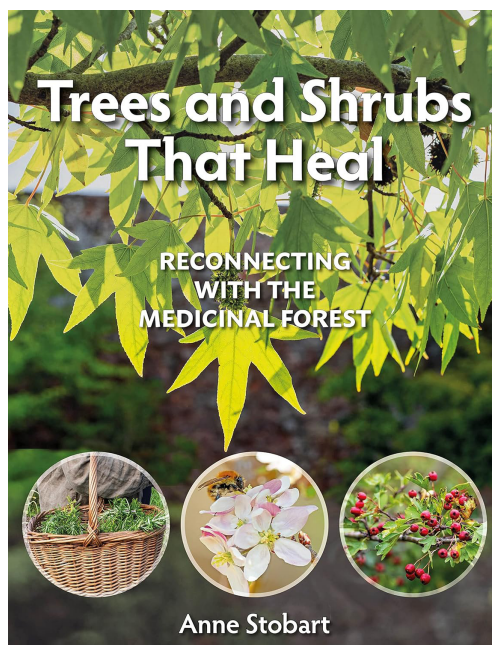


***Trees and Shrubs that Heal:
Reconnecting with the Medicinal Forest***

Author: Anne Stobart
 Paperback: 304 pages
 ISBN-10: 185623262X
 ISBN-13: 978-1856232623
 Publisher: Permanent Publications (January 18, 2024)
 Language: English

Reviewed by Mo Katz-Christy



Trees and Shrubs that Heal: Reconnecting with the Medicinal Forest by Anne Stobart will become an oft-consulted favorite for any herbalist, beginner or seasoned, who wants to move beyond the landscape floor and look up to find their medicine. Though it includes some tropical and subtropical trees, the majority of the plants covered grow in temperate forested regions in North America, Europe, and Asia.

Many of the trees included in this book are common and often ornamental or invasive. This opens up urban and suburban landscapes that are often overlooked by aspiring herbalists who might not have access to mature, diversified forests. The author recommends many plants that are not commonly used in so-called “Western herbalism,” such as, for example, *Cydonia oblonga* (quince) seeds as a demulcent, *Euonymus europaeus* (spindle tree) leaves as an antiparasitic, and *Forsythia suspensa* (forsythia) flowers as an antiseptic astringent.

Stobart takes a firm stance on invasive species, recommending their use to ease the overharvesting of native plants. She provides alternatives to endangered species like slippery elm, suggesting instead the more abundant *Hibiscus syriacus* (hibiscus) or *Tilia cordata* (linden). This is part of

a guiding philosophy, laid out in the first chapter, that aims to integrate the health of humans with the health of our ecosystems.

The first section of this book is an overview of the medicinal forest and its potential uses for various health conditions and body systems. The second section profiles 80 trees and shrubs, with richly detailed color photographs accompanying the descriptions that help with easy identification. Perhaps the most practical part of this section is the recipes that accompany each plant. These recipes range from the creative, such as *Cornus mas* (cornelian cherry) liqueur, to the simple, such as *Styphnolobium japonicum* (pagoda tree) flower infusion.

Even for someone uninterested in trees, this book is worth a read simply for the clear explanations of phytochemistry. Few books explain plant chemical constituents in plain language intended for lay audiences, yet Stobart manages to do so in writing that is also detailed and thorough enough to provide a reference for practicing herbalists.

If you live in a temperate climate and want to go out into your neighborhood and make medicine with the plants around you, this book is for you! 🌿