

Common Useful Plants & their Folklore

When: Saturday, September 6th, 9:00 to 11:00 am {rain or shine}.

Where: Mendon Ponds Park in Mendon {Directions will be given to those who register}.

Who: Christian Naturalist Elizabeth Thomson. Elizabeth is a former Nature Interpreter at Mendon Ponds Nature Center with over 20 years experience, and holds an A.S. in Natural Resources/Conservation in addition to a B.S. in Outdoor Recreation.

Description: There are so many plants to which we are often oblivious during our woods loafing strolls; plants which God in all His majesty and perfect intelligence designed for our use when He spoke His Creation into existence. On the surface, they may appear as common weeds or pretty, sweet smelling wild flowers. With the guidance of an experienced woodsman, however, we may discover that many of these so-called weeds or beautiful, flowering plants are incredibly useful in our day-to-day lives. Whether its for food, shelter, clothes, dyes, medicines, ropes, or much more, God continues to provide for our needs through these plants, even though man in his "wisdom" has developed alternatives over time.

There is much that can be gleaned from the study of this topic. Quite often, in our supposedly advanced, post-modern, technological age, we rush to embrace the "latest and greatest" substitutes for items, materials or ways of doing things which God has already provided and established, assuming that the "new" must always be better than the "old". And sometimes they are of God's will for our lives. But, other times, these advancements are no advancements at all, due to their cost compared to that which is available either for free or much less in Creation, as well as all the detrimental impacts to our health and the great outdoors which result from the toxic, artificial, or chemical nature of a process, or of an item's production and the actual finished state of the item itself. We must be careful not to fall into the trap of the secular world and its arrogance, which always presupposes that it knows better ~ both materially and spiritually ~ than the God in which it does not believe or serve. We must always be prayerfully mindful of God's will for our lives in these regards, as to what is actually best for the stewardship of both our families and His Creation.

Of course, God's primary will for our lives in general is to serve Him by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost. Just as we can dismiss weeds as a useless, ugly nuisance, or consider sweet smelling flowers to be no more than that or because they appear to be wonderful on the surface they are thus intrinsically good {do we forget that poison ivy also blooms pretty flowers in the spring?}, we can often treat our fellow man in similar fashion. We can dismiss people in our daily walk because they are vulgar, smelly or nasty, forgetting we were all sinful wretches before we accepted the saving grace of Jesus Christ. We can also judge that people are "good" or "acceptable" based on how they act or appear outwardly, forgetting what we were really like before our salvation when scratched below the surface and our hearts were revealed {i.e., forgetting that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God", irrespective of outward acts or appearance}.

As we advance in our woodsmanship, we must be continually mindful that all of Creation was Created for God's purpose and to glorify Him. As our Christian walk continues to grow and mature over time, we must further be mindful that we the saved were created for the purpose of serving and glorifying God by reaching out to the lost, and that we were all created for the purpose of loving and worshipping our Creator.

No matter how people act or appear on the outside, share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the lost. Share the love, the joy, the peace, the salvation, and the victory we have in our Lord Jesus! Even though we did not deserve it, someone loved both God and us enough to lead us to Jesus Christ. Can any of us fathom if they had not?

Throughout both a sit down session and a woods walk, Elizabeth is going to identify and discuss many wild plants and their uses. This will be a fascinating class, with many surprises. To add to the interest, Elizabeth will share with us the age -old tales of how the use of certain plants came to be, as they have been retold and "canonized" over time in the folklore of rural American life and Indian culture. Elizabeth will also share with us what guides and resources are available that can help us "woods sleuths" solve the mysteries of identifying which plants are which and the uses for which God designed them.

Skills such as plant identification and use were once commonplace in early American society, but have been lost through the generations as Americans have transitioned from a rural to an urban existence. If we are serious about being woodsmen or living the traditional country life, these are skills we will want to start acquiring. This is another one of those classes we will not want to miss, especially if we want to grow closer to God by learning more about His power and majesty as exercised through the blessings of His Creation!

Cost: \$7 per person pre-paid before class {please make checks payable to "The Homestead/Jim Fehrman" and mail to address below}.

Age Range: 13 to Adult {Exceptions may be made depending on the maturity of the individual}.

What to Bring: Comfortable and durable walking or hiking shoes, boots or sneakers {no sandals, flip flops, croc's, or "open" shoes}, rain gear, hats, sun tan lotion, insect repellent, some water, lawn chairs, pen and pad

to take notes, cameras if desired.

Scriptures to Review: Genesis 1:9-13, Genesis 1:29-31, Genesis 2:4-9, Genesis 2:15-17, Genesis 3:7, Genesis 3:17-19, Deuteronomy 8:6-14, Nehemiah 9:5&6, Psalms 1:1-3, Psalms 8, Psalms 52:8-9, Psalms 92:12-15, Psalms 104, Proverbs 3:5&6, Proverbs 11:28-30, Isaiah 61:1-3, Jeremiah 23:5&6, Matthew 6:24-33, Matthew 10:33,38&39, Matthew 25:31-46, Luke 6:43-45, John 6:28&29, John 14:6, Romans 1:16, Romans 3:10,23-25,&27, Romans 5:1,8&9, Romans 11:13-26, Romans 12:1&2, II Corinthians 4, II Corinthians 5:17&18, Galatians 2:16, Galatians 3:13&14, Colossians 1:10-29, Revelation 22:1-4,12-14

Special Notes: One parent or guardian is required to participate per family. Class space is limited. Husbands and wives without children are welcome.

How to Register: Phone Jim at {585} 424~4100 during the day Monday thru Thursday, {585} 889~6411 any evening, or email him anytime at jimfehrman@frontiernet.net. Please indicate names of family members desiring to register, ages of children, as well as a phone number at which you may be reached.

*Please pass this information along to any home schooling family, family, parents, or married couple in general who you think may be interested in participating.

God Bless,

*Jim & Nancy Fehrman
Proprietors,
The Homestead
681 North Road
Scottsville, NY 14546
{585} 889~6411*