

# Natural Dyes on Cotton

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Duration: 3 to 5 days

Cost: \$600.00 per day plus travel expenses

Materials fee: \$50.00 Includes handouts, mordanted fabric samples, dyes and chemicals

Level: Beginner

Class size limit: 12

Facility Requirements: Water, sink, electricity. 4 heating plates, 4 plastic 3-5 gallon buckets or pails, 4 stainless steel pots (2-3 gallon), scale, measuring utensils, stirring utensils. Ventilated hood for powder measurements would be appreciated.

6 large tables for 12 students. I will need two extra tables for display.

## Synopsis

Learn to scour, mordant, and dye cotton with natural dye extracts. We will use small yarn and/or fabric samples to develop a notebook.



## Learning Objectives

1. Learn about cotton fiber properties that affect dyeability
2. Learn to properly scour cotton
3. Learn mordanting methods
4. Learn to dye with extracts
5. Learn special methods for dyeing with extracts derived from wood
6. Explore color shifting

## Students should bring

Apron, gloves  
Plastic bag for carrying damp yarn home  
Enthusiasm  
Optional: each student may bring 100 grams of cotton yarn, hair dryer

## Guild/Group should supply

Facility with tables and chairs for the students  
Two extra tables for instructor display and workspace

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### Biographical Information

My educational background is in engineering. I have been spinning and weaving cotton since the early 1980's. While I do spin and weave with other fibers, the environmental cottons are my passion. I worked previously for Sally Fox, managing Vreseis Limited and overseeing research on fiber, yarn and fabric made of the naturally pigmented cotton.

In my current work with New World Textiles, I am involved in research on organic, naturally pigmented, and recycled cottons and in the development of spinning slivers and yarns from these cottons. I am not committed to 100% cotton products; I also blend these cottons with other natural fibers.

As a cotton enthusiast, I also develop tools and techniques; the *Khadi Khanoo*™ shuttle, a shuttle that holds the spindle for a book charkha, allows the use of singles as weft. The technique of the long draw allows for fairly consistent color sections to be spun, which can be woven as stripes on a plain warp or a "single shuttle plaid" on a striped warp. The simplicity of technique and the availability of colored fiber allow the spinner and weaver to create dynamic fabrics.

I dye cotton with indigo and other natural dyes; I introduced Dye-Lishus® cotton fiber, yarn, and fabric to fiber artists.

### Articles

*Arm's Length Spinning, or Single Shuttle Plaid*, Spin-Off Fall '96

*Spinning Crepe Yarns*, SS&D Summer '97

*The Carolina Flax Project*, SS&D Fall '97

*Spinning for a Single Shuttle Plaid*, SS&D Winter '98

*The Whole Truth about Sett*, Weaver's, Spring '98

*Lyocell*, Weaver's, Fall '98

*Crepe & Shape*, Spin-Off Fall '99

*Spinning Hope in Stecoah*, Fiber Ethics, Winter '01

*Huck Goes Green*, Handwoven Web Project,

*Spinning Cotton on the Charkha in the U.S.*, Jagriti, Vol. 52, No. 10, September 2008

*EZ Dye Cotton*, Handwoven, Mar/Apr 2012

*Color Magic*, Handwoven, May/June 2013

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