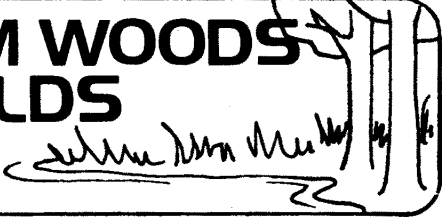


# FROM WOODS & FIELDS



by Connie Magoffin

At 4:45 a.m. on April 10th, five of us from the Weavers Guild (Jan Carter, Mary Johnson, Nan Kuehn, Laura Thompson, and myself) began our trek to a lichen workshop sponsored by the Duluth Guild and held at Janet Meany's home. An early stop for coffee and a roll resulted in an interesting conversation with a wilderness camp instructor who includes the rock tripe or *Umbilicaria* lichen on his edible wild foods list! *Umbilicaria* gives us those lovely purples.

Barbara Haight is charming and warm and a most enthusiastic proponent of lichen dyeing. From her home in Olympia, Washington she brought huge skeins of homespun yarn glowing with rich color, from yellow-greens to oranges to deep browns, purples; even shocking pink and blue can be achieved. Dyeing with lichens imparts a special lustre to the wool and the aroma reminds you of the woods where they probably were collected. One of the most appealing parts of dyeing with lichens is that fleece can be dyed without even being washed. This idea won everyone's heart!

After a discussion of the 13 lichens mentioned in her book, we dyed with 5 of them: *Alectoria*, *Lobaria*, *Letharia*, *Parmelia*, and *Cladonia*. In a short time we had the beautiful colors Barbara had predicted. In addition to sharing dyeing hints with us, Barbara treated us to slides of her farm, family, and the sheep she raises (also part of her family). Despite her pas-

sion for dyeing with lichens, Barbara is very concerned about its ecological effects and encourages us, if possible, not to collect lichens from trees or rocks, but only those that fall as a result of a wind or rainstorm.

After dividing up the fleece and yarn we had dyed, and thanks and goodbyes were said, our Minneapolis group drove further north and spent another half hour or more collecting lichens (what else?). A stop in Duluth filled our stomachs. We were considerably less talkative on the way home to Minneapolis, but we all agreed it was a most worthwhile trip.

Barbara 'N Me, On Lichening And Learning by Ruth Merrill and Barbara Haight is now available on our reserve shelf. Do take a look! If any of you would be interested in a lichen dyeing workshop please let me know or tell Margaret in the office.

One last thought before I say goodbye for the summer. Amy Core, who was one of the participants in the lichen workshop, generously shared woad seeds with all of us. Hopefully in a few years we will in turn be able to share our seeds with you. Don't forget to plant some new dye plants this year and, again, a reminder not only to use them fresh this summer but dry or freeze some for your winter dyepot. And when you are digging those weeds from your yard (dandelions, plantain, mullein, goldenrod, milkweed, etc.) throw them in your dyepot rather than in the trash; it makes garden work seem a much more productive task. Happy dyeing and be sure to share your results with all of us.

**NOTICE**  
 All items submitted to the Minnesota Weaver should be in writing and sent to the Guild office or to Karen Searle, 3036 N. Snelling, St. Paul, MN 55113. Material is due on the 10th of each month.

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**Yarnery**

**Double Weave**  
**on a**  
**Rigid Heddle**  
**Loom**

by Suzanne Gaston-Voute

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