

Wild Blueberry Dye

Long ago wild blueberries were used by Native Americans of Maine for many different reasons. They were dried and used to flavor soups, stews, and meats. Wild blueberries were used for medicines, and they helped settlers during times of sickness and when there was little or no food. They were used in teas, and baked goods just like today. Wild blueberries were also used to dye clothing, and other things. Let's try it!

Materials needed:

- Wild Blueberries
- Microwave safe bowl
- Water
- Paper towels
- Large Bowl
- Microwave oven
- Some old white stockings or other white fabric
- Wooden Spoon
- baggies

Step 1: Place the blueberries in a microwave safe bowl, add enough water to cover the berries and microwave until they are soft to touch.

Step 2: Be careful of the hot blueberries. Use the spoon to mash up the berries in the water. Let the mixture cool.

Step 3: Strain the juice into the other larger bowl. Be careful not to spill in on your clothes.

Step 4: Your old white stockings can be cut to make wristbands, hair ties or other useful items. Add the small pieces of white material to the juice.

Step 5: Let it sit overnight.

Step 6: The next day remove the fabric from juice, put your hands inside the plastic baggies and squeeze out as much liquid as you can. Rinse in cold water and dry on paper towels. Now you can observe the change in the white material you caused by using blueberry dye!

- ★ Why do you think Native Americans wanted to use dyes?
- ★ Why do you think wild blueberries helped settlers when they were sick?
- ★ Have you ever tried dried wild blueberries?

For more information and another dying activity visit www.TeachMEFoodandFarms.org
And find Fiber Lesson #5 – “A Colorful Life”

This lesson Adapted From- www.pressomatic.com