

Betsy Miller:

You know we think of peaches as being such an incredible food, but we don't always think about the medicinal properties of the tree. Peach leaf is the classic herb for the "hot red tongue pattern." Do you mind if I show my tongue on your podcast?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

No. Please.

Betsy Miller:

Okay.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

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

In today's episode, I'm joined by Betsy Miller, a clinical herbalist and nutritionist, and we're talking about an herb that doesn't get nearly enough attention. That's peach leaf. Betsy shares how she works with peach leaf for things like nausea, anxiety, and digestive discomfort, especially in cases where heat, irritation or sensitivity are part of the picture. It's really a beautiful example of how understanding plant energetics can open up options that are often overlooked.

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.

Betsy, I'm so thrilled to have you here. Welcome!

Betsy Miller:

Thank you! I'm so excited.



Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, so we go way back. I don't even know how far back, but we go way back.

Betsy Miller:

I think we first met at a Kiva fest-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

We must have.

Betsy Miller:

At least 13 to 14 years ago.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, that sounds about right.

Betsy Miller:

Give or take, yeah. I think that's probably where we first crossed paths and met, and started building a friendship.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah, yeah, and I got to see you just recently in Michigan, which was lovely-

Betsy Miller:

Yes!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And I've been wanting you on the show for so long, so it's really nice to have you here, and-

Betsy Miller:

Thank you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Despite knowing you for over a decade, there's lots of pieces of your herbal story that I don't know so I'm excited to dive in there and hear from you.

Betsy Miller:

Yay! Wonderful. I'm so excited to be here. I mean, I've, in addition to just loving you as a person, I've followed your work for the last decade or more. I just—I love your blog and your podcast. I'm honored that you wanted to include me, so thank you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Of course, of course. Yeah, yeah. Well, I'd love to just dive in of like where—how did the plants call to you, Betsy? What—what happened to bring you upon this path?

Betsy Miller:

It's a funny story, actually. So, when I was little, I went to a summer camp in the Catocin Mountains in Maryland. It was—I think I started when I was 11 or 12 years old at the summer camp. It was a sleepaway camp and each week that we were there was—you could be there for two weeks or four weeks—we would go on a three-day trip either backpacking or canoeing – backpacking in the Appalachian Mountains or canoeing on Potomac or the Shenandoah. On one of these canoeing trips—I should preface this—I grew up in Takoma Park, Maryland, very urban environment, not a lot of nature exposure outside of spending time on the Chesapeake Bay. Neither one of my parents knew a thing about medicinal plants. At the summer camp, one of the weeks that we were canoeing, I stepped out of the canoe onto the muddy bank. I was wearing my—my lifejacket and my bathing suit. No shorts, no pants, and I slipped and I fell barelegged and bare-cheeked into a patch of stinging nettle. And that was my, “I hate nature! Get me out of here! Get me back to suburbia! I don't ever want to do this again!” moment. My camp counselor, she was an herbalist, and she took me up onto the bank. She had me lay down on my belly, on my sleeping mat. She made a poultice for me of plantain and burdock leaves, and put it over my legs.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So cool.

Betsy Miller:

Yeah! And immediately, the sting started to subside, and that was my, “Oh, my God, what is this witchcraft? I have to learn.” So, that put me on—on the path of the plants. Also, Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman, I grew up on that show. I always have to—I always have to drop that in there. That experience of viscerally feeling what a plant could do in the moment really set me on this path of the plants, so I started self-studying. In high school, I wanted to go right out of high school to an herb school or Naropa or somewhere I could study plants. My parents said, “For the love of God, go get a real education and then you can do whatever you want with your life,” so I went up to Vermont and studied environmental studies there with a focus on forest gardening—how to grow the medicinal plants in a forest environment. I got to do an apprenticeship with an herbalist up there, and then came back to Maryland and went to, when it was called the “Tai Sophia Institute,” to study clinical herbalism, and then now, I’m in clinical practice and teach. That’s—that’s how the plants called me to the work.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, I love that, and you recently went back to school too, right?

Betsy Miller:

I am in school.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

In school.

Betsy Miller:

Yep, I’m in school. I’m getting my doctorate in clinical nutrition, because I’m also a nutritionist, in addition to the herbs, the partnership between plants and food. A lot of your



work has found its way into the way I practice, and I teach around nutrition and thinking about how can we get more phytochemical diversity in plants in our diet through food because that's where we can get these heavy hitting therapeutic doses, not just through teas and tinctures, but eating the plants. I love that aspect of—your work really speaks to me, in particular. I'm back in school getting my doctorate in clinical nutrition. I'm in the homestretch. I've got one year left out of a-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, wow.

Betsy Miller:

What's—what's been a four-year program because I'm doing it at a much slower pace, so I don't lose my mind as I work and raise small children, and do all the things.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Mm-hmm. Oh, that's wonderful. Yeah, I've really loved your sharings on that—the nutrition herbal side as well, so that's been a fun thing to see-

Betsy Miller:

Thank you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Emerge from you. Really smart sharing on that.

Betsy Miller:

Thank you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you for sharing that—that getting the—the very, very real introduction to nettles and having that to be like a turning point, that has to be one of the best herbal stories I’ve ever heard.

Betsy Miller:

Thank you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That’s a good one.

Betsy Miller:

Paul—Paul Strauss, one of my teachers, he’s out in Ohio at Equinox Botanicals. He does a lot with United Plant Savers. He calls nettles, “awareness medicine.” They teach us to be aware of our environment, so that was my first visceral experience with awareness medicine. I have a big patch of nettles in my backyard that I actually transplanted from Paul from his property. I’ve been teaching my children about awareness medicine because the nettles are growing right around my elderberry tree. Whenever we go harvest elderberries or elderflowers, I have to remind them the nettles are here and we have to be careful because they’ll let us know if we’re getting too much in their space.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

You know jim, he talks about poison ivy in the same way, as awareness medicine. I would way rather have nettle around as my awareness medicine than poison ivy.

Betsy Miller:

Because nettle awareness is in the moment, and then it at least goes away. I feel like poison ivy awareness just—it does not leave you alone for quite a bit, so I agree.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

A little bit more intense. It's a higher—a higher impact for sure. Thank you for sharing that. I just wanted to say too how cool that the—there was an herbalist there that just slathered you in green—plantain and burdock.

Betsy Miller:

Right!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's so cool. Just think—I feel like that's just very—it's an inspiring story to think about how many times we might turn to the plants to help somebody, and then how that ripples outward. Who knows what that's going to inspire in them?

Betsy Miller:

The green spark, right?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

They gave us Betsy, so it's awesome.
You chose peach leaf for your plant.

Betsy Miller:

Yes.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And I'm so excited to dive into that. What spoke to you about peach that you wanted to choose that as your plant?

Betsy Miller:

I feel like it's—it's a lesser known plant medicine. We think of peach as being such an incredible food, but we don't always think about the medicinal properties of the tree. It's one that I work with closely in my practice because I work a lot with prenatal clients, and peach is



one of my favorite medicines for prenatal nausea. We hear a lot about ginger for helping with—with nausea during pregnancy, but peach leaf is my go-to for that. It's—it's just such—and there are so many applications for it outside of just nausea. I love talking about the—the plants that aren't quite as shiny in the herb world and don't get their moment in the sun as often. I mean, *Rosaceae*, I can't not talk about *Rosaceae* plants. If I can only use one plant family, I'd probably pick the *Rosaceae*.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Hear, hear.

Betsy Miller:

Right. I'm preaching to the choir on that one. I feel like rose has been talked a lot about in—not just your podcast, but in general. Peach just doesn't get as much attention, so I like giving attention to the lesser known.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah. Yeah, like you said, it's so accepted as medicine, but we don't always—sorry—so accepted as food, but we don't always know it as medicine. Wherever you'd like to dive in with peach, I'm excited to hear what you have to share.

Betsy Miller:

Sure. Peach, being part of the rose family, has that classic, just cooling and astringent nature to it. I always associate the *Rosaceae* family—I feel like it gets so much attention within the nervous system, but I always associate *Rosaceae* with the gut. So much misplaced fire ends up in the gut with heat patterns. To me, peach leaf is the classic herb for the hot red tongue pattern. I did a lot of tongue diagnosis training as part of my—my early herbal education, and I have the—do you mind if I show my tongue on your podcast?

Rosalee de la Forêt:

No, please.



Betsy Miller:

Okay.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

It's really exciting.

Betsy Miller:

I have the very classic-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

First time ever, folks.

Betsy Miller:

Yes! I have the very classic peach leaf tongue, which is red and pointy. I have a very red, pointy tongue. When you see—it might be a little tinged with—I'm drinking one of my favorite herbal hot chocolates right now, so it also might be a little brown. I apologize for that. Anytime I see that red, pointy tongue, I always think heat pattern in the gut and I want to bring some cooling and—and astringent nature to that heat pattern. Peach and rose and meadowsweet, all these amazing *Rosaceae* family plants have that ability just to cool and soften and gently tone the gut and focus on those—those important tight cell junctions that often get comprised when we have excessive heat patterns in the gut. I see that translating so well to the pregnancy pattern where I use it, which is nausea during pregnancy.

I think of nausea as just misplaced heat. It's coming up when that heat should be staying in our, you know—our digestive fire should be staying put. Peach just really helps to temper that rising flame in the gut associated with nausea, especially when ginger either doesn't work, which for some people it doesn't, ginger did nothing for me. In my first pregnancy, I had horrible nausea and ginger did nothing, but peach, just even holding the tincture in my mouth for a moment before I swallowed it, really helped to allow me to eat during my first

trimester which was so important, obviously, for growing a child, the mother needs to eat, and I could not eat well because food just—it made me feel like I just—I couldn't handle it. Peach helped me get rid of that feeling of everything coming back up. It's so specific for that reflux, that nausea either in or out of pregnancy, and just excessively hot pitta or mesomorphic digestive patterns.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's so key. Can you imagine just how many people out there don't recognize peach leaf for this nausea during pregnancy?

Betsy Miller:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's like one of those ones you wish you could scream from the rooftops. If you're just—even though if you know about ginger and you know about peach leaf, one of the two are going to really help you, and how many people suffer through that period.

Betsy Miller:

The two even go together so beautifully in formulation for working with nausea. I always love including some kind of cooling and soothing demulcent in there too because peach can be a little bit drying like a lot of the *Rosaceae* family plants, which is great because we want to work on those tight cell junctions because whenever there's inflammation in the gut, it can impact—or the epithelial junctions that we need to maintain the integrity of the gut, but it can also be a little drying. I always love combining a chickweed or a marshmallow, something that's going to give that mucilaginous goo to the lining of the gut, so the peach leaf, marshmallow, ginger combination is so nice for cooling and soothing the nausea. It's like—that's my powerhouse combination.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, that's lovely. I love the nuance there, all the energetics. Alright, so, nausea during pregnancy, really, any kind of nausea though, but just typically that's where you have worked with it a lot with benefits.

Betsy Miller:

Yeah. I had food poisoning—when was that? Back in the summer and it really helped with my food poisoning nausea as well.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Sorry about that, but thanks for doing the test on that one.

Betsy Miller:

Yep.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Reporting back.

Betsy Miller:

Yes.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Alright. So, we've talked about for digestive heat—thank you for the tongue illustration, very appreciated, for nausea. Where else would you like to go with peach?

Betsy Miller:

Nervous system. Like many of the rose family plants, it's just such a calming and peaceful nervine. Especially, when—often when we see a heat pattern in the gut outside of an actual pathology like an IBD or an IBS, if it's someone who just runs energetically hot, they're choleric or pitta or mesomorphic, we often see that heat present in the nervous system as well. We might be prone—more prone to anxiety or anger or just excessive energy within the

nervous system. It's one of those herbs that I feel like it's just so gently like, "take a deep breath." When we first started this and we were closing our eyes for a minute and breathing, I was visualizing myself under my favorite peach tree. It just—it has that effect on the nervous system, just the cooling, quieting, and almost dissipating effect on—on trapped anxiety or trapped heat. It's just so diffusive and spreading—spreading that heat out so it can release. Almost like, if you cook with an Instant Pot and you release the valve, and the steam comes out, that's kind of how I feel like peach leaf and blue vervain—I use that combination together a lot. They kind of help release that valve on—on anger and anxiety when it's trapped in the nervous system. So that's another area where I love it.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Ooh, I love that. That's a really interesting duo there. Great analogy too with the Instant Pot. Love it.

Betsy Miller:

Thank you. I'm very afraid of my Instant Pot. Releasing that valve terrifies me, so I have to do it with a wooden spoon so I can stay a little bit away from it. It just has that release of pressure, so it's a fun metaphor.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's kind of hilarious because I refuse to use the Instant Pot, and so I just call in the husband every time it needs to be used, which is like every night these days and-

Betsy Miller:

Nice.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I'm doing an overnight decoction. It's like we have our little—our little team. I put the herbs together in the water, and then he comes and does the thing. I know it's safe, but there's something about it.



Betsy Miller:

It's terrifying. Terrifying but safe.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Peach leaf and blue vervain, that's really a lovely combination that I've never considered before.

Betsy Miller:

Oh, it's so nice. I take that with me whenever I'm going into situations that I feel either uncomfortable or that make me nervous. I hate flying—fun little fact about me. Planes make me very nervous, so I take blue vervain and peach leaf, skullcap and rose is my—my “flying blend” to help me calm down and not feel as fearful. Any situation that really—it causes that build up of anxiety or anger or fear in the nervous system. It's a great combination that blue vervain. Again, it's just that release valve.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Yeah. Yeah, it's lovely. Betsy, now, I want to go back to digestion because I just-

Betsy Miller:

Okay.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Something just popped into my head.

Betsy Miller:

Sure.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I've really been enjoying your bitters and I bought a bunch of them in Michigan when I saw you. They were just—oh, my gosh, they just taste so good. Bitter and good. There's your hibiscus bitters which are amazing.

Betsy Miller:

Thank you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That orange one that was grated in the special way, the cacao ones are amazing. Unfortunately, also my husband likes them a lot so I've had to share. They've just been so much fun. I'm curious. Now, do you have a peach leaf bitter? Do you use that-

Betsy Miller:

I don't have a peach leaf bitter, but I really want to, especially for my pregnancy clients because digestion can be so challenging during pregnancy, because literally, all your organs are getting squished up by the baby. It can be—you get full easier, and then you get that bilious reflux. It just—bitters can be so helpful, but many of them are contraindicated during pregnancy like gentian, classic bitter. We don't want to do it during pregnancy. I've been playing around with a peach leaf, dandelion, dandelion root, and orange peel bitter that I'm going to bring to whichever conference I go to next. I haven't been selling one up to this point, but I've been playing around with different flavors and combinations, and using them with certain clients that are really excited about experimenting.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Cool. Call me. Let me know where—where that conference is.

Betsy Miller:

I'll just send you some. I'll just send you some and you can—you can give me your feedback.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Okay. I guess I will do that. I will force myself to do that for you, for the benefit of [crosstalk]

Betsy Miller:

Thank you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Alright, so thanks for that digression. Your bitter formulas are just incredible. It's exciting.

Betsy Miller:

I just—I have so much fun with flavor. I am a big believer in medicine should be an enjoyable experience. We should like taking the herbs that we're taking. There are some that are going to be challenging with taste and that's okay, but when we can make medicine magical and delicious and we look forward to taking it everyday, I think that adds so much value to the—the therapeutic effect of taking them, just like sitting with a cup of tea that really—the ritual of making tea, watching the herb steep and holding the hot mug in your hand, adds so much nervine activity to a calming blend. I think that taste can add medicine as much as the herbs themselves.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Absolutely, yeah, and you do a good job with that. What you have shared with us is a peach leaf elixir.

Betsy Miller:

Yes.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And I'm wondering if you will walk us through that.

Betsy Miller:



Sure, absolutely. I love making peach leaf as an elixir, again, because taste. I think that the—either honey or you can use sugar, just kind of is reminiscent of the sweetness we expect when we bite into a peach. You can even use fresh peaches. I didn't include that in the recipe, but it's just a little fun addition. You can, if you're making this in the summer when the peaches are fresh, you can take some fruit and chop it up, and add it in there with the peach leaf and the honey and the sugar, and it just—oh, my God. It almost caramelizes the recipe, in a way. It's so good. The key is using either extremely fresh peach leaves, like literally, off the tree and into the—into the alcohol or using fully dried peach leaves because wilted peach leaves are going to have a higher concentration of those cyanogenic glycosides. We don't want to use wilted peach leaves, so either completely fresh or fully dried.

And then, this is one of the medicines that I just make folk style. I think there's absolute value in the—I don't like to say necessarily scientific method where we do a one to five or a one to ten because all—*all* medicine making is magic and *all* medicine making is science, whether or not we're measuring. But there are times where we do want to know we're getting a specific dose of a particular herb or constituent to have a, if possible, predictable therapeutic outcome. With medicine like this that I'm using for just nausea or digestive support or nervous system relaxation, I don't necessarily need to be as precise. I will make it folk method where I'll take either my fresh or my dried peach leaves, fill up my glass jar, add the alcohol. If I'm doing fully fresh peach leaves. I like to do anywhere from 85% to 90% alcohol over that to account for the water content of the fresh leaves. If I'm doing dried peach leaves, I'll do 40% alcohol by volume vodka. It tastes really—if you're going to do the peach fruit in there, do brandy because it tastes so good in the brandy. And then make sure all the leaves are completely covered. And then you can either add the honey or the sugar while the peach leaves are macerating or after you strain it. Totally personal preference. Sometimes—if you're straining through cheesecloth or muslin cloth and you're squeezing it out, it can get a little sticky all over your hands if you've added the sugar or the honey while it's macerating. You can totally wait until after it's done macerating and then add the sweetener. I usually do it anywhere from 5% to 10% by volume, honey or sugar for that nice little touch of sweet to bring out the peach—the peachness of the leaves.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Also makes a nice mouthfeel too. It adds the sweetness and it also just takes away some of the harshness of the alcohol as well. I like that.

Betsy Miller:

Yes, exactly. The alcohol can be super biting.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I'm wondering—just trying to think about people who are—they're interested, maybe they don't know how to get peach leaves and when to harvest them. Do you have any tips on either of those?

Betsy Miller:

Yes. If you can find a local orchard—I'm lucky my son goes to a farm preschool here in Virginia and they have peach leaves. I can just go harvest some of their peach leaves, and that's where I get mine. But if you have a local orchard that grows peaches, ideally, ones that are not spraying their—their trees with heavy pesticides—that's always a concern with—with peaches because they—they tend to be very susceptible to pests. Ideally, finding an orchard that's not doing heavy spraying, and just reaching out and saying, "Hey, in the spring, when the peach leaves are starting to come out, can I harvest some leaves from your tree?" Most orchards were like, "Okay." They don't really understand why, but they're not super opposed to it. That's one way to do it. And then there are—there are some growers that will carry peach leaf. I haven't found a good one recently. Years ago, I had—I had a connection with a farm that they would send me dried peach leaf. They've since gone out of business, that orchard, but there's a great, great, great herb company in—in Texas, Texas Medicinals. It used to be owned by Ginger Webb and she recently sold it, but they have such amazing peach products. If you're not able to make your own peach leaf elixir, Texas Medicinals is where I highly recommend getting. They've got a peach leaf elixir, just regular peach leaf tincture. I think

they even have some dried tea blends with peach leaf in it, if I remember correctly. I love, love, love Texas Medicinals peach products.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Likewise. Actually, I had forgotten that they have such great ones, but I have tried theirs and they're fabulous, so I second that recommendation. For people who want to try this out, you can get your beautifully illustrated recipe card at herbswithrosaleepodcast.com or just check out the show notes. One of my favorite things is hearing back when people make these, so-

Betsy Miller:

Yes.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

When you make your peach leaf elixir, then let us know how it goes on the medicine making side, just how you feel, all of that.

Hey, it's Rosalee. You know, creating this podcast has been one of the most rewarding parts of my herbal work, and if you found something meaningful here, whether it's a new perspective, a favorite recipe or just a sense of calm, I want to let you know there's a good way to go even deeper. It's called the "Podcast Circle." Inside you'll get access to live classes taught by some of my favorite herbal teachers, behind-the-scenes updates, and a beautiful library of herbal resources that we've gathered over the years. But more than that, it's a space to connect with fellow plant lovers who care about the same things you do. And truly, your membership helps make this podcast possible. It's how we keep the episodes coming and the herbal goodness flowing. So, if you're ready to be part of something more, something rooted in connection, head over to HerbalPodcastCircle.com. I'd love to see you there.

Oh, before we go on, just in terms of harvesting, Betsy, do you have thoughts on preferences of harvesting leaves in the spring or the summer? Or do you see a big difference in that?



Betsy Miller:

I typically harvest leaves in the spring and the early summer before the fruits are fully formed because when the fruits are coming out, that's when the—that's when the tree is devoting more of its energy into fruit production. When the leaves are starting to come out, that's when more of the energy is in the leaf. Kind of like when we think about roots, most roots we're going to harvest in the fall when that energy is going back down into the root for the winter. Whenever I'm harvesting any plant, I try to think about, "When is the plant devoting most of its energy to that particular part?" and that's when I harvest.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Nice. Thank you for that and also for this wonderful recipe.

Betsy Miller:

Yes, absolutely.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I'm lucky to have a peach tree. I've never made a peach leaf elixir before. I've worked with the pits, but not the leaves specifically, so I'm excited to try that once those leaves are coming out in the new year.

Betsy Miller:

You can—you can add pits. You can add twigs. You can add fruit. All parts of the tree are so beneficial.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Absolutely. Wonderful! Is—that was kind of a nice little foray into the medicine making aspects. Are there any other aspects of peach you want to talk about before we move on?

Betsy Miller:

Oh, I do like using the dried leaves in a salve. It's great for anything hot, red and itchy on the skin. It combines so well with chickweed, plantain, a lot of the herbs that we classically think about for a hot, red—hot, red and itchy presentation. Peach leaf adds such a nice touch to that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's nice. That actually—that's one of my favorite duos, is plantain and peach. Those go together so well for-

Betsy Miller:

Yes.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Those hot, red, itchy things, so yeah, that's lovely.

Betsy Miller:

Yeah.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you for bringing the peach leaf to us, Betsy.

Betsy Miller:

Absolutely!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

And I'm loving your formulation notes too. Those indications as well, just the formulations as well. That's going to be very helpful for folks.

Betsy Miller:

Thank you.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I'm excited to try the peach leaf and the blue vervain together.

Betsy Miller:

Yes, I will send you some.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Awesome! Thanks. I feel like I'm just getting all the privilege here. I'll take it. I would love to hear what you have going on in your herbal world and offerings that you have, etc., and where people can find more from you.

Betsy Miller:

Sure. I feel like I'm—I'm reemerging after, like I said, a seven-year hiatus of focusing on my kids. They're—they're getting so big now. They're seven and almost five. I'm finally starting to come back into the herb world after just taking some time to focus on them, so it's—it's kind of—it's like finding myself again, which has been such—such a great feeling. I think it's pretty easy to lose yourself in motherhood, which can be good. It also is hard and this is allowing me to find myself again. My identity outside of "mommy" is coming back into the—the plant world. I'm really excited to be getting back into the conference circuit. I taught at the Great Lakes Herb Faire this past year, and a couple of online little conferences, so I'm really excited to be both just attending and teaching at a few in the coming—in the coming year. That's—I did a lot of formal education with—with plants. I went to Tai Sophia. I did a lot of formal education, but the herb conferences I feel like are really what opened my eyes to the magic of the herb world, hearing from so many different voices and perspectives outside of the almost sterile clinical education that I got. I just—I can't express enough how much I love and encourage everyone to attend conferences whenever possible. That's probably the thing-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I love that, yes.

Betsy Miller:

Yeah, that's probably what I'm most excited about, is getting back into the conference circuit. Another thing-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Do you have any that you're actually eyeing next year? Sorry to interrupt.

Betsy Miller:

Yes. Oh, no. Please interrupt. Great Lakes Herb Faire, I just—that was so much fun.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Are you going to go back?

Betsy Miller:

Yes. Always. That's going to be my regular calendar event every year. I get to see jim mcdonald. Hopefully, you. So many of my friends go to that conference. That's—that's my—my permanent place holder whether or not I'm teaching or just attending, is Great Lakes Herb Faire. I really want to get back to the Good Medicine Confluence. I just—I never get out to the Southwest. That place is just so—I have Appalachia here, where I am, which is ancient and magical, and then the Southwest is just so powerful in a different way. I really love making yearly pilgrimages to the Southwest whenever possible. Good Medicine Confluence is another one that I'm really hoping to get to. I've never been to the Midwest Women's Herbal Conference, but I'd really like to attend that one at some point.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Oh, fun. Those are really lovely. Wonderful!

Betsy Miller:

Yeah. What else have I got going on? So, I-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I hear you might be writing a book—is what I hear.

Betsy Miller:

Yeah! Yes, that's-

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Word on the street.

Betsy Miller:

Word on the street. I've been—I've been working for a while now on a manuscript for a pediatric herbalism book just because I feel like we don't have as many resources for pediatric herbalism in a clinical setting. I've been working on that for the last couple of years. Both my children—my youngest has some pretty significant health challenges that I've learned a lot working with him. Even just tricks on—getting herbs into kids can be challenging, so I've learned a lot of hands-on experience with him. So, I'm really—I've been really diving into that. I have no idea when it's going to be ready because between the doctorate and the teaching that I do and everything, I'm pretty busy. It's just been a fun side project that I've been working on. I will absolutely keep you posted on when I could possibly have a—a date for that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

That's very exciting, and to put your heart into that for so many years is also impressive; like you said, as you're a mommy and teacher and this doctorate. Will you have—is it anticipated that you'll finish the doctorate by Great Lakes next year?

Betsy Miller:

No. My graduation date would be spring of 2027.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Okay. I was going to say we should have a big celebration, but maybe we should just have a big celebration, anyway.

Betsy Miller:

We'll just have a big celebration, anyway.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

You could bring the sourdough bread.

Betsy Miller:

Oh, yes. We'll just have a big sourdough party.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Sweet. I'll just tell folks – I show up at Great Lakes Herb Faire, and it's like within 30 seconds of being there, I get to see you and you handed me a loaf of sourdough bread. I just looked at you. I'm like, "This is my love language." I just couldn't believe it. That would be very memorable.

Betsy Miller:

Baking is absolutely my love language. I just—I just have so much joy in the kitchen, so I appreciate that we have the same love language.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Mine's on the receiving end, not necessarily the doing end, but it works out really well. There's no competition. I'm not going to be trying to get in on the stove while you're trying to get in on the stove. You know what I mean? It works out well.

So, Betsy, for folks who want to hear more from you, hear more about what you have going on, how can they best find you?

Betsy Miller:

Great question. I have a website. It's plantwisdomwellness.com. I am kind of on social media. When I say "kind of," I'm just horrible at the self-marketing piece of—of social media. I have a Facebook, which is Earthside Botanica, and that's also my Instagram, is Earthside Botanica. I post a lot about kids and plants and recipes, and things like that. Those are the best ways to—to find me.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Awesome. I always enjoy your social posts, so glad that you're there even if it's minimal. We can call it a "sane amount."

Betsy Miller:

Yes, sane amount. I like that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Betsy, before you go, I have one last question for you, and that is, how do herbs instill hope in you?

Betsy Miller:

I love this question. I feel we live in a very challenging time right now. There's a lot of discord and upheaval. It's a really hard time to be an empathetic human walking through life. The herbs always give me somewhere to turn for peace and for comfort, and that reminder that there will always be plants is just when—when life feels too overwhelming for whatever reason, I can go out to my garden and sit with my tulsi or sit with my skullcap; even now, sit under my hawthorn tree and even with the leaves bare, know that they're going to come back. That the plants are coming back every spring, that the medicine is there when I need it is just—it gives me more—more comfort and grounding and consistency than really anything else. The hope that plants give me is really just that they—they understand without judgment.

They understand without expectation. As long as I show them the same respect in my garden, in my life, that they will be there for me.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

So beautiful. I really resonate with that. Some other words that came up for me was comfort and trust because I feel all of that.

Betsy Miller:

Yes, yes.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

I often wonder, Betsy, what do people do without plants? I get so much-

Betsy Miller:

I don't know!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Just soothing and comfort—all of that.

Betsy Miller:

Right!

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Everything that you said, it's like I can't imagine not having-

Betsy Miller:

I can't imagine a life without plants. I mean, whether or not it's actually taking them into my body or putzing around with my house plants or looking at seed catalogs for my garden. Every aspect of plants just instills joy and I can't imagine a life without that.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Thank you so much. Thanks for being here. Thanks for your time. Thanks for sharing the—the love of the peach leaf. It’s just been lovely to—to hang out with you a bit and talk about the joys of the rose family as well, so thank you.

Betsy Miller:

Thank you. I’m so glad that we were able to do this. I love any opportunity just to talk with a wonderful person who also loves plants.

Rosalee de la Forêt:

Absolute pleasure. Thank you.

Thanks so much for listening. You can download your illustrated recipe card from today’s episode, just head over 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 students. This week’s Student Spotlight is on Linda Weiss in Germany.

Linda is a student in the Herbal Energetics Course who brings a deep love of plants into her everyday life. As a mother to her young daughter, Tilia, she’s been finding meaningful ways to weave herbalism into her daily rhythms.

She explored dandelion as her bitter ally—discovering its wide range of effects and flavors—and formed a heartfelt connection with linden in the sweet module, a plant that also shares its name with her daughter. Her experience of linden as a source of calm, comfort, and nourishment beautifully reflects how herbalism can support us in simple, everyday ways.

And if you’d like to deepen your skills as an herbalist, you can check out my foundational courses at HerbsWithRosalee.com.



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

Peach leaves aren't the only medicine on this tree. Peach pits are also loved, especially for their strong focused medicine. If you'd like to continue your dive into peach medicine, then be sure to check out my interview with Robin Rose Bennett, all about peaches. Robin beautifully describes peach in this way: Peach is cooling. It's moistening. There's that juiciness of it. It's a pretty profound herb to help with hot irritation in the mind, heart, and body. It's a wonderful reminder that sometimes one, single tree holds many layers of medicine.

As always, thank you so much for joining me in this episode. I'll see you in the next one.