

Intro to Plant Identification



Our ancestors have worked with plants in all of the medicine they have to offer without botanical names + modern taxonomy for millions of years. Our people continue to come to the medicine of plants by using the senses, noticing patterns, and learning from those who have documented plants of their region. Common plant names were given according to plant uses (physical + spiritual), how they look, how they smell, how they protect themselves + where they grow + cosmology + star formations associated with the plant to create a folk taxonomy. Our healing journeys may call us to relate to plants by botanical name, common name, and no name at all. We will be working with a variety of tools to help us identify plant ancestors with the goal of remembering their medicine. We may not always

come to the specific botanical name of a plant ancestor, this does not necessarily mean that we cannot work with them neither that they do not want to be known. We will work to develop a ritual for meeting + working with plants that are new to us. Plants who make themselves known in your environment, because you and your community are needing them.

Tips for Plant Identification



Bring your intuition! We access our intuition through our senses. We come to a living plant as we do when we meditate with them, we come with open hearts + bring our senses to greet them. Observe the sweet being before you! Notice them using your sight, touch [with consent], smell, hearing, taste [when appropriate], energy + intuition. Allow your intuition + their clear signs to guide you on whether you can touch them, whether they should be consumed, whether they need you to bring them some water.



Connect to the same region during all the seasons. The more we return to the same regions, the more we get to know a place. Return to the same nook throughout the seasons. Notice now the environment changes, the plant in all of their stages of growth, the shifts in water + wind availability, who + when they grow, and how other beings interact with the region.



Keep a journal! Our memory can be built. When we encounter a plant that is new to us, that we are curious about, document the experience. Notice their environment, what parts of them are exposed to the sun, where their water comes from, the other plant friends growing around them, how they change through transitions (seasons, day, drought, destruction, etc). Draw them, sit with them, remember them!



Honor the plants. Plants are living, breathing, feeling, intelligent beings who deserve our respect. They are organized in their medicine + in their parts, they exchange energy with the environment, adapt + evolve to meet the environments needs too. They are creators, they move for their resistance, their life, for our collective healing. Plants, like human beings, have a common ancestry. Speak to them, hold them, gift them energy, prayers, songs + an honest conversation when you come to learn about who they are, what they offer, and what they NEED.

Intro to Plant Identification

Plant ID Journal



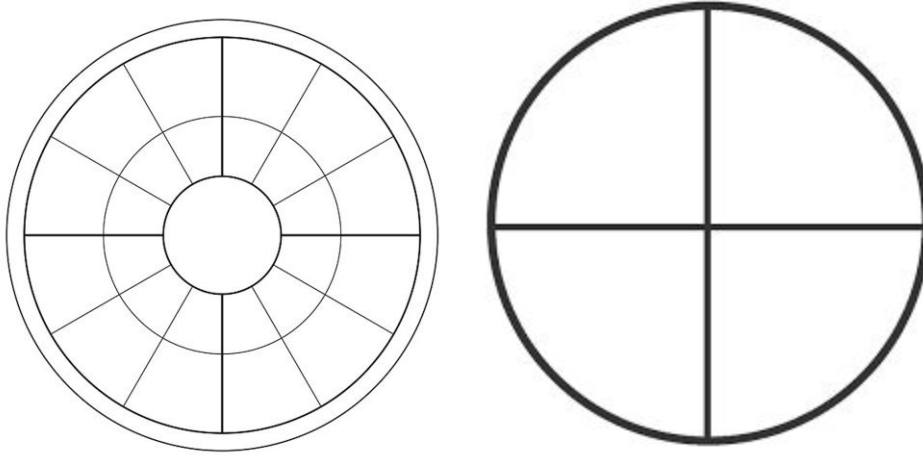
As part of your self-healing + home practice you are asked to maintain a Plant Journal for your plant meditations, and your plant identification. The act of documenting our experiences will help us build a deeper relationship with plant ancestors + get to know them in more intimate ways.

Elements of a Plant Journal

- **Sketch or Drawing**- Watercolors, watercolor pencils, color pencils + pens create magickal outcomes!
- **Plant Parts**- Whether or not you have access to the whole plant draw + use words as well as colors to describe
- or telltale parts to identify a species. Including the seeds, flowers, twigs, leaves, etc will help you to discern plant varieties.
- **Facts about the Plant**-
 - Habitat: Where it's found
 - Plant structure: how it grows,
 - Plant through the seasons: When it flowers, type of soil preferred, etc.
- **How to Care for the Plant**-
- **Dates**- It's always good to include the date of your entry especially if you are record keeping for a garden.
- **Pictures**- Taking photos of the plant + plant parts can be really supportive for accurate ID. These photos can be shared in ID groups + to our community. Feel free to add these to you journals too!
- **Leave blank space**- Each plant journal entry takes up 1 to 2 pages of our notebooks

Seasonal Plant Circle

Intro to Plant Identification



Over the next 9 months we will be acknowledging the plants around us by keeping our plant journal on specific plants + by keeping a Seasonal Plant Circle. This is a tool that documents the plants around us by the season/moon cycle. A tool that allows us to be more present in the transitions of nature, connecting us to our own evolutions.

Creating your Seasonal Plant Circle

- Choose an approach that resonates with you; documenting on a circle or another shape, documenting by each moon cycle (12 spaces on your circle), or by season (4 spaces on your circle)
- In each quadrant draw/write the name of the plant. Draw the plant in all of the season it corresponds as it looks, Draw the plant even when you do not know the name + notice its changes, when + if you learn their name add it later

Plant ID Tools

- **Your senses!**
- **Plant ID Journal**
- **Hand lens**, to examine plants at close range
- **Optional:**
 - **Field guide** with keys to plants of the region
 - **Binoculars**, to look at things high up in a tree, for example
 - **Metric ruler/tape**, to measure leaves and other small features—trunks

Plant ID Resources

- PLANTS Database
<https://plants.sc.egov.usda.gov/java/>
- Garden.org
<https://garden.org/plants/>
- Wood Plant
http://oregonstate.edu/dept/ldplants/plant_ident/
- Plant Native
<http://www.plantnative.org/rpl-ut.htm>
- Weed Identification
<http://wssa.net/wssa/weed/weed-identification/>

Plant ID Apps

- Leaf Snap
- Audubon Trees
- Tree Book
- MyNature Tree Guide
- Audubon Wildflowers