



A Walk in the Rain

The Spring walk on Rhode Island was planned well in advance. As the date approached, I watched the weather forecast: cloudy; cloudy with a chance of light rain; 60% chance of rain; 90% chance of rain and so it became clear that it would be a rainy walk. That discouraged some people from coming with the apology, *"Thanks for inviting me. I think it's supposed to rain most of the day tomorrow."*

And, so it did.

The tree canopy had our backs. We could hear the gentle sound of the rain and very little actually reached those of us who walked that day. Prepared with our rain slickers and boots, we walked anyway. We were virtually alone in the forest, only seeing a woman and her dog towards the of the walk.

What is it about us that we only want to be in nature in good weather?

What does that say about our approach to life? Yes, as a certified Forest Therapy Guide, I watch the radar because safety is my first concern. I'd end a walk if lightening, thunder, high winds showed up on my radar app. In fact, I chose a trail that never was more than ¼ mile from the parking area just in case the weather turned to something more serious. As it turned out, we were kissed by the rain

and caressed by the breeze and in awe of just how green the world is in the rain.

Even during our tea ceremony by the edge of a vernal pond, we were magically protected by the trees around us; joined by a Kingfisher or two, who must have wondered what these Humans were doing out in the rain.

Walking, even in the rain.

How often does the weather affect our behavior; our mood; our activity? *"Thanks for inviting me. I think it's supposed to rain most of the day tomorrow."*

Don't get me wrong. There isn't judgment in that question. Only curiosity. What would it be like to walk in the rain? To show up? To participate?

There is more to this invitation to explore how we are in the rain than an rsvp to a forest walk. I invite you to ask yourself that question and see how you reply. *"Thanks for inviting me. I'll be there."*

LI Forest Walks Summer Edition 2018

LI Forest Walks -Upcoming Events

June 24th 2-4 PM, LI Forest Walks Meetup group will be meeting at Gardiner Park in W. Bayshore for a meet and greet. We'll stroll and chat. This is a free event.

July 11th 10 AM – 1 PM Bailey Arboretum, Spring Public Walk, A Walk for All Seasons. \$25 general admission, \$5 off for Friends of Bailey.

July 20-22, Spirit Fire Retreat Center, a retreat for women, exploring creativity, connection and belonging. To learn more or register: <https://www.tenwomenstrong.net/events/exlore-create-circle-july-2018/>

August Walk for All Seasons, Rhode Island, date and time to be announced. Please follow the event calendar on www.liforestwalks.com

Watch for walks at Bayard Cutting Arboretum ... coming soon!



LI FOREST WALKS WELCOMES NEW RELATIONSHIPS

LI Forest Walks is excited to announce that talks are underway to schedule Forest Therapy walks at Bayard Cutting Arboretum in Great River, Long Island, NY!

LI Forest Walks is always inviting new relationships with:

- Universities
- County Government
- Corporate Organizations
- Arboretums
- Wildlife Preserves & Refuges
- Retreat Centers
- Other coaches & facilitators of workshops and retreats

SUMMER PLANTS

Part of my certification as a Forest Therapy guide was to identify the plants around me. That includes plants in my backyard as well as the forest; tea plants, poisonous plants and medicinal plants.

POISONOUS - FOXGLOVE

Last year, my son planted Foxglove (genus *Digitalis*). Its properties include:

- Medicinal: strengthens the heart and regulates heartbeat; also *dangerous* for the same reason
- Toxic glycosides –anything poisonous is an edge for me and all parts of this plant are poisonous, if ingested.
- Folklore: "Foxes must have used the flowers to magically sheath their paws as the stealthily made their nocturnal raids into the poultry yards of rural folk."
- Called Witches Gloves; Dead Men's Bells; Fairy Thimbles
- Bees love them

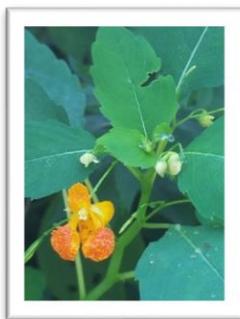


MEDICINAL - JEWELWEED

My forest friend! *Impatiens capensis*. Jewelweed, Touch-Me-Not.

It's been used for years as an antidote to poison ivy and poison oak, as well as other skin conditions. It's often found growing near poison ivy and poison oak, which amazes me. It's as if nature said, "*Here's a really nasty plant for Humans, so I'll give you something wonderful right next to it.*"

Some people are thrown by the name Touch-Me-Not, and it's not what you think. The name came about because if you touch it, it's seeds pop out. This plant is a self-seeding annual, so you must understand its eagerness to jump right out and get started!



TEA – RED CLOVER

Trifolium pratense, otherwise known as red clover is a lovely tea/foraging plant, if used safely. Like all plants, every benefit comes with a caution.

The list of benefits of red clover includes it as a digestive and anti-inflammatory aid; for IBS and menopausal symptoms; for aging conditions and allergies. It also comes with a list of cautions for pregnant or nursing women, women with estrogen dominance conditions or ovarian and breast cancer or liver problems, or on blood thinners. Like any herbal tea, everyone should check with his or her doctor/nutritionist. As a result, red clover isn't something I'd forage for a walk. It grows in my backyard and I've made tea for personal use. It just has too many caveats for me to feel confident offering it to a group. Remember, it's all about safety.



MASTER NATURALIST CERTIFICATION

A Forest Therapy Guide is fond of saying, "*Naming isn't the same as knowing.*"

What does that mean? It means that I might know the names of plants, mammals and trees and still *never really know* the being. On the other hand, a Forest Therapy guide knows the being through curiosity and connection and may not know its 'given' name.

My Master Naturalist certification through Quality Parks in Port Jefferson, NY, is the balance between knowing and naming.

Check out the program here:

<https://www.qualityparks.org/master-naturalists.html>

VOLUNTEERING AT S.T.A.R.

In tandem with the Master Naturalist program, I've begun volunteering at S.T.A.R., Save the Animals Rescue in Middle Island, NY. Working with and for wildlife, some of which are being rehabilitated to be released and some who can never be released due to their injuries, is in service of the natural world. I've also taken their rescue and transport program, to know how to respond, or not, if I come across injured wildlife in the woods. To learn more about volunteering, check out their website:

<http://www.savetheanimalsrescue.org/index.html>

CONNECT WITH LI FOREST WALKS

Website: www.liforestwalks.com

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/liforestwalks/>

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Meetup Group:

<https://www.meetup.com/LongIslandForestTherapyWalks/>

