

Below are five plants found around Seafield, alongside their Arabic, Polish, and Scottish Gaelic names. These plants formed the basis of the developer we made to process film and make darkroom prints from, accompanied here by knowledge about their health and wellness applications.

- a. Mugwort
- b. Dandelion
- c. Plantain
- d. Nettle
- e. Yarrow

a. Mugwort

Ash-sheekh; Bylica Pospolita; Liath-luis

Saining is a traditional Celtic practice that involves using the smoke of dried plant material to banish negative energy or bless an object or space. Mugwort is one of the primary herbs used in this practice, which is also known as "smudging". The fresh or dry leaf placed under pillows are said to bring about prophetic dreams.

Mugwort Smudge Stick

- Harvest fresh mugwort stems on a dry day, ideally just before or during flowering. Stack stems together with tips all pointing the same direction.
- Make a bundle about 1-2 inches thick. Tie string/cotton thread at the base and wrap upward in a tight spiral, then back down again. Tie off securely.
- Hang in a cool, dry, airy place for 1-3 weeks until fully dry. (It must be completely dry to burn evenly.)
- Light the tip, let it smoulder, and wave gently to release the smoke.

b. Dandelion

Al-hin-di-baa; Mniszek Lekarski; Beàrnan-Bride

This plant's flowers represent the sun, its seed head the moon, and when the seeds are airborne, they represent the stars. Sun, moon and stars, the entire cosmos, the life force.

Leaves

Pick and eat fresh in early spring before flowering (milder flavour, best for tonics). The older the leaf the more bitter the taste. Older leaves can be steamed and eaten like spinach. Flowers: Late spring-summer on dry days. Can be used to make a syrup or fermented to make wine.

Roots

Liver support and appetite stimulant. Best dug up in Autumn, Decoction (root): simmer 10-15 minutes for digestive support. Roots can also be roasted and brewed as as caffeine free coffee substitute.

Seeds

Can be sprouted like microgreens/ress. Full of vitamins, minerals and trace elements.

c. Plantain

Le-Saan-al-haml; Babka Zwyczajna; Cruach-Phàdraig

Known as a healing and protective herb for travellers, plantain on paths and tracks, and is therefore seen as a guide and companion. Appears in the old "Nine Herbs Charm" for wounds, bleeding and drawing out poison.

Leaves

Picked, chewed, and placed on the skin for fast relief from cuts, grazes, nettle stings, insect bites, blisters, and splinters. The upper side of the leaf is placed on the skin for its healing virtues. The underside of the leaf for drawing out stings and poison.

Seeds

Collect in late summer-autumn. They can be sprouted or added to food and help soothe the digestion and act as a gentle laxative. Soak one teaspoon in cold water overnight.

Plantain Salve (Using Fresh Leaves)

- Fresh leaves contain water, so they must be wilted first to prevent mould. Pick and lay the fresh plantain leaves on a clean cloth or paper towel. Let them wilt for 12-24 hours until limp (but not fully dry). This removes excess moisture.
- Chop wilted leaves. Place in a jar and cover completely with your carrier oil (sunflower/almond/rapeseed). Leave 2-4 weeks on a sunny window, shaking occasionally. Strain thoroughly.
- To make the salve use a ratio of 1 part beeswax to 4 parts infused oil.
- For 100 ml plantain-infused oil: You need 25 g beeswax. For 50 ml oil → 12.5 g beeswax.
- Place plantain-infused oil in a heatproof bowl. Add beeswax, warm gently until the beeswax melts.
- Optional: Stir in a few drops of essential oils. Pour into tins or jars and allow to set.
- For a firmer salve, add slightly more beeswax; for a softer salve, add more oil.

d. Nettle

Al-qur-ras; Pokrzywa; Deanntag/Neanntag

It was said eating nettles 3 times in the spring would keep the doctor away for the rest of the year. People believed the sting drew blood to the area and eased stiffness, especially with arthritis, rheumatism, and cold-damp pains. Cooking nettles neutralizes their sting.

Leaves

Young tender leaves collected in spring (March-May), before flowering. Young nettles were the classic "Spring tonic" to replenish iron and vitality. They are full of vitamins and minerals.

Seeds

Stimulant and restorative; collected in late summer-early autumn.

Roots

Collected in Autumn-winter. Traditionally said to dye wool a yellow colour. Modern herbalists use the root to treat an enlarged prostate.

e. Yarrow

Al-a-khee-le-ya; Krwawnik; Lus chosgadh na fala

Traditionally used as a wound herb: externally as a poultice for cuts, bleeding, and bruising. Aerial parts (leaf & flower) are collected around mid-summer when in full bloom on a dry day. Young leaves and flowers can be eaten in salads.

A Note on Seed Collection: When collecting seed be sure to harvest responsibly, taking no more than 10% of wild seeds from the one plant, ensuring enough remains for habitat regeneration and local wildlife. Seeds are best collected when brown and mature and kept in a cool, dark place to dry before storing. Hand-printed paper envelopes are provided for the storing of seed in the Portobello Seed Share (available at Portobello Library). Be sure to label with the species name, date and location the seed has been collected from.



Words by Herbal Scotland

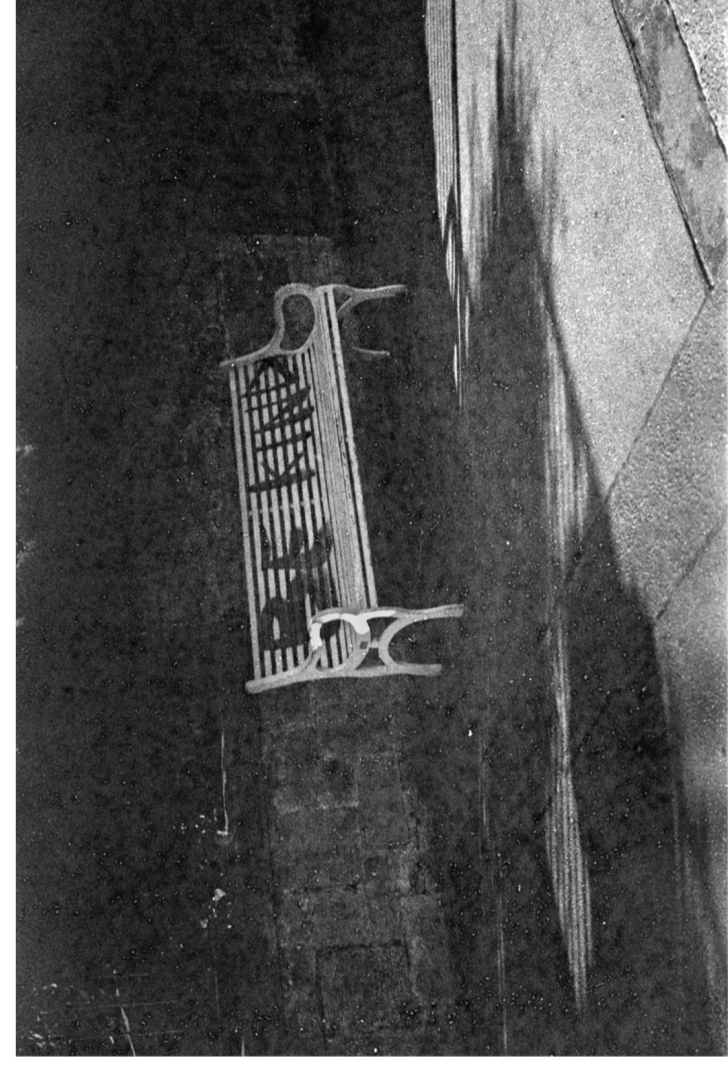
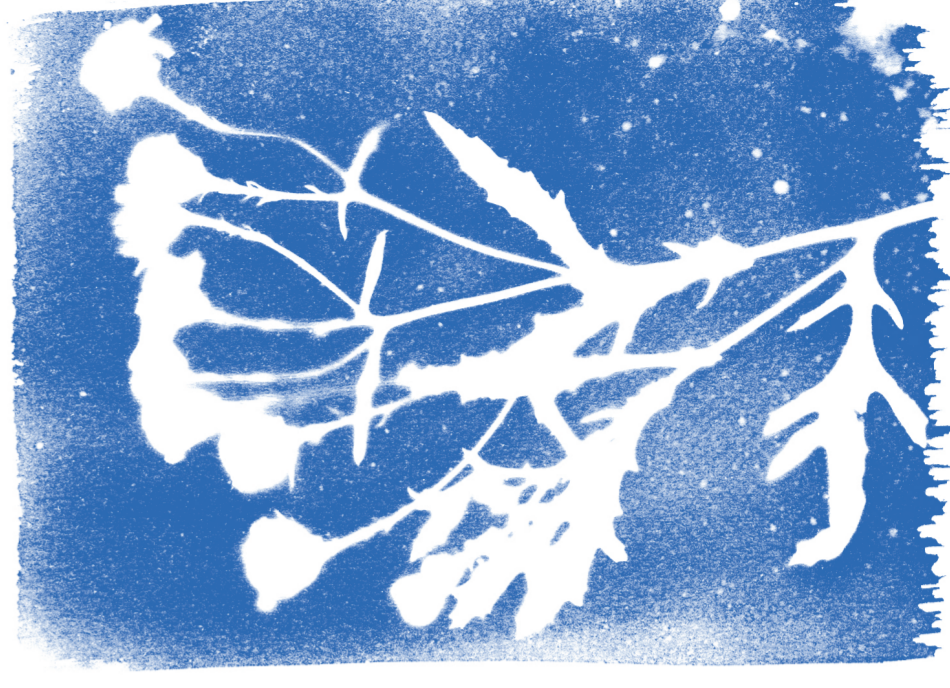
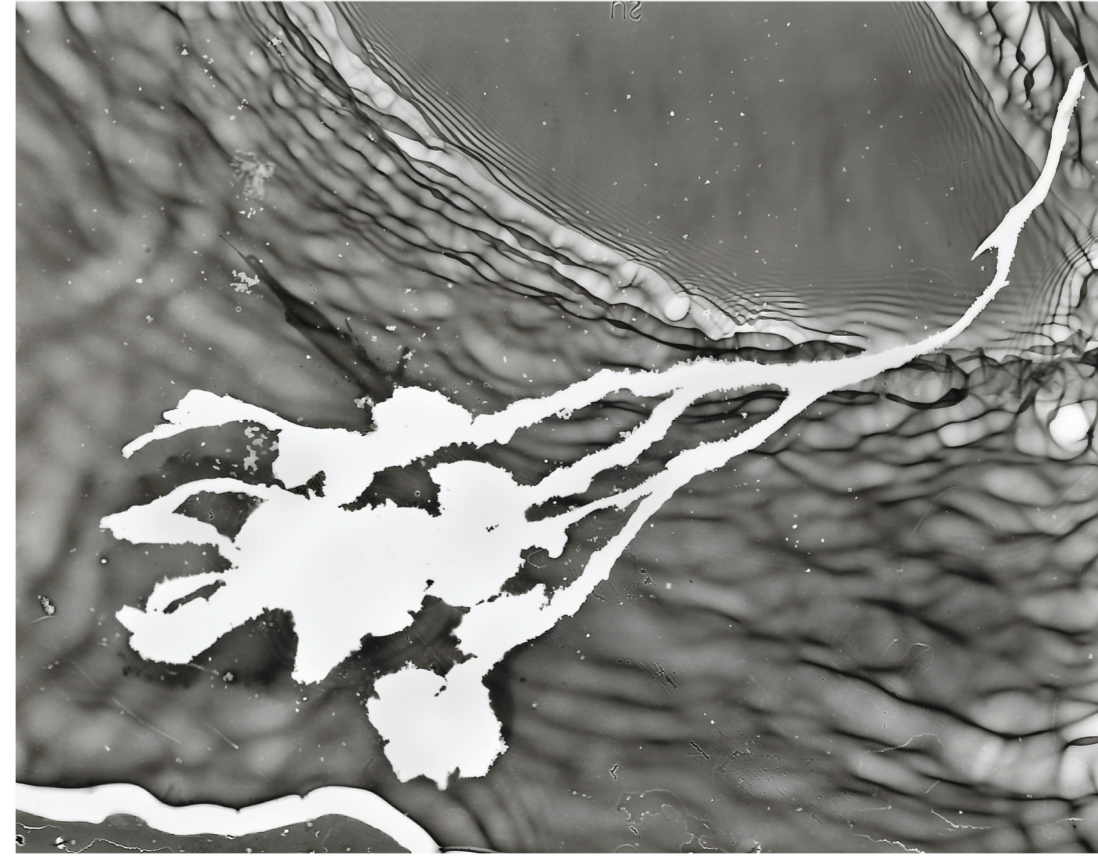
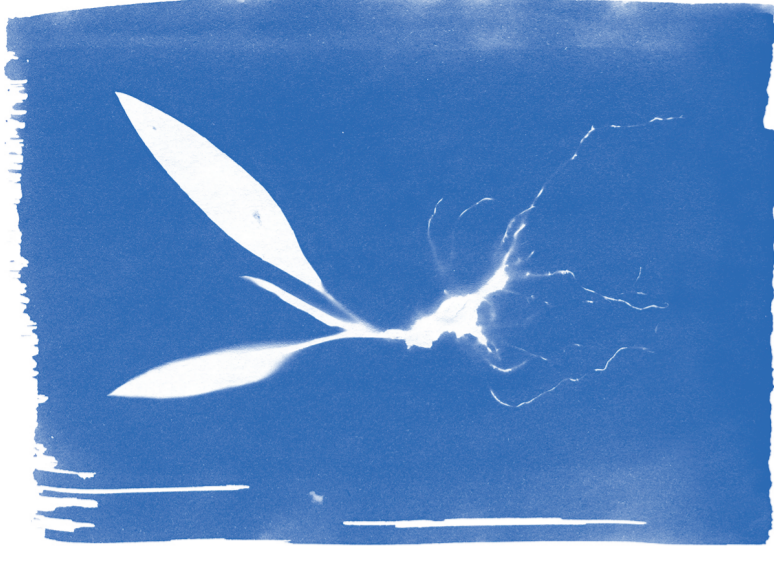
Remedy is a medicinal seed project involving coastal wild plants situated around Portobello. The project comes through a series of photo-arts workshops with participants from Access to Industry, creating images in living landscapes in response to local Portobello & Seafield. Facilitated by artist Zoe Hamill and herbal ecologists at Herbal Scotland, the project has experimented with camera-less photography and plant-based developing of film, alongside the learning about medicinal plant ecologies and remedy making.

This leaflet includes cyanotypes and photographs produced through the workshops using plant-based developers and toners made from locally collected medicinal plants around Portobello and Seafield.

The new Portobello Seed Share created through this project and situated at Portobello Library, invites you to collect medicinal seed to add to the collection.

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Images by: Ala, Bill, Colin, Dougie, Hussein, and Kat