we get to be a part of. It's pretty, just a remarkable and beautiful thing to remember.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That is a beautiful thing to remember. Thank you so much. I've had a very similar experience too of-

Juliet Howard:

Oh, nice! Was it when you're traveling or-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, yeah, and absolutely in finding plant friends, and just be, "Oh, okay. Nervous system reset. We're all good. We're all good. We're here."

Juliet Howard:

Yeah, it is! It is. It sounds probably silly to someone who hasn't encountered that, but it's such—it really does. It feels like you're seeing your friend. You're like you can have a sigh of relief. You're like, "Ah, okay. Hoo! We're good. I got this!"



Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's been so long for me now that there's actually—I just talked to somebody the other day who didn't know plants at all. In my mind—I'm not coming from a judgy place—I mean maybe kind of, sort of, but in my mind, I'm like, "How do you live-

Juliet Howard:

Right, right!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Without knowing the plants around you?" That perception and that way of walking through the world feels so alien to me now, not to know the plants.

Juliet Howard:

Which is such a gift because I think about that too. When I was younger, when I didn't know, like, "How was I—what was I doing to deal with this or that?" All these different things when you get to know the plants, you have these gifts; these things that they offer and this sense of empowerment of knowing like, "Oh, wow, this is happening. I can talk to this—this friend that's a plant and they will help me through this." That's a pretty, pretty invaluable gift, and so it is—it's good to be reminded that not everyone has that. That's why it's so important for herbalists to gather and spark that in the folks.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That reminds me several years ago, I went back to where I was raised. I was—I hadn't been back really since I had become an herbalist. It had been a couple of decades, I went back and—and I saw—I remember just seeing mullein. I remember thinking, "Whoa! Back in the day I had no idea that that was mullein," and that mullein would be here, and just this recognition that I really didn't know the plants then—so it was kind of interesting that they were there all along and I was just blind to them back then.



Juliet Howard:

It's so cool.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I thought it was a really interesting thing, like I've always been surrounded by these friends.

Juliet Howard:

Exactly! That perspective shifts because it's like they—they knew you. You were like, “Oh,” and then you come back and be like, “Yes, you were here. You were here when I was young and providing.” That's really, really cool.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you so much, Juliet, for being here, again, for sharing your gifts with the world, this beautiful book, and for sharing the love of folklore and story with nettle. It's just been absolutely lovely to spend time with you.

Juliet Howard:

Agreed. It's been so, so wonderful. I'm so happy to be here. Thank you so much for having me on. Yeah, I hope we can get together and make some—some nettle pastry of some kind.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I'm in.

Juliet Howard:

Some nettle infusions. A nettle day.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

You had me at “nettle.”



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Juliet Howard:

Good, good, good.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I'm in.

Juliet Howard:

Let's do this.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Sounds lovely. Thank you.

Juliet Howard:

Awesome! Thank you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thanks so much for listening. You can download your illustrated recipe card from today's episode. Just head to herbswithrosaleepodcast.com or check out the show notes for a link. If you're not already subscribed, I'd love to have you as part of this herbal community so I can deliver even more herbal goodies your way.

This podcast is made possible in part by our awesome, amazing, incredible students. This week's Student Spotlight is on Emily Leigh in Ohio. Emily is a long-term member of our herbal community. I often see her in class and she has joined us in courses like Cooling Inflammation, Building Resilience, Herbal Energetics, and now, the Podcast Circle, and our new course, Grow. She brings a thoughtful and grounded approach to her learning, along with a strong sense of curiosity and care for the people around her. She's especially active in live events and community spaces where her practical questions and shared experiences help deepen the conversation for everyone. From revisiting herbs like ashwagandha with fresh awareness, to experimenting with herbal recipes inspired by podcast episodes, Emily's learning is both



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personal and generously shared. Her steady presence and willingness to engage make her a meaningful part of the community, and a beautiful example of how herbalism can grow over time through both practice and connection.

To honor her contributions, Mountain Rose Herbs is sending Emily a \$50 gift certificate to stock up on their incredible selection of organically and sustainably sourced herbal supplies. Thank you so much, Mountain Rose Herbs, for supporting our amazing students. And if you'd like to deepen your skills as an herbalist, you can check out my foundational courses at herbswithrosalee.com.

Okay, you've made it to the end of the show, which means you get a gold star and this herbal tidbit.

At the end of this episode, I want to leave you with something to look for next time you meet nettle out in the wild. Not all nettles are the same. Most of us are familiar with *Urtica dioica* as a species, but there are other species too like *Urtica gracilis* or *Urtica urens*, which you'll find in parts of North America, and there's even varieties out there that barely sting or don't sting at all. It's incredible when you find those. So, what's growing near you?

Also, here's another layer to that: nettle isn't just important for us. It's a vital host plant for several butterfly species, so that means without nettle, their caterpillars simply couldn't survive, so entire life cycles depend on these plants quietly growing along the edges of fields and trails. So, next time you brush up against nettle or perhaps even get stung by it, you might pause and wonder not just what it offers you, but who else is relying on it too.

As always, thanks for joining me. I'll see you in the next episode.