



# DYES DHA37 IN HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

## THE REVIVAL OF THE ANCIENT TECHNIQUE OF PRINTING

Using Mordants and Dyeing with Natural  
Colourants to achieve Contemporary  
Multi-coloured Designs



Dr Kate Wells and Katie Churn, University of Derby

This research explored how mordants and resist pastes were used in ancient times for dyeing fabrics with natural colourants and creating multi-coloured patterned designs. These historical techniques influenced my design work and were applied to modern processes. Print pastes were created using natural pigments and natural gums to be used through silk screens. This research aimed to find a more sustainable way of printing and dyeing than using synthetic dyes and pigments.





## Tested Natural Dyes

**Pinks/Reds:** Madder (roots), Red Cabbage, Blackberries, Avocado (pits and skin)

**Oranges:** Annatto (seeds), Red and White Onion (skins), Cutch (bark)

**Yellows:** Weld (plant), Turmeric (root), Heather (flowers), Marigold (flowers), Tansy (flowers), Goldenrod (leaves, stems and flowers)

**Greens:** Chlorophyll (leaves), Weld overdyed with Woad

**Blues:** Woad (leaves), Indigo (leaves), Red Cabbage, Logwood (wood)

**Purples:** Red Cabbage, Logwood (wood)

**Browns:** Logwood (wood), Walnut (husk), Oak Galls

