

BLACKBERRIES

The blackberries sigh as I walk past, their ripening weighs upon the thorny vines. Seldom have I time to honor this childhood memory of slow summer days picking with my grandmother. I have spent recent years removing these pests from my pastures, fence lines and gardens. I respect but am annoyed at their tenacity and voracity as they continue to invade where they are not wanted by the unnatural nature I have created in my yard.

Blackberries belong in the wild, they are not often cultivated as blueberries, strawberries or their cousins the raspberry. The creatures of the forest can and do navigate through the thorns, but human movement is thwarted, irritated, and impassable.

I want to honor the blackberry in me. The part that is uncultivated, unwanted in certain circles, and untamed. Yet wildly fruitful in its place and season.

Slowly and gradually, without fanfare or announcement, these have eased their way over the fence line and into and onto our pastures. These berries ripen on their own time table, some are yet blossoms, some tight and green, some full ripe and ready.

I pick, considering that these berries blossom, grow, ripen and fall without my permission, without my blessing, and even without my knowledge. My thoughts or ideas do not seem to influence their growth or productivity one way or the other. They have withstood the heat of summer, and the lack of rain, and the fruit is still tender and sweet. Regardless, heedless of the needs or desires or even the approval of the surrounding plant, animal, and human judgments and opinions, these berries simply show up.

If no one should acknowledge them, if no one should praise their taste, beauty, and abundance... still they would ripen, rot and fall – to feed the ground, small creatures and their own root system.

I pick and follow the ripest that are within easy reach. My pant legs full of the field, seeds and dying grass; my arms bitten and scratched by thorns and nettles, my fingers and tongue stained by the purple juice.

I too want to show up, be only what I am, be all that I am, even if what I am... is me.

Two one gallon buckets later, I have communed with these wild plants and have been fed by much more than the fruit they have given.

August 31, 2012

Written by Dawn Warnaca, HTCP/I

Healing Touch Certified Practitioner/Instructor