

**KLOOS, from page 5**

There's a lot of things like that where we can learn from the plants; how to hold ourselves energetically and work with our emotions in a different way and be more attuned with them. Specifically, in the book regarding hawthorn, if we are talking about the health of the heart and want a healthy physical heart, we can't ignore the life of the emotional heart and how that affects us on the physical level too.

**E.G.:** *Is it through meditation that you would achieve some of these psycho-spiritual benefits?*

**S.K.:** That's a really good way to do it, to sit with a plant, whether it's the plant itself in a natural place where it's growing, or to take the tincture or drink the tea, and just open yourself in a space of meditation and think of this plant as a teacher and see what comes.

That's how I've learned so much about plants, and I believe that's how people have learned about plants forever – both the physical stuff and the psycho-spiritual stuff, because when you learn to attune yourself to a plant's energies, whether it's the physical constituents or the more spiritual, esoteric side, you can really feel what's happening.

Actually, hawthorn was the first plant I ever worked with in that way. I was taking a class with a woman named Deborah Frances, and she passed out hawthorn berries to everyone and said, "Taste it and sit quietly for five or 10 minutes." We sat, and then everyone shared what they experienced, and we basically painted a picture, both of the physical properties and of the emotional and spiritual properties of that plant, just within the group. I started doing that with some friends here in Portland, and then it turned into this public thing, and for years I held weekly plant meditations and all kinds of people came and we learned about the plants together.

If you look at the accounts of anthropologists talking to indigenous cultures and the anthropologist asks, "How did you learn about the plants?" and they say, "Oh, the plant told me it was good for this." And then the anthropologist is like,



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*Black hawthorn is plentiful in Western Oregon. Hawthorn is "an excellent remedy for the heart on the physical level," herbalist Scott Kloos says, "and then on the emotional level, there are all these teachings it can bring. It helps soothe a wounded heart and helps soften a hardened heart, and it teaches us how to be in touch with our vulnerability."*



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*Devil's club, which produces clusters of bright red berries, is "a plant of protection," Kloos says. "It symbolizes the protection of the forest, and also our own psychic and energetic protection."*

"Oh, that's so quaint – they think that the plants talk to them." And my experience is yeah, they do. There was probably some kind of trial and error, but with some plants it would be impossible to find some of these ways that they work just through trial and

don't want is for people to harvest the wrong plant, especially if it's a potentially toxic plant. There are some plants, and I mention this in the book, that are deadly toxic in the area. All of those really deadly toxic ones are in the parsley family, called the Apiaceae, and anytime you are harvesting a plant in that family, you need to be *absolutely* sure.

No one who gets this book should go out and start harvesting angelica, for example, which is in that family. It also has plants that look similar to it and could kill someone with just a tiny piece of the root.

**E.G.:** *Is there any particular plant among the 120 that you outlined in your book that is of any special significance to you, on a personal level?*

**S.K.:** There's many, but one that pops into mind is devil's club. That plant, I would say, is my foremost ally in everything that I do. It has a lot to teach on many levels, and it's a plant of protection. It symbolizes the protection of the forest, and also our own psychic and energetic protection. It got the name devil's club because of the way it looks with all of its spines, and some European person came along and said, "That looks like something the devil would carry."

I like to think of it as the club that keeps the devils away, meaning the negative thought forms that try to bring us down, that we are so surrounded by in these times. But it's a really potent ally to help us stay clear with ourselves, and also it's a great ally in healing deep traumas, especially deep childhood traumas. On the physical level, it's in the ginseng family so it has adaptogenic properties, it helps when the adrenals are weakened, and in my experience, I've found it's especially good for people whose adrenals are weakened because they are in a state of constant alert, always on guard to protect themselves from trauma. Devil's club teaches us how to be alert in a way that isn't taxing on the adrenal. For me it's been a huge ally in both transformation of trauma and also that protection in the healing work that I do, and then just a symbol of that protection of wild nature.

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error, so there's a lot more to it than our modern scientific research modality can understand.

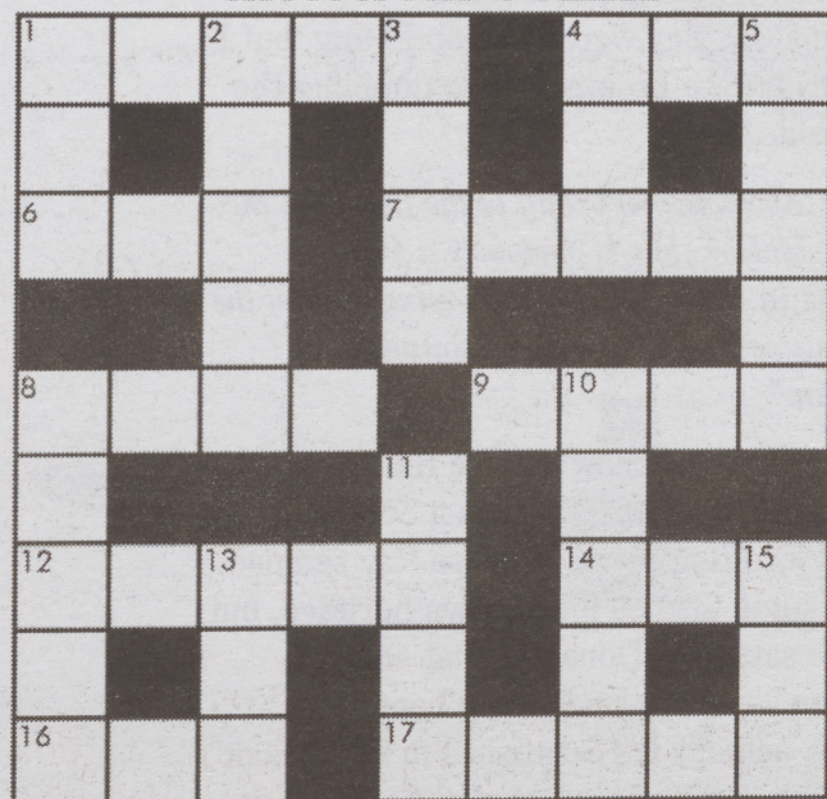
**E.G.:** *What are some things that someone who is new to wildcrafting should keep in mind while they are out foraging?*

**S.K.:** Never harvest anything until you've positively identified it. If you're just learning, start with some of the easier plants. In the book I talk about the six plants that everybody should know (black cottonwood, nettle, Oregon grape, St. John's wort, western redcedar and yarrow). I listed them because they are useful, and they are easy to identify – there is nothing else that really looks like them around here.

To help learn, I recommend going on plant walks with other herbalists, or a botanist or if you have a friend who is knowledgeable about plants.

Look for the defining characteristics, those are mentioned in the "How to Identify" section for each plant – the things you need to look for to know that this is the plant you're looking for. Because what we

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**ACROSS**

1. Fermentation agent
4. Have a bite
6. Tree fluid
7. Cake ingredient
8. Three-ply cookie
9. Hook's henchman
12. Ground grain
14. The gift of \_\_\_\_
16. Tease or ridicule
17. Francis or Kevin?

**DOWN**

1. Affirmative!
2. Type of fritter
3. Analyze or try
4. Cake ingredient
5. Tres
8. Deal
10. Potter's practice
11. Nosh!
13. Late rapper; abbr.
15. \_\_\_\_ appétit



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