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Frequently Asked Questions

Updated December 2020

We often receive similar questions from students, especially at the start of a new course. This page features some of the common questions and answers.

Webinars

Heartwood webinars are live events, but they are always recorded and archived so that they are available for all learners to view at any time. When you view a recorded webinar, the fact that you have watched it is 'logged' on the LMS, and counts as attendance for assessment purposes.

Moreover, you are still able to post questions to the webinar leader after you have viewed a recording, so missing a live webinar session (because of family, work or other prior commitments) will neither detract from your learning nor adversely affect your fulfilment of assessment criteria.

Shopping List

- A small hand lens (to look more closely at plants in your vicinity)
- Tea making equipment (so that you can try some of the herbs we discuss)

Reading List

- ***Book - Anita Ralph and Mary Tassell (2020). Native Healers: Foundations in Western Herbal Medicine. 1st edition. Aeon Books.***

This book is a companion textbook for the Foundation Course. There is no requirement to buy this book to be able to do the Foundation Course, as all materials are provided online, but you may wish to have this to hand during and after completing the course. A percentage of the sales of this book go to Heartwood Education, a non-profit charitable trust, and will therefore go toward helping other educational projects to help more people access herbal medicine information.

- ***Book - Elpel, J.T. (2013). Botany in a day: the patterns method of plant identification. 6th ed. Hops Press.*** This book is not required reading for the Foundation Course, but it does expand on some of the plant identification that is covered in the Foundation Course. It also gives a brief introduction in to some of the plant compounds found within key medicinal plant species, in a very accessible way. You may find this book useful therefore to expand slightly on what you will learn on this course.

Other interesting books are listed in our reading list.

You may enjoy sourcing a plant identification guide or flora - suggestions include:

- ***Kingfisher Guide to the Wild Flowers of Britain and Northern Europe, David Sutton*** (very good value, with good illustrations and comparisons). ISBN-10: 1856971554 / ISBN-13: 978-1853688430
- ***Collins Wild Flower Guide, David Streeter, C. Hart-Davies, A. Hardcastle and L. Harper*** (heavy but small book for committed naturalists - just about portable on a walk!). ISBN-10: 0007183895 / ISBN-13: 978-0007183890
- ***Casell's Wild Flowers of Britain and Northern Europe, Marjorie Blamey and Christopher Grey-Wilson*** (a desk top, not especially portable, guide for the real enthusiast - extremely high quality). ISBN-10: 030436214X / ISBN-13: 978-0304362141

NOTE: If you do not live in Europe, you may prefer to buy a plant identification guide more fitting to your location on our beautiful planet. We would love to hear from you, if you can recommend a Plant Flora/Plant Identification Guide for plants in other plants of the world – please let us know about your favourites!

Herbs

Each month we start a new unit of information. In Units 4, 6 and 8 of the Foundation Course you will need a small sample of the following herbs to follow our plant tasting method. We introduce the plant tasting method in month 2 (Unit 2), and suggest you taste nettle, but we return to nettle in month 6 (Unit 6) as well. You may therefore like to get hold of some nettle herb (fresh or dried) in readiness for month 2, and the rest of the herbs in readiness for month 4, 6 and 8. These are the herbs we will taste in months 4, 6, and 8:

Unit 2

- Unordered List ItemNettle (herb)

Unit 4

- Chamomile (flowers)
- Lemon balm (leaves)
- Meadowsweet (leaves)
- Elder (flowers)
- Fennel (seed)

Unit 6

- Hawthorn (flowering tops)
- Marigold (flowers/petals)
- Lime (blossoms)
- Lavender (flowering tops)
- Nettle (young leaves)

* **Unit 8**

- Thyme (flowering tops/leaves)
- Marshmallow (leaves)
- Marshmallow (root)

- Yarrow (flowering tops) Cleavers (herb)
- Dandelion (leaf)
- Dandelion (root)

You may like to grow and harvest these herbs yourself, you could also contact a local herbalist or supplier for a sample or 5-10g of each herb. Or, if you cannot access the herbs yourself, Anita and Mary have arranged for Medicine Tree to offer the full set of herbs as a postal sample pack especially for Heartwood students at a lower price to help with your studies. The set of organic dried herbs will be packaged for you to order by Medicine Tree herbal dispensary, and are sourced entirely from co-operatives and other fair trade producers.

Each sample pack contains approximately 5g of each herb, and the total charge is £26, including postage and packaging to the UK mainland. (Postage rates for other countries are available on request). Please contact the dispensary on 01732 871818 or by email, email if you would like to place an order. They will need your postal address, and a bank transfer payment from you, which they will organise with you directly.

Having a sample of each herb listed above will help you participate fully in this course. Heartwood does not receive any money from the scheme. If you have other sources of herbs you would prefer to use, or would like suggestions and contact details for suppliers that you could contact directly (particularly if you live outside of the UK), please don't hesitate to let l.smith@heartwood-uk.net, the Foundation Course Co-ordinator know.

Computer equipment

The courses have been designed to be cross-platform, and are accessible to both Mac and PC users.

The learning platform we use is Moodle. Moodle does not guarantee compatibility with Internet Explorer, but works with its replacement browser, Microsoft Edge. We test the user experience on Chrome, Firefox and Safari browsers, so if you have problems on another browser, we recommend that you use one of these when accessing the course. You should try to use only the most up-to-date versions of these browsers, and your operating system must be the most up to date that your computer allows.

The only thing that may limit ease of access to the course materials is the speed of your internet connection. Basic broadband packages are usually more than adequate, but slower systems can work better when there is a direct connection to the router, via an Ethernet cable, rather than using wi-fi.

Heartwood courses are also compatible with Android and iOS (and phones and tablets can be great ways to watch video content), but in general we recommend using a computer whenever possible.

Downloadable materials are in .ppt or .pptx format for slides, and .doc, .docx and pdf format for documents; .doc and .docx materials can be read by Microsoft Office, LibreOffice and iWork suites. On mobile platforms, you may need to download an app to read them.

All further questions about compatibility can be sent to lms@heartwood-uk.net mailto:lms@heartwood-uk.net.

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