

Native Hands

We provide Pottery and Basketry courses, led by Ruby Taylor.



We call them "Wild" Pottery and "Wild" Basketry because we forage our materials from the land and hedgerows, and because courses are held mostly in woodland settings. It's an opportunity to learn life-long skills and to connect with the natural world. Our courses have evolved out of a love of making things in nature using natural materials, alongside an interest in ancient crafts and technologies. We aim to offer a satisfying learning experience as well as an enjoyable time away from it all. It's easy to take the objects and resources we use in our daily lives for granted, so it's really valuable to experience the whole cycle of production: harvesting/gathering materials in a sustainable way, processing them and finally creating a useful and beautiful object. It's an empowering opportunity to learn and develop practical, life-long skills.

Connecting with the natural world can deeply nourish and rejuvenate us. Taking time out of our daily lives to be creative in the woods round a fire, with birdsong, wild plants, creatures, dappled sunlight and like-minded people is a wonderful way to find a sense of space and connection—to ourselves, each other, and to the web of life itself. "Nature deficit disorder" is now widely recognised as a serious issue in many people's lives, and the importance and benefits of working creatively with our hands is also well-documented. It's these issues, along with a deep concern for sustainability, that are at the heart of Native Hands. Inspired and informed by traditional wisdom and knowledge in the ways we work with nature and natural materials, we harvest what we need with respect and sensitivity.

If you are among the tens of millions of people who spend most of their days indoors, embedded in the "man-made" world, it's to be expected that your concept of life will be largely human-centered. When you begin weaving more of nature into your everyday existence, however, your sense of life may open up to encompass the much richer, more complex, more communal and more timeless universe that you're actually part of. • Native Hands was originally set up in 2009 as a small educational collective, through a shared love of making things in nature using natural materials and a respect for ancestral knowledge. As friends we still meet, share ideas, and inspire each other. Native Hands is now mainly a platform for Wild Pottery and Wild Basketry courses led by Ruby Taylor

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