



Foundations of Bioregional Herbalism

Fall Syllabus 2025

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Mission & Learning Outcomes

The Foundations of Herbalism program is designed to enable and inspire students to embark on their educational journey with confidence. The focus of this course is forming and understanding healthy *ethnobotanical relationships* with the plants. You will learn the foundational principles of many topics relevant in preparation for professional herbalism while embodying plant knowledge as a lifeway. Our focal point will move in and out from the nitty gritty details to the broader scope of the ecological, ethical, spiritual implications of herbalism. More than just an education about plants, the course will help you develop a relationship with the land as a whole and an appreciation of the traditions that have kept that deep, intimate knowledge alive for millennia. Ethics around land stewardship and decolonization are a central focus of the program.

This program is designed around the premise of teaching one to fish, rather than merely giving one the fish. A key focus is to develop the skills needed for continual learning, regardless of where your herbal path leads you. We believe that the two most important qualities an herbalist can have is the humility and mindset of a life-long student of the craft.

Three foundational tracks are offered:

- Foundations of Bioregional Herbalism In-Person
- Foundations of Bioregional Herbalism Hybrid
- Foundations of Bioregional Herbalism Online

The Bioregional Herbalism hybrid and in person programs program have the same content as the online program with the addition of 8 in person learning days to include field botany, plant journeying, nature journaling, nature awareness, medicine making, organoleptics, formulation, wild edibles, and a day of celebration. Alumni of all programs are invited to join our community group and camping trip which is held in the Spring.

The Northern Appalachia School is not accredited, and herbalism is not licensed in the United States. While this course is intensive, it is not designed to make you a “Certified Herbalist,” nor is it designed for students to be prepared to begin an herbal practice immediately upon completion. Further studies in medical herbalism, nutrition, and clinical skills will be needed for students wishing to practice clinically, or enter into a clinical mentorship under the Northern Appalachia School. This program does provide many of the foundational skills needed to begin the process of becoming a Registered Herbalist (RH) with the American Herbalists Guild, which is the most well respected certifying body of clinical herbalism in the United States.

Certification & Grading

A Certificate of Bioregional Herbalism will be granted to those who complete the requirements. The certificate will include the number of study hours.

You will be required to complete all mandatory assignments and maintain a 90% attendance rate (see Attendance & Make-Ups for more information), and demonstrate a commitment to learning through assignments and class participation.

Program Structure

Note: This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the director & program instructors.

The breakdown of study hours is as follows:

	In Person	Hybrid	Online
<i>Study hours (total)</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>250</i>
<i>Live class hours (total)</i>	<i>72.5</i>	<i>72.5</i>	<i>24.5</i>
Online live lecture	3.5	24.5	24.5
In person live lecture	72.5	48	0
Independent study (pre-recorded material, readings, assignments, exams)	~228	~228	~225

Live online sessions will all be recorded for later review (see Attendance for more information). If sessions go past our designated time slot, students will not be required to stay for the remainder of the class.

Questions are welcome during the live lectures, however we have a limited number of lecture hours together each month, and so if there is not time to answer everyone's questions during the live session, you may email your questions directly to the director (or specific instructor if contact information is provided). There will also be opportunities for 1-on-1 student check ins as well as open office hours. There is a private group available on our website, as well as a facebook group, for students and alumni to interact with each other.

Students are encouraged to spend as much time as they need with each assignment, but can expect to spend 8-15 hours per week minimum on homework. Several assignments will be shared with the rest of the class, and for some of these shared assignments, students will be required to review and comment on their classmate's work.

The Auditing option includes class-time only. Audit does not include assignments, instructor feedback, or certificate option. Audit enrollment opens once the class minimum has been met.

Instructors

Lead Instructor:

Calyx Liddick Northern Appalachia School

Co-Instructors:

Jaybird Tignor Northern Appalachia School

Jonathan Darby Riverbend Foraging, Wallicks Farm Project

The Herbal Therapeutics program may be taken upon completion of the Foundations of Bioregional Herbalism. This HT program includes content on anatomy, physiology, pathology, assessment, case studies, and materia medica, as well as additional therapeutics-focused content.

Required & Recommended Reading

Required Texts

- *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer
 - Note: We ask students to read/listen to Braiding Sweetgrass prior to program commencement every year as an introduction to the many topics and themes covered in the program
- *Planetary Herbology* by Michael Tierra
- *Encyclopedia of Herbal Medicine* by Andrew Chevallier
- *The Modern Herbal Dispensatory: A Medicine-Making Guide* by Thomas Easley & Steven Horne
- *Foundational Herbcraft: Actions & Energetics in Western Herbalism* by Jim McDonald (purchase here: <https://herbcraft.podia.com/foundational-herbcraft>)
- *Newcomb's Wildflower Guide* by Lawrence Newcomb
- *Field Guide to Edible Wild Plants of Eastern & Central North American* by Sam Thayer

*Choose at least one of the following books by Samuel Thayer:

- *Incredible Wild Edibles*
- *Nature's Garden*
- *The Forager's Harvest*

*Choose at least one of the following books by Matthew Wood:

- *The Earthwise Herbal Volume I: A Complete Guide to Old World Medicinal Plants*
- *The Earthwise Herbal Volume II: A Complete Guide to New World Medicinal Plants*

*Which of these books you choose will largely depend on if which particular plants you feel called to work with

Recommended Reading:

To see our recommended reading list, please go to:
<https://www.northernappalachiaschool.com/booklist>. *None of these are required for the course.* If you would like suggestions for more books that are specific to your bioregion, please feel free to ask us.

Course Calendar

Announcements, assignment reminders, quizzes, instructor feedback, and grades will be posted on the Google Classroom.

Class Schedule:

- Class Format
 - Weekend classes:
 - In person weekend classes will take place in Dillsburg, PA and nearby York/Cumberland County parks.
 - There will be a 30 minute break for lunch and two 15 minute breaks throughout the day.
 - Weeknight classes:
 - Online live lectures will take place synchronously on Zoom - you will be able to interact and ask questions in real time.
 - In person classes will take place in Mechanicsburg, PA on Monday and/or Tuesday evenings
 - There will be a 15 min break or two 10 min breaks.
 - Q&A will be from 8:00-8:30.

Only offered in person (In-Person & Hybrid programs)

Offered online & in person

BOTH PROGRAMS Tuesday, Jul 15, 2025 5PM-8:30PM ONLINE (no in person option)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Orientation ● Kincentric Ethnobotany 	Calyx
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<p>Monday Jul 28, 2025 5:30PM-9:00PM IN PERSON</p> <p>Tuesday, Jul 29, 2025 5PM-8:30PM ONLINE or IN PERSON</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant Knowledge & Observation • Organoleptics & Somatic Experiencing 	<p>Calyx</p>
<p>HYBRID Saturday, Aug 9, 2025 10AM-4:00PM IN PERSON Location: Letort Spring Garden Preserve</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Botany I 	<p>Calyx Jaybird</p>
<p>Sunday Aug 10, 2025 10AM-4:00PM IN PERSON Location: Mount Holly Springs Marsh Preserve</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intro to Nature Awareness & Journaling 	<p>Jaybird</p>
<p>Monday Aug 11, 2025 5:30PM-9:00PM IN PERSON</p> <p>Tuesday, Aug 12, 2025 5PM-8:30PM ONLINE or IN PERSON</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Holistic Medicine 	<p>Calyx</p>
<p>Monday Aug 25, 2025 5:30PM-9:00PM IN PERSON</p> <p>Tuesday, Aug 26, 2025 5PM-8:30PM ONLINE or IN PERSON</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herbal Actions, Energetics, & Tissue States 	<p>Calyx</p>
<p>Saturday, Sep 6, 2025 10AM-4:00PM IN PERSON Location: Pomo Ct.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicine Making Lab I - Teas & Tinctures • Organoleptics Lab 	<p>Calyx</p>
<p>Sunday Sep 7, 2025 10AM-4:00PM IN PERSON</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicine Making Lab II - Topicals 	<p>Calyx</p>

Location: Pomo Ct.		
Monday Sep 8, 2025 5:30PM-9:00PM IN PERSON Tuesday, Sep 9, 2025 5PM-8:30PM ONLINE or IN PERSON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Herbal Safety & Research Discussion 	Calyx
Monday, Sep 22, 2025 Tuesday, Sep 23, 2025	BREAK	
Saturday, Oct 4, 2025 10AM-4:00PM IN PERSON Location: PA State Game Lands #243	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field Botany II Dynamic Ecology 	Calyx Jaybird
Sunday Oct 5, 2025 10AM-4:00PM IN PERSON Location: Pomo Ct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applied Cultivation 	Jon
Monday Oct 6, 2025 5:30PM-9:00PM IN PERSON Tuesday, Oct 7, 2025 5PM-8:30PM ONLINE or IN PERSON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decolonization 	Calyx
Monday Oct 20, 2025 5:30PM-9:00PM IN PERSON Tuesday, Oct 21, 2025 5PM-8:30PM ONLINE or IN PERSON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-Columbian Plant Student Presentations 	
Monday Nov 3, 2025 5:30PM-9:00PM IN PERSON Tuesday, Nov 4, 2025 5PM-8:30PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subsistence Economics Bioregional Apothecary Ethics & Management 	Calyx

ONLINE or IN PERSON		
Saturday, Nov 15, 2025 10AM-4:00PM IN PERSON Location: Pomo Ct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulation 	Calyx
Sunday Nov 16, 2025 10AM-4:00PM+ IN PERSON Location: Pomo Ct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wild Edibles Closing Circle End of Program Celebration & Potluck 	Jon
Jan 12, 2026	Final assignments due	
Friday-Sunday May 29, 2026 - May 31, 2026 Location: TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ALL STUDENTS/ALUMNI CAMPING TRIP 	

Make Up Dates:

In Person Make Up Dates:

- Saturday/Sunday Aug 23, 2025 & Aug 24, 2025
- Saturday/Sunday Nov 1, 2025 & Nov 2, 2025
- Saturday/Sunday Dec 13, 2025 & Dec 14, 2025

Monday & Tuesday evening Make Up Dates (held online):

- Tuesday Aug 19, 2025
- Tuesday Nov 11, 2025

Additional Content

Pre-Recorded Content, Documents, & Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principles of Medicine Making
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History of Western Herbalism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Botanical Morphology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 Steps of Positive Identification

• Regenerative Harvest
• Apothecary Management & GMPs
• Winter Plant ID
• Intro to Phytoconstituents
• Herbal Safety Part I: Toxicology & Adverse Effects
• Herbal Safety Part II: Low Dose Botanicals
• Research Techniques
• Applied Ecology for Wildtenders
• Herbal Processing Essentials
• Sensory Awareness Exercises
• Herbal Monographs
• Toxic Plants of Central PA
• Online Herbal Research Resource List
• Herbarium Template
• cGMP Example Templates

Attendance & Make-Up

90% attendance is required to receive your certificate. Certificate students may be withdrawn from the program or moved into auditing if absences or tardiness are excessive.

In person classes generally cannot be made up. In the case of an extenuating circumstance, please contact the Calyx directly to discuss a missed in person class.

Up to 2 missed online classes may be made up. If you are absent for an online webinar and wish to make up the absence, you will be required to watch/listen to the recording and provide notes or complete a special assignment.

All class make-ups must be completed within 1 week of the scheduled class.

Google Classroom & Drive

Announcements, assignments, class powerpoints, recordings, and materials will be posted in google classroom and google drive.

Some of the materials posted to the classroom will redirect to Youtube. In order to access private youtube videos, the email address provided/linked to google classroom needs to be the same email address linked to your youtube account.

The google drive will contain a folder titled "Documents & Resources" with several useful files. The Herbarium Online Resources file is continually updated. Students may make suggestions for additions if they find a useful resource by emailing us.

Quizzes & Exams

Quizzes will be held every other week, to be posted on Friday at 5:00pm and due back by Tuesday at 5:00pm.

Online quizzes will not have a time limit, but students are asked to complete them in one session without the use of study aids. Students may not discuss the quiz with other students until the following class.

Study guides will be provided at least 2 days prior to the exams being posted. There will be a review of each exam at the beginning of the following class if needed.

They may be made up or retaken with certain circumstances under the discretion of the director.

Individualized "study prompts" may be provided throughout the year to encourage growth or reflection in certain areas if needed.

Assignments

Instructions for Submitting Assignments:

If you have questions or problems with any assignment or course materials please let us know immediately so we can help you keep on track. Late assignments will not be assessed unless you have communicated with the instructor. If you need an extension on an assignment, please contact us. We are generally pretty accommodating for when life circumstances arise, within reason to prevent students from falling behind.

All assignments and detailed instructions for submission will be provided via Google Classroom. The following information is intended to give you an idea of what to expect during the course and is subject to change.

All assignments must be submitted directly via Google Classroom.

Assignments must be submitted as a *google doc or .docx* in the following format:

Last name_First name_Assignment name_Date

Please include any images in the body of the document.

Assignments shared with the group are noted in the assignment instructions. Students will be reviewing and commenting on each other's shared assignments.

Monthly Herbarium Assignments:

Each month you will work in-depth with an herb of your bioregion (while you will be working with the herb in the field, it is not a requirement to harvest the plant yourself for medicine making).

Herbarium independent study includes 4 areas of study:

Section A: Research

Section B: Field Studies

Section C: Herbal Medicine

Section D: Intuitive Work

You will be required to complete:

- **Section A & B for all 4 herbarium entries**
 - Research information must be cited (incl. information retrieved verbally from first hand accounts).
 - At least 2 cited sources must be from the books on the required reading list unless the plant cannot be found in any of these texts.
 - Phenological observations should include dates.
 - A minimum of one sketch is required for Section E. This ideally should be a still-life sketch from a live specimen. Additional sketches of various reproductive stages and plant parts (may be taken from photographs if not visible in the field) are encouraged. You may also include photographs and/or plant pressings.
- **Section C for 3 herbarium entries**
 - Research information must be cited (incl. information retrieved verbally from first hand accounts)
 - You will be encouraged to interact with the plant in as many forms as possible, and work with it daily for the duration of the two weeks (unless a reaction occurs) and log this experience for a total of 7-14 days
 - During weeks 1-2, only work with the single herb. During weeks 2-4, experiment with formulation with other herbs.
 - You may opt to study 1 at-risk or toxic/low-dose plant for the week where section C is not required.
- **Section D for a minimum for 3 herbarium entries**
 - This section is highly recommended for every herbarium, but is not required to be extensive.

Assignments Schedule

Assignment	Due Date
Reading: What's in a Name?	Jul 29, 2025
Reading: Tracking as the Art of Seeing	Jul 29, 2025
Watch: Botanical Morphology pts 1-3	Aug 8, 2025

Watch: 5 Steps of Positive ID	Aug 8, 2025
Reading: Lines in the Sand	Aug 8, 2025
Watch: History of Western Herbalism	Aug 11, 2025
Differential Morphology	Aug 18, 2025
Listen: Regenerative Wildcrafting	Aug 22, 2025
Sit Spot & Phenology Journal Entry #1	Aug 25, 2025
Herbarium #1	Sep 1, 2025
Watch: Principles of Medicine Making	Sep 5, 2025
Watch: Polar & Non Polar Molecules: Crash Course Chemistry	Sep 5, 2025
Watch: Intro to Phytoconstituents	Sep 8, 2025
Watch: Research Techniques	Sep 8, 2025
Reading: Toxicology Assessment: Kava Kava	Sep 8, 2025
Local Toxic Plants	Sep 15, 2025
Tincture Making pt 1	Sep 22, 2025
Water Extractions* (optional for hybrid students)	Sep 22, 2025
Essay: Herbalism Through the Ages	Sep 29, 2025
Botanical Morphology pts 4-6	Oct 3, 2025
Readings: Invasion Ecology	Oct 3, 2025
Reading: Between Wolf & Dog	Oct 3, 2025
Reading: Tending the Wild	Oct 3, 2025
Reading: Which Way	Oct 3, 2025
Reading: Succession Happens	Oct 3, 2025
Watch: Urban Ecology & Wildtending (optional)	No deadline
Post-Columbian Plant: Student Presentation	Oct 21, 2025
Read or Listen: The Serviceberry of Abundance	Nov 3, 2025

Tincture Making pt 2	Nov 10, 2025
Reading: Be Like Your Place	Nov 14, 2025
Sit Spot & Phenology Journal Entry #1	Nov 24, 2025
Herbarium #3	Dec 1, 2025
Reading: Foundational Herbcraft	Dec 31, 2025
Sit Spot & Phenology Journal Entry #1	Jan 5, 2026
Herbarium #4	Jan 12, 2026
Essay: Decolonization	Jan 12, 2026
Herbal Processing Essentials	No deadline
cGMP & Apothecary Management	No deadline

Payments & Refunds

A non-refundable deposit of 20% of your tuition is required to hold your place for the program.

The full cost of the **hybrid** program is \$2,800

The full cost of the all **online** program is \$2,000

There is approximately \$150 worth of required texts for the course if all purchased new and in print (some are available on Kindle for less). The cost of herbs and required reading materials are not included in the price of the program.

Financial Accessibility

It is a priority to us to make this program financially accessible, and so we ask students to balance personal financial ability with reciprocity. If you

- Full and partial scholarships are available to racialized people (BIPOC)
- Sliding scale tuition rates are available to all students and are based on household income

Further discounts are available. These are applied consecutively. Students may also

opt to pay any of these discounts forward to our scholarship fund:

- 10% discount to final tuition is available for any student who refers another student with a deposit
- 5% discount is applied for all in-person cash payments

Payments

After the deposit, the first payment is due 2 weeks prior to the start of the program. You may opt to pay in full or pay in 4 installments. A late fee of 10% of the payment is incurred for late payments.

Payments may be made by credit card, venmo, check, or cash.

If you choose to withdraw from the program and have paid in full, you may request a pro-rated refund (minus deposit) as follows:

- Up to 14 days prior to start of program: Full refund
- By day 15 of program: 75%
- By day 45 of program: 50%
- By day 75 of program: No refund

If you need to withdraw from the program, please notify us as soon as possible. Your refund amount will be processed based on the date of notification of withdrawal. We cannot provide backdated refunds. In the case of program cancellation, your deposit will be returned.

Policies

At Northern Appalachia School, we embrace our students' differences in age, color, ethnicity, disability, family or marital status, gender expression, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, and other characteristics that make our students unique. It is part of our mission to create an environment and a mindset that is not only inclusive, but actively works against systemic racism, colonization, and bigotry. We expect all students and faculty members to embody this work and act in a way that is respectful and inclusive of the diversity of all our students. Any student that exhibits discrimination or hateful speech may be dismissed from the program without refund.

All students are expected to demonstrate respect, mindfulness, and responsibility for the plants and the landscapes with which we will be interacting.

COVID-19 Policy: We ask that students respect the wellbeing of other students and facilitators in regards to your activities both in class and outside of class. Please do not come to class if you are feeling unwell, have tested positive for COVID-19, or have been exposed to someone who has. If a student comes to class knowingly ill or exposed the student may be subject to dismissal.

If an instructor is ill or is exposed to illness, class may be rescheduled, class topics may be swapped, or portions of the class may be offered online that day with in-person portions taught on a subsequent Saturday.

Masks and vaccination are not required. Students are encouraged to bring a mask to class, and are welcome to wear one if they wish.

COVID policy is subject to change depending on the current climate of the pandemic. In the case of an upsurge, we reserve the right to instate a mask policy.

We will do what we can to keep students safe and healthy while maintaining the continuity of the program.

Communication & Student Support

Students are encouraged to ask questions and seek out guidance from the instructor as needed. One-on-one communication must be within reason. Questions related to a student's health will be limited to what is applicable to the program, beyond that we ask that students schedule a consultation.

If you have questions or problems with any assignment, quiz, etc. please let us know immediately so we can help you keep on track.

We encourage students to interact with and support each other as well through the facebook group, and to make local connections in the herbal community whenever possible.

We welcome feedback and ideas about how to improve the program! Students will be asked to fill out program evaluations, but you are also welcome to email concerns or suggestions at any time.