

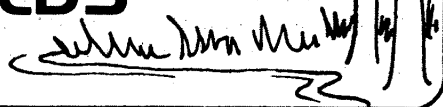
HOUSE OF MACRAME



macrame & weaving supplies

5416 Penn Ave. So., Mpls. Phone: 927-8307

FROM WOODS & FIELDS



by Connie Magoffin

Several months ago, I discussed a method to use for setting up yarn samples for light tests. I also mentioned that I wasn't sure how long it was necessary to expose the samples to light to get an accurate test result. Since that time, however, I have discovered some good information on fastness in Ida Grae's book, *Nature's Colors*. She indicated her source as J. Merritt Matthews', *Application of Dyestuffs*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York. Although Matthews' book was published in 1920, it was like opening a treasure chest. Of course by 1920 only a few natural dyes were still in use, but the tests for fastness that he suggests seem equally valid for testing our naturally dyed fibers.

After the yarn samples are properly mounted (see the Sept. issue), they are placed on the inside of a window with a southern exposure to obtain the strongest possible sunlight. The results are rated by Matthews as follows:

1. Very fast — no fading after 4 weeks of exposure
2. Fast — if there was no fading at 2 weeks, but some fading after 4 weeks of exposure
3. Fairly fast — if there was no fading at 1 week, but some fading after 2 weeks of exposure
4. Not fast — if there was fading at the end of 1 weeks exposure

The decision for the length of exposure was based on information from Sir Wm. Abney that exposure to direct sunlight for 1 month equals 100 years of exposure to diffused indoor daylight. Ida Grae used a slightly adapted rating system of 1-4 based on a total of 2 weeks exposure.

Whenever there is a discussion of fastness, it is always added that color fastness is a relative term. We are not only concerned with fastness to light, but also to washing, to rubbing and possibly even to perspiration. No dyes are fast to all conditions and the use to which the dyed fiber is to be put must be an important consideration. Further questions are raised in my mind, such as the fading effects of our current indoor lighting. All this must be discussed in a future column since the next two months will be devoted to planting a dye garden. If you have a dye plant you would like to try in your garden but don't know where to get the seeds or how to grow it, let me know in the next few weeks and I'll try to find out for you.

A final note — Natural Dye I starts on Saturday, March 20 (Natural Dye II starts on May 8). Don't forget that you can now get college credit for taking these two courses. Also several of us have discovered the Umbilicaria lichen in Minnesota—the ones that produce beautiful violets (even on unwashed fleece!!). This dye is now included in our experiments in Nat. Dye I. It is a slightly different method of dye preparation, but so easy. Join our class and try it for yourself!

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.