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I remember the first time I ever lived in a place where violets were covering the yard and like, oh, the joy of lying down in a lawn of violets, just one of the most joyful things. Violet is one of the most softening plants that we have. And I don't—I think it's the beauty of what violet has to offer.

**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.

Well, most people know violet as a pretty spring flower, something to smile at in the lawn and maybe toss in a salad. But in this episode, herbalist Lindsey Feldpausch makes a compelling case that violet is a gentle yet powerful herb with a reach that extends well beyond the skin into the lymphatic system, the respiratory tract, and even the nervous system. By the end, you may find yourself looking at that so-called backyard weed very differently and wondering why you haven't been working with it all along. 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.

Lindsey, it's my absolute pleasure to have you on the show.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

I'm so happy to be here with you, Rosalee. This is going to be so much fun.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

It is. It is going to be so much fun. That was a very we just, we did the practice round of me welcoming to you to the show, and then I just feel like—and also we're friends, so. Also we're friends. Hello. Welcome. So great to have you, Lindsey, I am really excited to hear your story. You've chosen one of my most favorite herbs. So, yeah, lots to look forward to. But as always, I love to just get started with hearing how the plants have called you onto this path.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Thanks, Rosalee. Yeah, I truly, truly love hearing everyone's plant stories. It is such an incredible window into the experience of people and how they entered this world. So I feel in the genre of plant stories, there's people who grew up with parents who cultivated this, you know, relationship with plants or they had their own natural connection with them. And that was definitely—I was on the other side. So my experience was that I grew up in suburbia and I did not really have any connection with plants. I mean, I remember climbing one specific tree in our neighborhood that we all climbed, and I remember the cultivated bushes where I lived and kind of hiding behind those. But it was never with an eye towards their relationship to us as humans or their, you know, questioning what their names were or what their purpose was. I mean, I knew the relationship between trees and oxygen and carbon dioxide. But, yeah, I think that it wasn't even something that felt like—the door was never open for me in those early ages until I went to college in Detroit, Michigan. And that's where I'm from.

So I moved into this house that had a bunch of young, artistic punks living together in this space. And it was in downtown Detroit, city center. We're living in an old Victorian mansion, and we are starting to build a garden in the backyard. And I had never gardened before. I had never grown a plant in my life. And so I'm helping to plant kale and lettuce and tomatoes for the first time ever and just being like, whoa, this is super cool. Like, I'm really enjoying this practice and getting to know the plants and what they have to offer as food. And it was my first relationship with any type of plant. And then I was like, if these plants are so amazing what about all the other plants in the world?

So I—living in that house, we had some plants that had been also established. So there was a mugwort and there was a wormwood, and we had, I remember some sage and some rue. And I—there's this memory where I remember somebody that was really into plants coming over and being like, oh, yeah, well, this is wormwood and this is mugwort, and this is rue. And I was just like, how do you know that? Like, how can you tell the difference between these plants? They're all, you know, green and—yeah. So anyways, it's just being—I remember being so fascinated by the fact that they could identify plants. I remember my friend sitting down on the grass with me and being like, oh, this is plantain. It's good for everything.

So from there, I remember making my first tinctures. I still have the mugwort bottle that I made a tincture of. And I remember flipping through my first herb book, which was David Hoffman's *Holistic Herbal*, and writing out what it was good for on the label. I think it says “for dreams” or something like that, and it has how many drops to take. And yeah, I got my first—*Holistic Herbal*, and my other first plant book was *Botany in a Day*.

Anyways, those books just kind of opened me up to the world of herbalism, and I did some self studying from there until I decided that I wanted to go to herb school. And so I, yeah, told a friend sitting in the backyard of this same house, that I wanted to study herbalism. And that friend happened to be best friends with Thomas Easley. And she was—you know, we're in Michigan and Thomas is in Alabama. She's like, “Oh, we gotta meet my friend Thomas. He'll totally let you come move to his farm and study with him.” And so she introduced me and that's exactly what we did. My husband and I, who was my partner, my boyfriend then, moved to Alabama. We loaded up our pickup truck and our dogs and we moved to Alabama and I did a clinical training intensive program with Tom—I did a clinical apprenticeship with Thomas for almost a year. And that kind of started off my journey.

I went back home to Michigan after that and I studied with jim mcdonald, who is obviously one of my greatest teachers and our dear friend. I can never say enough great things about the education I received from jim. And yeah, so that is in a nutshell, kind of where I started.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Well, yeah, so many questions popped into my mind. First of all, that—just that grouping of plants that you had at your house, the mugwort, wormwood, rue, sage, all these lovely aromatics and such potent plants too. Those are like some strong plants to call you in. So yeah, I love that. And yeah, there's something—you know, hearing all these different plant stories from people, I often hear about, it's like—it's like something sparks it and it's like your whole being is just like, “Yes, I need to know this.” And kind of like that—like you're, you know, someone comes over and is like, “Oh, I know these plants” and something in you is just lit up like, “Yeah, I need to know this.”

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yes. Yeah, I think it's like the fire of curiosity, you know, that feeling of insatiable desire to learn about something. Like it's really a telling feeling, right? Like this is obviously something that you are meant to explore when it just makes you so curious. I wanted to know everything and-

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

I mean, so much so that you just packed up your truck and headed to Alabama. There—I love Thomas, but there—I don't even think that I would travel to Alabama for Thomas, I'm just like, heat, humidity and snakes? I don't know.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yeah, well, it wasn't the only time I packed up and moved. So Thomas, in 2015, 2014, Thomas called me and he said—I kept working at his school from the time that I studied with him in Alabama, and in 2014, he called me and he said, “Hey, we're thinking about starting—we're thinking about leasing this 500 acres in the middle of North Carolina. We want to start a clinical training program for herbalists.” And he said, “Will you and Brian,” my husband, “join us?” You know, move to North Carolina sight unseen and start this herb—this herb program. And in 2015, we did.

We spent five years living in the mountains in North Carolina being—running a clinical training intensive program where people would come live with us for a year, and it was the coolest thing ever. We would study Monday through Thursday, full days. Thomas and I were the lead teachers until we had some more folks join us later on. But, yeah, they would study Monday through Thursday full time, and then Fridays with clinic, and we had medicine making. We had our own apothecary. We—you know, it was really intensive. So that's how I—I'm still in the south because of that.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Well, it was lovely to hear your story. I knew bits and pieces, but I don't know that I've had that—quite the entire linear progression. You didn't mention when we met, which seems like a blaring omission. That's fine.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

2017 International Herb Symposium is when Rosalee and I fell in love.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

And we did too! When I met you, I was like, we are kindred spirits. Yeah. From the get go.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Diana Barry to the Anne of Green Gables.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Absolutely. And it is true, too. We have—we are like such twinsies on so many things. But we will, you know, we will not list those for all of you dear listeners.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

It could be fun.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Yeah. We both love to read, for example.

And yeah, I just wanted to talk more about—you have been—so you obviously dived in so deep. You were like, yes, this is it. You took the plunge a couple of times, and you have done so much herbal curriculum development. I mean, that's something that you have just spent a tremendous amount of time in, as well as clinical practice. I'm just kind of curious, what is it about the herbal curriculum development that you love? Because obviously you're exceptional at it, and you've spent a great deal of time doing it.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

I love that question, Rosalee. I don't know if I've ever really picked that apart. So I will say that right now, my position is I'm assistant director at the Herbal Academy, and so I do spend—you know, my full time job is developing curriculum for herbalism. And before that at the Eclectic School of Herbalism, I was program director in cultivating herbal education for these incredible programs, right? So I think that I am an educator. I'm a clinical herbalist and I'm an educator, and these are two identifiers that I hold very close to my heart, because these are how I choose to live my life and present myself in the world, and educator is a natural part of, I think, who I am. I remember when I was younger, like my grandma being like, “You should be a teacher, you should be a teacher.” And I was like, “I don't want—I don't want to be a teacher.” No offense to teachers. I'm so grateful for the teachers out there that they—I'm talking like K through 12 teachers who do what they do. It's incredible. It's so much work. It's really the backbone of our society, and they're under paid and underserved. And anyways, we won't go down that ramp.

But that was not what I felt called to do, right? I needed something that was more intriguing to me. And so when I started teaching in herbalism, it was like, oh, this is actually like, yes! Yeah, it was such a big yes, because I love teaching, I love helping people. I have a very maternal spirit where I'm just wanting to support people and I—and also I think patience is a key virtue that one must hold as an educator in a lot of ways to be in the trenches with people learning. And you know, I—taught medicine making at the Eclectic School. And I remember

teaching people percolation math and just being like, “No, we can do this. I promise we're going to, we're going to get through this.” And yeah, the feeling of being able to support people as they learn on that path.

So there's—there's the teacher side of the educational program creation, but then there's also the knowledge research base, right? Like, what do you want people to know? What is important? Where is the information coming from and how are we going to clearly communicate it in this format, and in the development of courses? So I think that it's an art, really. I would imagine you probably feel that way too, Rosalee.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Yeah. Yeah. It was partly a selfish question because I was, you know, just wondering, as someone else who also loves herbal curriculum development, I'm just like, “What is it?”

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yeah.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

You know, something I was thinking about is I feel like I'm most easily in my flow state when I'm either prepping the curriculum, doing the research and writing a course, or teaching the course. Those are my most easy flow states to get into.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yeah. I feel like the creative ideation stage of “What could this course be and what is it going to give to the students?” And I feel truly so lucky to be at the Herbal Academy, able to be working with this incredible team to develop curriculum on this—on this larger scale. And so coming to this place where it's like, I have an idea and here is how I cultivate this, or here's how I see this being cultivated, right? And getting excited, like I get excited about identifying new plants in the wild—getting excited about identifying the pieces of a puzzle that can be put together to create a whole in a program is so beautiful, you know, and it does. It feels like

the end result is this piece of art.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

That's beautiful.

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.

Well, thank you for all of that. And we're going to dive more into some of the curriculum that you're currently developing later, I know. But for now, let's switch over to discuss one of my very favorite plants. Aww. So right now, Lindsey, for anyone who's listening, Lindsey's holding up some gorgeous little violets, and they're still in flower. I checked mine, I didn't have any in flower, but I've been eating the leaves every day. Which is lovely.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Wonderful. I was very happy to be able to bring with us today some of the last *Viola sororia* flowers on my land.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Well, my first question for you, Lindsey, is I always like to ask—you could choose any plant. Why did you choose violet?

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

I feel—like you, Rosalee, violet is a kindred spirit.



**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

That's the highest compliment I've ever gotten right there.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

It is a plant that I feel like I not only know intimately and have used or worked with in so many ways, but it is a plant that still, yearly, every time I get to work with it or when it flowers in the spring, I get so happy to see it. It's like if we were to plan a trip to Ireland or something and you know, pop up in the airport and see each other—that feeling of excitement to see a beloved person or plant, right? Every year when violets start blooming, I feel that feeling of just, like, “Ahhh,” you know, like reconnecting with a friend and being able to see it and work with it and bask in its beauty. Yeah. So, yeah, I think that I like the connection that I have with it, the love that I have for it, the excitement that I feel towards it, and the relationship I've built with it are the reasons that I chose violet.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

You know, for me, I didn't—violet, I came to love later, but now that I—it's been honestly, now, I think it's been 10 years. But, you know, I was pretty far into my herbal love before I fell really in violet. It still has that kind of fresh newness to me, but it also has that special spring—it's here for a little bit, and so there is that, “There you are, and I get to treasure you for a bit.”

I was going to save this question for later, Lindsey, but since we're already kind of in this realm. As you probably know, Tori Amos has some very famous lyrics, and she says, “Kiss the violets as they're waking up.” What does that mean? What does that mean to you? This is the Tori interpretation lyrics moment of the podcast.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

I think it means live in the moment and that joy that you experience at finding the love of the moment.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Yeah, lovely. Yeah, that's what I think, too. It's kind of one of those “smell the roses” moments, but it's this incredible ephemeral spring moment because the violets are only with us—the violet flowers are only with us so long.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yeah. Yeah. That makes me think about the chemical constituent ionone that is found in *Viola odorata*. So we can talk about some of the botany of violets, but ionone in particular is what, in part gives violet flowers that are aromatic, which *Viola odorata*—right, that “odor” tells us something—is one of the aromatic species that's found in Europe. The ionone constituent actually is really highly sought after in perfumery. But because it is this fleeting experience—so ionone, the chemical, wafts up into your nostrils and it hits your olfactory glands and they actually bind to the olfaction and stop you from being able to smell the scent momentarily. So it's like this incredible experience of smelling violets, and then it disappears until the binding stops and you can smell them once again. So it's like—it's very momentary, very fleeting, very part of the magic, right? If something is always great—so it's like, if you live in a place where it's perfect weather all the time, you can't really appreciate it because it's always there. Well, with violet, it's like, here it is. Here's the magic of the smell of violets for a moment, and then we're going to—we're going to take a break, come back to it.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

That is so fascinating. I did not know that at all. What I say, which I kind of—I guess now I'm realizing a crude take on it is I say perfumists try to capture that smell but are unsuccessful. But maybe that's not true. Maybe they can successfully capture it, but then we're inhibited from the smell of it.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yeah, yeah. It's one of those things where perfumists want—they seek it out because they want to capture it, but no matter what they did, it doesn't matter. The chemical itself is going to stop it from being present at all times.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

That's so fascinating. Yeah, I feel like there's a lot of lessons in that. Like, you shared one, you know, perfect weather and being able to appreciate something over time. But, yeah, there's a lot of—I think there's a lot of lessons in that.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Just like a Tori Amos lyric, you can-

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Interpret it in many different ways.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Exactly. Yeah.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Let's keep going with this one Tori—just kidding. I'm just kidding. We will move on from the Tori Amos segment. Where else should we dive in, Lindsey, with violets?

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Okay. Yeah. So let's talk about violets as a genera. So Violacea is the family, they get their very own family. They're obviously that special. And then *Viola* is the genus and there's many species in the violet genus. So of the like 600 or so specific species you would think that when you see a violet, you know it, right? It's like “Oh, heart shaped leaves, and it has the five petals, five flower petals” which we can, we can look at shortly, but I think it's really fascinating because violets are actually highly variable in their presentation.

So we have *Viola sororia*, which is common blue violet, which is what I have here. And it's very similar—like I don't think I could tell them apart if I sat next to a *Viola sororia* or a *Viola odorata*, right? They have purple flowers. They both have the chordate shaped, heart shaped leaves by look. But you could obviously smell *Viola odorata* and know that it is sweet violet.

So that's the common presentation. That's what we think about when we think about violet. At least that's what I think about. So yeah, again we have their heart shaped leaves, and they're super beautiful. And then we do violet flowers. So I'm going to try to, for folks out there, try to show—let me see if I can get one that is actually showing all of the parts.

So violet flowers have five petals and there are two upper petals, two lateral petals and then one lower petal that has what is called a nectar runway in it. So this is those stripes and that change in color variation. So with the purple ones there's—what I'm seeing is a white into a yellow with lines that are actually to guide insects into them, to help them pollinate. So we have these beautiful showy flowers. All *Viola* species have the five petals that come in various colors though. The purple violets are the ones that I work with the most, but there are multi colored violets, right? So we have *Viola tricolor* which has, you guessed it, three colors. And so it's pretty common for the violets that are multi-colored to be referred to as pansies—so the cultivated violets that have multi-colored are referred to as pansies or hearts-ease. It's a specific type. But there's wild violets that are yellow, there's wild violets that are white. These are not uncommon colors for the violets to be.

So we have variability in the color of the flowers. But then we have wild variability in the leaves. So, again, heart shaped cordata. But then we have leaves—leaf shapes like *Viola pedata*, which is bird's foot violet. This is a lobed violet that is highly divided lobes that looks like a bird's foot. We have *Viola hastata*, which “hastate” is a type of leaf shape and it's like a spear shape. So it's like a pointy end with two lobes at the side at the other end. And so, like *Verbena hastata*, blue vervain, has a similar leaf shape. We have *Viola sempervirens*, which is a leathery leaf shape with evergreen leaves, which is wild. Then we have violas that are palmate, so *Viola palma*. We have violets that are—palmate, let me think; there was one other one that I was trying to share. I think—what I'll say is that it's—oh, I know what it was. So some of the leaves are pubescent. So some of the leaves are hairy. So you have hairy violet.

So yeah, they're wildly diverse and I think that that is super cool because it's engaging and

interesting. It's like, "Oh, you're not just one type. You can present in so many different ways."

So all viola species are going to have edible flowers and leaves. But that's not like non viola species. So African violets is one where it's like, "Oh, this is a violet." It's not a violet, at least not a *Viola*. The root and the seeds of all viola species have saponins which cause them to have a level of toxicity. They also have a bitter alkaloid called violin, which is what gives it part of the emetic qualities of violet root and seeds. So you definitely wouldn't want to—or, you know, it's—it's with those plant parts come emesis, so definitely not something that I am working with. Yeah, but—and then I will mention one final botanical characteristic that I find very interesting. Rosalee, if you'd like to hear about it.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

I'm guessing I know what it is.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yeah, the second flower. So the showy flowers, the purple violet flowers that, that we know and love and see, you know, I remember the first time I ever like lived in a place where violets were covering the yard and oh, the joy of lying down in a lawn of violets is just one of the most joyful things. So those are—those are the showy flowers. They are pollinated by insects. They are—they are reproductive, some people say that they're not, but they are actually reproductive. They produce seeds. They're the chasmogamous flowers. Chasmogamous flowers are reproductive. They are showy. They are cross pollinated by insects. And then we have the other flowers, which are the cleistogamous. These cleistogamous flowers are like the Virgin Mary of flowers. They never open. They are self-pollinating and they just come later in the season. They're closer to the ground. Sometimes they're even underground. And they also produce seeds. And both flowers on the *Viola* species produce seeds that are—once the seed pod dries, become projectile. The seed pods will dry and then they'll pop and shoot their seeds a few feet away. So highly reproductive, these plants. And that's why you can plant a few in your yard and next thing you know, like a few seasons later, you have an entire lawn, which I love.

We recently put in some—we did some work in our backyard to where we scraped up the grass and the violets are like the only things growing in those areas right now. I'm just like, "Thank you! Yes, please, more violets."

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Oh, it's lovely. Yeah. I've heard so many stories of people just moving in like a, you know, a little violet plant. And then [makes whooshing sound]. Which I'm so happy about, I moved—I created a little micro climate in my garden and moved in *Viola odorata*, and I have quite the scene there now so I'm very happy about that. I live in a very high desert, dry place so they don't necessarily love it here and that, but I did create the microclimate for them, so they're happier. Yeah. And the smell is just so lovely.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

I love that.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

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](http://HerbalPodcastCircle.com). I'd love to see you there.

Well, thank you for all of that botany. I think there's an obvious question coming out of that, which is, how many of those species do you work with in a similar way, like with the common

violet, are you working with that in the same way you are with the *Viola odorata*?

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yeah, so that's a great question. I, because where I live *Viola sororia* is prolific, I'm typically working with *Viola sororia*. If I had the chance, I would love to spend more time with *Viola odorata*. And in the past I have worked with it, and you get the benefits of aromatics, right? So anytime—I think that *Viola sororia*, even though it doesn't have the aromatics, anytime we get aromatics, we know that they're going to have bonus nervous system impacts. An enfleurage with *Viola odorata* is the best thing ever if you have a patch, like you, Rosalee, you can work with those flowers to attempt to capture their smell by having a solid fat on a tray and then putting the flowers in and then replacing them as often as you can to attempt to capture. But no, I work with *Viola sororia* for the most part, and I love it. I work with both the leaf and the flower. I work with them together, and I do work with them separately.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Let's hear more about that and how. In what ways do you like to work with it?

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yeah. Yeah. So I will say that the first time I worked with violets was actually from a salve that somebody made for me. So I—this was back in a time before I had violets in my yard. So I was not actually lucky enough at that time to have access to violets, but I was living in northern Michigan, and there was this incredible woman, she was an elder, Carol Laughing Waters, and she would make a violet breast salve for—I think she would put. She put amethyst. She infused it with amethyst, too, which I don't really work with crystals, but I just feel like it was very magical of her. So it was a violet salve. And it was when my son was born, and I had just started—it was a gift, and I had just started the journey of being a mom and nursing. And I, for those of you out there who have been through this journey, the first couple of weeks of nursing can be really painful, and so you have cracked, dry tissues. And it's a, it's a really sensitive time too, right? So to be attempting to feed your child and having the pain that goes along with this, this tissue issue is really challenging. And so I got this salve and used the

violet leaf salve on my cracked dried tissues. And it was miraculous. I mean, not only did it, you know, did it support the regeneration of the tissues and increase the moisture, like the—the tissues were, went from so dried to moistened. And it was a combination of the violet leaf and those lipids. It was safe, it was gentle for both me in that nursing state, but also for the baby. So feeling like violet at that time is such an ally and it was so gentle, yet so effective.

Violet leaf is highly mucilaginous and using it topically in a salve was like the best thing for those cracked dried tissues, and it made such a difference in my life. So ever since then, that is one way that I continue to use violet, is through making a violet leaf salve and for new moms and any cracked dried tissue. So that is specific to nursing, but like obviously that is applicable to any cracked dried tissues. If you have dry hands in the winter, violet salve is great for that. I have actually done foot soaks with violet. So making an infusion of violet leaf and then doing foot soaks for any dried, hard, cracked tissue on the feet, it can be really effective for that, because when I think about violet—and you know, this is not unique to me, it is a word that we, many of us use to discuss violet's uses—and that is softening. Violet is one of the most softening plants that we have. And I don't, I think it's—it's like the beauty of what violet has to offer. So it softens the skin in this way, so that's external use, emollients we could say.

I think that violet also softens the mind. So we'll talk more about the tissues, but it's the nervous system actions for me. I do make a leaf and flower tincture and I've made only flower tincture as well. I do think that they're, they're great together, like the pairing of the two. The leaves, as I've mentioned, are edible and they're mucilaginous, and the flowers are with their beautiful colors going to be like highly rich in polyphenols. So they bring—both bring nutrients to the table. But as far as the nervous system—staying on track here, Rosalee—as far as the nervous system goes, you know, I feel like violet is able to take you from a hardened state. So we're not just having—we can—it's not just tissues that can be dry or hardened. It can be our minds and our emotions. And so I feel like violet is like one of the most softening on our mind and on our spirit. I think that the way that violet in the respiratory system can clear stuck congestion, I think violet can clear stuck emotions, especially anger. So things that are really



stuck in our minds and in our hearts, I feel like violet's part of the work that it does in softening us is moving those along. And so I think, you know, like those lymphatic actions really actually can be spoken towards in its impact as a nervine as well.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Hmm. So much goodness there, Lindsey. I'm going to circle back a bit because I'm just curious. When you make your oil infusion, to make either an oil infusion or salve are using fresh, wilted, absolutely dry? What's your preference on that?

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

I actually, I personally prefer to just do really freshly dried. The water contamination component, like the—microbes like water and they need them to grow. So for me, I've actually even like—freshly dried infusions of violet leaf are one of the most incredible colors and flavors that I have in a tea, and so the freshly dried in a salve, you're going to maintain the majority—if properly dried—you're going to maintain the majority of the beneficial components and you're going to take that water component out. If I were to want to do a fresh, I would definitely wilt and then apply heat with an open lid to attempt to get the water out.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Nice. Thanks for that. Just thinking of all those leaves I have.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yeah, yeah, I think that freshly dried, it's—there's something to freshly dried violet that like, it's one of the plants that I'm just like—the concentrated nature of—but still, you know, because I think that there is still freshness to it. You're just removing that water component. I think it's just it's highly—it's very potent when it's freshly dried. It does—like most plants over, you know, a year, I would say it's like you've lost a lot of the goodness. So maybe using within a year or two if you do dry it. But the fresh is—freshly dried is best.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Yeah, yeah. And something about that: it is hard to find it in commerce, so harvesting your own and keeping track of the freshness of it and everything is really the way to go with violet. It's a plant that people have to fall in love with in person, I think, and-

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yeah.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Develop that relationship with.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

And I will say it's one of the plants that's easiest to harvest, because it's so prolific in nature. I can sit in one spot in my backyard and pick a whole bowl of flowers.

So, Rosalee, I want to talk a little bit more about the constituent bits. So the leaf, as I mentioned, is really mucilaginous. It's highly nutritious as well. It has a lot of great minerals, mineral content, nutrient content within it, so you can eat violet leaves. There's actually—on the Herbal Academy blog, one day I ran through and I was like, “Oh.” I was looking for something and I saw that some—there was a violet soup recipe which I just—I have not made, but I thought that was fascinating. I have this memory of Odin when—Odin is my son, he's 13 now. When he was little, we actually went camping with our, with our mutual dear friend Mel Kasting for her birthday, and it was—we had brought a hammock and we put it up and Odin was swinging between two trees, and I just remember him every upswing, he would grab a handful of violet leaves and he could just do this, it was so prolific. He could just spread his fingers out, scoop up, and then throw a handful of violet leaves in his hand, swing back, do it again. This image of Odin just consuming violet flowers—or violet leaves—is such a beautiful mom experience for me. So the violet leaves are great. Like, eat them, put them, make salads with them, cook with them, stir fry, whatever, do whatever you want, pick, walk out into your

backyard and eat them. They're mucilaginous. They're going to be super great for your tissues. And we can talk about the digestive system actions.

The flowers I mentioned have the polyphenols. Right. With those colors, we have anthocyanins. So Rosalee, have you ever played with violet flower as a litmus test, as a pH indicator?

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Yeah. That's pretty fun.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yeah. So violet flowers, I think most of us know what violet flowers do when you add an acid to them, because we've seen violet syrups and violet jelly. So I actually, Rosalee, I have some—some stuff here. So this is—

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Oh, you came prepared!

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

I came prepared. So everyone who's not listening—or who's only listening on audio, I have some violet flower tea that I, when they were prolific, I froze. Okay.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Wow, look at you!

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Really beautiful purple color.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Okay.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

So if you take this violet flower infusion, and, you know, we don't need any ratios here. You just throw a bunch of violets in the cup, cover it with water, get the most color you can, get as many polyphenols, anthocyanins as you can with this beautiful blue, purple color. And then if you add an acid, like this lime juice I have here, it is going to turn more magenta. So let's see if we can get a little bit more, actually, because that did not do as much as it could. So I'm just grabbing the bottle now, going straight for it. Okay.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

I did see it change more to—there we go.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

There we go. Okay, so that is the magenta color, and what that indicates us is that the substance that was added to the violet flower infusion was acidic. Now, have you ever seen it with a base, though? So most people don't add baking soda to their violet jellies or their violet syrups. Okay. But let's see if this is enough. It might not be, but if you do, it turns this incredible green color.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Emerald green.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Emerald green. Okay. So I'm gonna see if I can get it. Over here, it looks like a deep teal right now, but I'm just gonna-

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

It's my favorite color. So.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Look at this. So it's. It's still pretty purple blue, but it's. Oh, my God, Rosalee. It's like this

incredible teal color.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

That's my color right there.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yeah, I love it. It is like that eyeliner. Okay, so baking soda is a base, right? It is something that—so when you add a base to the violet flower, it is going to turn a green color. And in this case, we got a nice teal. So that tells us that the substance that was added is a basic. So, yeah, the litmus test is, it's a pH indicator and violet, along with any other purple flower—so butterfly pea flower is also commonly used in this way. And it's super fun to experience that and I think that it's a really great way to teach children too, about the pH. So let's put these next to each other.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Well that's a very fun show and tell here.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yes. So those are the two different colors side by side.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Lovely. Thank you, Lindsey.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yeah.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Well, you had mentioned briefly about the lymphatic nature of violets, and I didn't want to let that get passed up, if you have anything else to dive into on that.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yeah. So violet is a lymphatic. So I actually think it's an alterative, so it works on our waste delivery and nutrient delivery system. So it helps to remove waste products and it helps to deliver nutrition. Lymphatic alteratives work on the lymphatic system to do just that. And so violet is absolutely a moistening, cooling remedy, so anytime that there's heat or dryness in the system, violet is incredible for that. As a lymphatic, that softening nature is actually really good for swollen, hardened lymph nodes. Obviously, if you have an issue with the lymph node that is problematic, you're going to want to see a medical professional. But if you're like, oh, you got a cold and your lymph nodes are swollen and hardened and you know that it's from that and you want to work on applying an herb to support the congestion in those lymph nodes, violet's perfect for that. I think it's also good for supporting lymphatics throughout the body and bringing the nutrition, removing the waste products, but that supports the kidneys in a big way. So you'll often see like violet spoken towards as a kidney herb, and that is the reason.

So when we need water, when we need moisture, lymphatics like violet are a great answer. And in those cases, you're going to want to tend towards, instead of a tincture, a water extraction. So doing an infusion of violet leaves for the lymphatic nature is going to only get—not only get the dryness—or not only get the herb in, but it's going to get the water content in as well, so I love violet leaf for that. The mucilaginous nature of the herb is going to support moistening as well, and so in our digestive systems, if you have dryness or any heat in your digestive system, similar to the way we would use plantain, violet can absolutely be used in that way.

I think violet is a really wonderful gentle aperient, so it's going to help to move stool if you have mild constipation for those reasons: it's coating, soothing, moistening those tissues and supporting the movement of your bowels in that way.

I just remembered I wanted to share another story about its topical use. Because of this cooling, moistening, demulcent nature of violet, it's really great for bites and stings, like

mosquito bites and insect stings. When I was teaching at the Eclectic School, we had a patch of nettle and I, in the first few weeks, would do a plant walk with the students to take them around, show them what was growing in the area. I would always make them practice urtication, and for those of you who don't know, urtication is where you sting yourself with nettle and it's really great. It's a counter irritant, it's going to draw blood to an area. So similarly to the alterative nature, that counter irritant can bring the blood to help draw nutrients to the area and to remove waste products. And so I would have my students sting themselves with nettle, and then for folks who had experienced it before, it wasn't like that big of a deal. But for people who hadn't, it's like, oh, that's actually quite painful, right? The trichomes in nettle have histamine, they have formic acid. They totally sting. It's a, it's a painful experience, one that I have grown to love. But, if you sting yourself with nettle you can actually use violet leaf in a spit poultice. You take a leaf, you chew it up and you apply it to the sting and it immediately takes it away. It's kind of this magical introduction to like, “Oh, well, have you ever stung yourself with nettle? You haven't? Okay, well, ouch. That hurts.” Grab the violet leaf, chew it up, stick it on and poop. Gone.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

You can see class with you is quite fun. A little bit of sting, a little bit of relief. You know, it's funny that you mentioned nettle because when you said violet soup, I immediately was thinking like, “Oh, I'm gonna add violet leaves to my nettle soup.” I think that'll be really lovely. And then I'm gonna put violet flowers on top of it and it's gonna be great.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Do send pics.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Always. And you know, I just had another question to call back to. Do you work with *Viola tricolor*, the pansies. Do you work with them in a similar way? I hear some people do and some people don't. So it's always something I'm curious about.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

It's my understanding that folks do. But for me, I really only see pansies at the gardening center. So no, I'm not working with them the way that I am with my prolific patches of *Viola sororia*, but I do think that they're pretty interchangeable for the most part. I know way more about the *Viola* species that I work with and the chemical constituents, but I do know there's some really great research coming out about the content of cyclotides in many if not all *Viola* species. Cyclotides are cyclical peptides. They're amino acids that are really heat stable. They're molecules that are very stable. They can pass through—they can survive heat and they can survive the digestive system to enter into our bodies in a way that is very surprising to the researchers. It's like, “Oh wow, these are super stable molecules.” And the research that's coming out—there's no clinical trials in humans yet, but there's some really great research coming out in animal models that shows that these cyclotides are like a molecular hole punch for cyto—well, it's cytotoxic. They are cytotoxic to cancer cells. So they're like hole punches to cancer cells where they increase the—they're able to punch a hole into these cells, enter, and then induce apoptosis, so the anti cancer nature, the cytotoxic nature of *Viola* is being researched for this specific compound. Cyclotides are also known to be immunomodulating. So violet has—*Viola* species have one of the highest concentrations of this compound found in nature. I say that to go back to the *Viola tricolor*, they're going to have the cyclotides and they're going to be beneficial. They're also going to have the polyphenols, they're going to have the mucilage, so I do think that they're beneficial still.

One more thing about the cyclotides: with the immunomodulating nature, they're shown to work on the T cells. In autoimmune cases we have this T cell activity that's overactive, so the part of our immune systems that's been tagged as—it's been tasked with the task to attack the cells that are deemed foreign in the body. Even though this can start from molecular mimicry. So what that means is we have—to put it very, very succinctly—we have increased gut permeability. We have proteins that are not supposed to be entering into our systems, enter into our bloodstream, and then through the process of molecular mimicry, we have these—let me actually step back.



We have those compounds entering into our system, proteins that should not be there. Once they enter in the bloodstream, the immune system tags them as foreign, causing them to be antigens, antibodies. The B cells and the T cells create a memory of these cells. But the problem is that some of those proteins look like various parts of our body. So say in Hashimoto's thyroiditis, we have the thyroid being attacked because the immune system has been sensitized to a molecule that mimics the thyroid, and so then our body is attacking them. The T cells play a big role in this inflammatory autoimmune process and cyclotides are shown to be immunomodulating and able to pull back those molecules from their overzealous activity.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

That was such a great description of all of that. That was very, very descriptive, but you know, very “gettable”. So thank you for that.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yeah, yeah, it's really fascinating.

Violet's one of those plants, to quote our dear, dear friend and teacher, jim mcdonald, “gentle does not mean weak.” It is one of those plants that's unassuming, but it's also highly active and really effective at so many things. And it's taken, I think, for granted.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Yeah, I'm feeling—I knew going into this, I knew I loved violets, and I knew I was like, hands down, I'm going to be more in love with violets after I hear Lindsey talk about them. And it's true. I can't wait to dive out into my violet patch after this.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

You know, Rosalee, the coolest thing is too, that they're also fun. There's so many fun things you can do with this. I mean look at this color. That's the most beautiful-

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Well, speaking of fun, let's talk about your recipe, because your recipe is so beautiful, so much fun. I love your potions so much. So, yes, you have a Violet Elixir for us. Please dive into that.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Okay. So I have a plant product company called Plant Matters. And my goal in creating plant products is always to connect people with the magic of plants and the various ways that we can. And that can just be through food that tastes good, like my seasoning salts or oxymels and vinegar infusions. I do make some other products, too, but a lot of times what I'm wanting to do is get something that makes people excited. One of the things that—one of my favorite products that I make, that people are just so enamored with, is my violet elixir. This is an elixir, it could be called a cordial—really just depends on your preference. I typically just feel out which—what the herb wants to be called. Are you an elixir or are you a cordial?

My violet elixir starts by stepping out into my yard and harvesting as many violet flowers as I possibly can, and putting them into a bowl, and then I make an infusion, just like what we've been working with here. The violet flower infusion is the base of my elixir, and it turns the blue purple of the violet infusion. And now this is actually interesting, Rosalee, because you can tell if your water is basic based on the color that the infusion turns. So you're gonna want to strain out the flowers and then add the infusion back to the pan. I work with this recipe in parts, so I'm going to do equal parts violet infusion—I measure it before I put it back in the pan—to sugar, and this makes a syrup. You could stop there. You just stop there, and you have your violet syrup, and that is also beautiful and can be a really great addition to beverages on its own or just taken straight as a lovely potion. But I take it a few steps further, Rosalee.

I melt the sugar into the violet infusion, and then I add—I do two parts violet flower infusion and two parts sugar. So that's again, equal parts. And then I add a half a part of lemon juice, and that gets this floral, but lemony flavor—floral, sweet, and lemony flavor to go with it. It's definitely a little like this color. A little more pink, typically. And then to preserve it, I add

alcohol. I typically do half a part of vodka. Again, you could choose not to add that and make it a non alcohol, you would just want to keep it in the fridge and store it there for preservation. But the violet elixir with the alcohol can make a really tasty beverage. I will typically add it to a sparkling water, so making a cocktail out of it. I will serve it over ice. You can garnish it with violet blossoms. You're gonna want to store it in the fridge and use it within a few months, preferably, but mine usually don't last that long.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Yeah, I can see that. Yeah. This is absolutely lovely on so many different levels. And thank you for that. Thanks for sharing in parts too, because it just gives so much more flexibility there.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yeah, yeah.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Just for an example you could choose a part as a cup. So you could have like two part—two cups violet infusion, two cups sugar, and then a half part would be half cup. So half cup vodka, half cup lemon juice, for example. Right? I did that right?

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

You did that perfectly, Rosalee. I love working in parts for me because I—my batches can wildly vary in size, and so if I were to give you a recipe and be like, “Oh, you have to make this size of a violet infusion. So it's like, oh, half a cup of violets with a cup of water for your infusion.” That is limiting you to that space. But if I'm like, “Oh, here's parts.” And you know, actually maybe I should talk about the violet infusion part. You can do as many violets as you want. What I'm going for is the most concentrated color possible and the most violets possible. But it takes a long time to harvest the violet flowers, so I don't ever—in this case—I'm very mathematical in my clinical formulation side, like when I'm making tinctures, totally measuring, ratios for everything. But things like this part of—part of the fun is being a little creative. So as far as violet flowers to water goes, the more the better.

And then, the parts allow you to vary your batches. So it's like, oh, you could do a cup as one part or you could do a quart as one part. And then you're—that's what I do sometimes when I'm making batches for—which I typically do every spring, where I'm making batches for my product company.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Yeah, which I love. I buy things from you by the pound or the bottle. So highly recommend.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Thank you Rosalee.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Speaking about your projects you're doing, things you're up to, what have you got going on right now?

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

So as you know, we've talked a little bit about, I have been spending a lot of time working on a tick-borne diseases course for the Herbal Academy. So this course has been—I've been lead developer for the course and I have written numerous lessons found within, and this entire course is focused in on the diseases that are transmitted by ticks. And while I would love to say that this is a fun thing, it's—you know, ticks are not, ticks are not an exciting fun thing, but it is such a serious part of the world that we live in today. Because ticks are highly prolific, their populations are booming based on the habitat fragmentation that is occurring, we have widely cultivated edge habitats where ticks thrive. Think about it this way: you build a neighborhood and you leave some woods in a strip behind it and then you build another neighborhood behind that and there's you know, all these strips created. Instead of one large forest, we now have varying fragmentations that occur, and again we increase the edge habitats where ticks thrive. We also have a very booming white tailed deer population, and so interestingly the small rodents like the white footed mouse are more of the vectors for the

diseases versus the white tailed deer which actually *Borrelia*, which is the species of bacteria that transmits or the genus of bacteria that transmits many tick borne illnesses including Lyme. *Borrelia* does not, is not harbored by deer, they are just a really great meal for these ticks and the meals are necessary for ticks to populate-

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

They help them to thrive.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

They help them to thrive. Tick borne illnesses are—in my region, so in the East Coast, I live in southwest Virginia—are just so, so prolific, and so at the Herbal Academy, basically my goal this whole time is to create a compendium of information on the diseases themselves, on ticks, on tick prevention, on the diseases themselves, and how we can, alongside appropriate medical interventions, use herbs to support the body in these cases. It's incredibly comprehensive. I mean, I wrote 40 pages on the tick-borne bacterial infections alone. I have also written a lesson on alpha gal, tick-borne allergies. Alpha gal is a tick borne allergy that is transmitted through the saliva of the ticks that contain the alpha galactose carbohydrate molecule that—actually it's not an infection. Most of the time we think about ticks, we think about pathogenic infections: bacteria, viruses, parasites, which is all covered in the course. This alpha gal is actually an allergy. Your immune system becomes sensitized to this alpha gal molecule, and alpha gal in our foods and in our environment and our products that we use, like household products and beauty products, is found in mammalian products. So think mammalian meats like beef and pork and venison and also gelatin and bone broths, any byproducts of mammal, so dairy is also out. But also there is red seaweeds that contain alpha gal. So carrageenan is another source of alpha gal.

So anyways, alpha gal is really prolific where I live and it is one of those diseases that is not very well known, so having this incredible resource that has been cultivated to teach people about this newly discovered—the history of it is fascinating. I won't get into it today but truly the history of Alpha Gal is and its discovery is so fascinating. People get diagnosed with this

allergy and they have no clue, no clue what to do. I think this course is going to be really supportive for folks that experience tick-borne diseases or are fearful of experiencing tick-borne diseases living in endemic areas. And yeah, so that's where I've been Rosalee.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Oh my gosh. Yeah, you've been sending me little highlights and interesting facts and stuff via voice notes about this and I remember just sending you one. Just being like, “What kind of self care are you doing Lindsey so that you can get a palate cleanse of this?” So it's such important work is going to be so valuable for people. Like you said, it's just really important and yeah, so glad you're doing it.

You know when I first heard of alpha gal I thought it was a joke. Like I honestly did. Like I was just like what? Nah. But honestly, it's not a joke at all. I thought it was just like some conspiracy theorist, you know, like that—like I just did not believe it. It sounded—yeah, so yeah. Anyway, so important to get this out there and yeah, so grateful for all the work that you've just been pouring into it. So yeah, thanks for sharing.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Thanks Rosalee. Yeah, yeah.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

And that's not out yet, right? Because there's going to be folks who are like where do I find this? So it's not quite out.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

By the time this podcast launches it will be out. So, yeah, we can definitely link that if possible.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Yeah, absolutely. Well, I have one last question for you before we go. Well, I also, before we go

too. You can find Lindsey and her amazing potions at PlantMatters.org, PlantMatters.org. We will also link to that as well. You can hang out with us in Michigan this year at the Great Lakes Herb Faire and taste her potions in person. I know I will be. I'm going to show up at her booth and be like, "Oh, what's this one? I don't know if I've tasted it or not," even though I might have five times. But I love the tastings.

All right, before you go, Lindsey, I've got one last question for you, and that is, what do you think herbs are especially good at teaching us right now?

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

I love this question, Rosalee. I think that herbs are really good at teaching us that their actions have impact and so do ours. And I feel like those actions of herbs are oftentimes supportive to us. And we can choose as humans on this planet to be supportive to ourselves and to others and to the plants that give us so much, including our medicine, but also our food and our shelter and our clothing and, you know, really the oxygen we breathe and life on this planet.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

That's beautiful. I love that especially in regards to violet, when we think about all the ways violet supports us, the softening of the nervous system, the immunomodulating qualities, the lymphatic qualities, the polyphenols, the topical applications. Yeah. So many gifts in that one plant.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Yes.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Beautiful sentiment, Lindsey. Thank you.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Thank you, Rosalee. This has been wonderful. I'm so excited I finally got to come onto your

podcast.

**Rosalee de la Forêt:**

Me too. Me too. It's been absolutely lovely. Thank you so much for being here.

**Lindsey Feldpausch:**

Thank you for having me.

**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](http://herbswithrosaleepodcast.com) or check out the show notes for the link. And 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 Laura Gallop in Arizona. Laura is currently enrolled in the Herbal Energetics course, where she brings a joyful sense of curiosity and adventure to her learning. With years of experience using herbs, she's now exploring a more holistic approach, learning how to approach the body as a whole. Along the way, she's been crafting her own bitters, experimenting with tea blends, and diving into hands-on experiences with herbs like artichoke leaf and linden. Her reflections are thoughtful, detailed, and full of discovery, showing how much can unfold when we stay open, curious and willing to try something new.

To honor her contributions, Mountain Rose Herbs is sending Laura a \$50 gift certificate to stock up on their incredible selection of organically and sustainably sourced herbal supplies. Thank you so much to Mountain Rose Herbs for supporting our amazing students.

Okay, you've made it to the end of the show, which means you get a gold star and this herbal tidbit. We spent a lot of time talking about what violet does for us, but I want to leave you with a reminder of what violet does for the rest of the living world, too. So violets are the



exclusive larval host plant for fritillary butterflies in North America, so every single fritillary butterfly you've ever seen began its life on a violet leaf. No violets, no fritillaries. It's that simple. But I find this beautifully astonishing. It's a plant that's so easy to overlook, so often pulled from lawns as a weed, but it's actually holding up an entire branch of the butterfly world.

This connection means a lot to me personally. I have a tattoo of violets and a fritillary butterfly on my leg because to me, that's part of what makes herbalism so deeply fascinating. It's not just about what plants do for our bodies. It's about falling in love with the full complexity of their lives. Who they feed, who depends on them, and what whole worlds they're quietly sustaining.

So next time you see violets spreading across your yard, I hope you're able to spend some time with them. From enjoying their sweet scent to relishing the slow pace of getting down on the earth with them, to marveling how they are a nursery for butterflies. As always, thanks for joining me. I'll see you in the next episode.