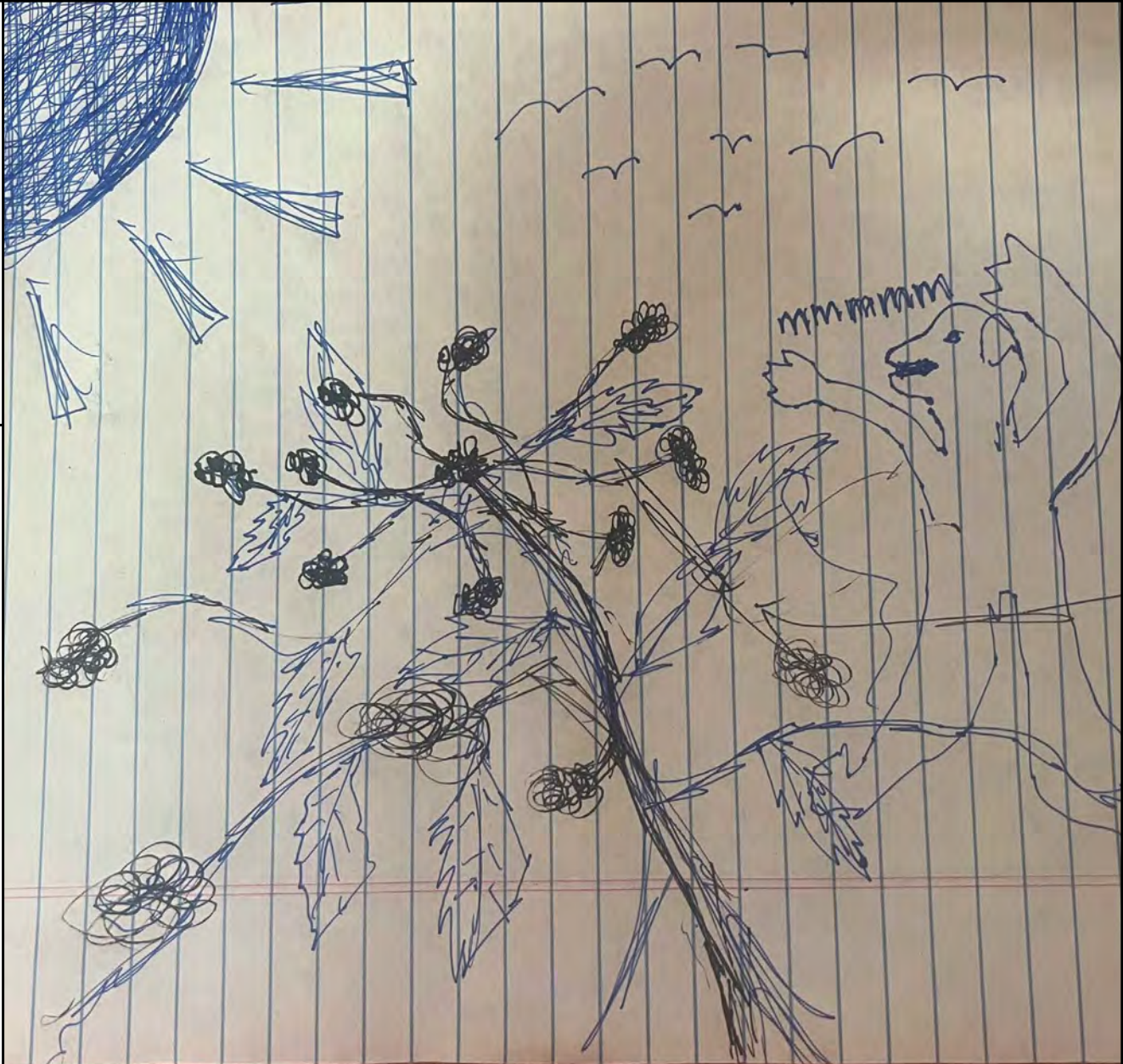
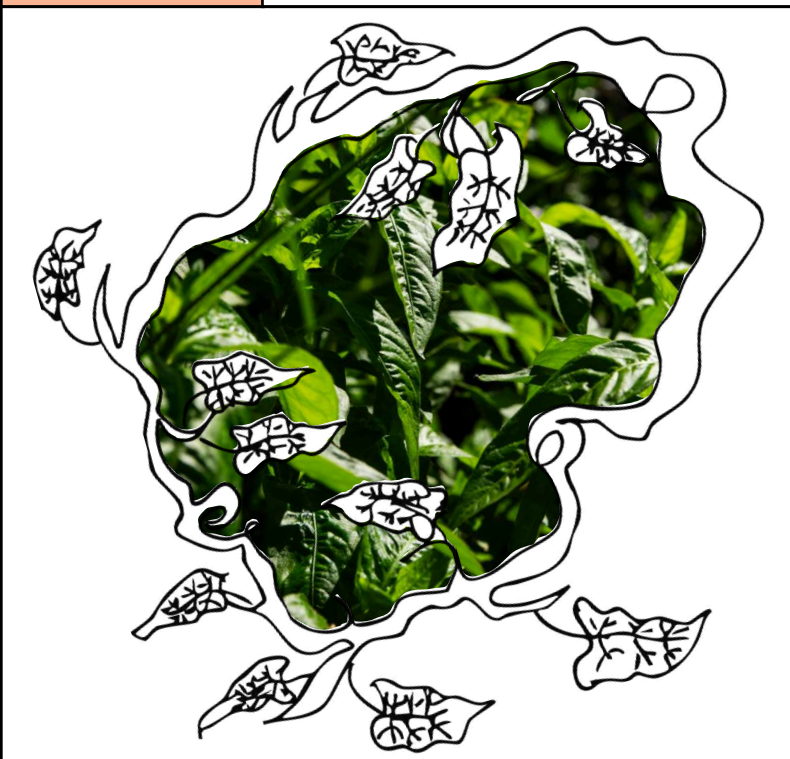


Summer 2025 Plant Zine



THE
ONLY
ANIMAL



Growing on the Roadside: How to Combat Plant Blindness

Plant blindness is a term that refers to the human tendency to ignore plants. In this project, our efforts to combat plant blindness are inspired by small but rippling actions of resistance and transformation. We create in hopes to heal our own ability to witness, recognize, and consider the value of plants.

This artwork seeks a decolonial approach that resists human-centered and hierarchical evaluations of the natural world. It brings forward a perspective that focuses on the personality,, stories and gifts of each plant. By growing our presence and ability to engage with plants as equal, complex and autonomous beings, rather than merely backdrops for aesthetic contemplation, we are invited into their generosity and unconditional love. When we uncover our presence for the natural world; and we are fully where we are, it doesn't take too many steps before we realize our own connection to it.

This project is deeply inspired by the teachings of Indigenous scholars: Robin Wall Kimmerer and Leigh Joseph; who revere plant wisdom as vital guidance in how we care for the world and each other. Growing on the Roadside primarily focuses on the wisdom and offerings of three plant species: English Ivy, Bindweed, and Himalayan Blackberry. These plants were our collaborators materially and conceptually, as individual species and a collective network, living interdependently with one another. These three plant species are well defined in our common imagination for being invasive and are therefore often subjected to “bad” plant language.

This artwork and zine ask:

How might we have a different exchange with these plants - that doesn't vilify them? How can we collaborate and work with these plants instead of struggle against them? How can we avoid wasting what they have to offer?

These hungry plants so often take over because the presence of human care and connection is not there. What lessons of our own responsibility are these plants here to teach us? What plants are growing on your roadside - are they cooperative plant neighbours or do they need intention and redirection? What is their impact on native plant species?

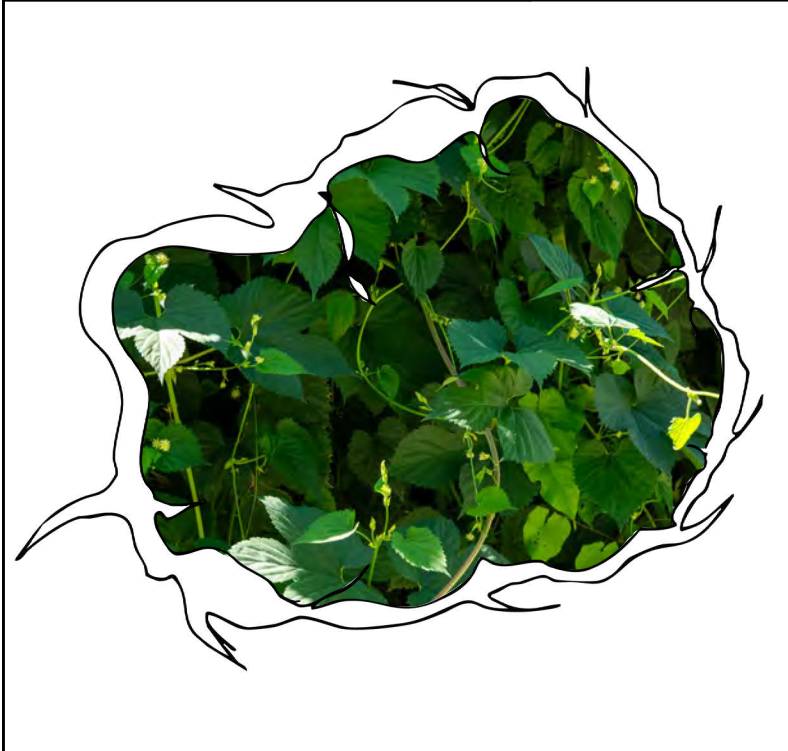
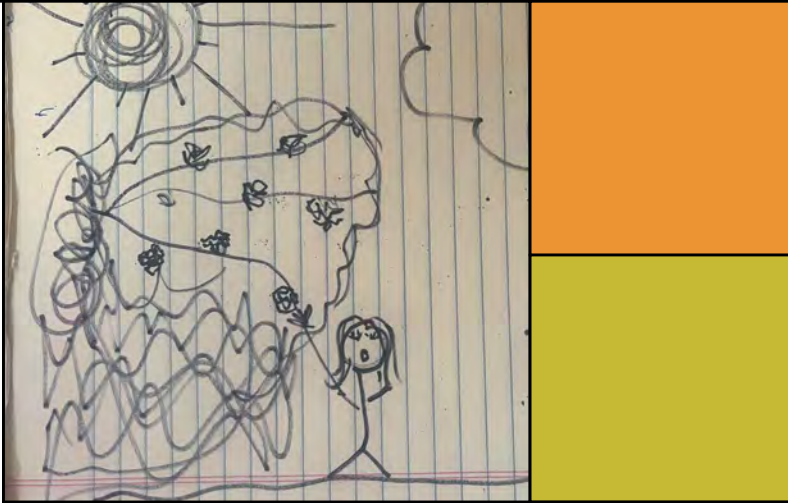
The plant material collected for this artwork was harvested from the Sunshine Coast; in qathet on Tla'amin territory and in Roberts Creek located within the traditional territories of both the shíshálh Nations and Skwxwú7mesh Nations. By working with invasive plants, we hope to honor and enact a reciprocal exchange with these lands, where we are so grateful to be guests. However, we did not want to use these invasive plants without thoughtfully inquiring into their perspective.

Combatting plant blindness simply begins with starting where you are. If you bring intention to this, you will be transformed in your stillness by the intrinsic and direct love of plants.

English Ivy - Hedera helix

*"I reach out to cover the barren soil,
blooming tiny flowers along my path"*

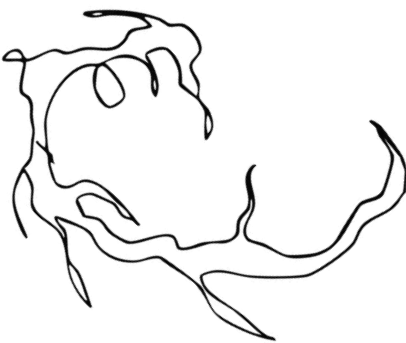
- How to Harvest for Cordage & Weaving:**
- Can be harvested at any point in the year
 - Vines and roots can be pulled out by hand
 - Remove leaves and coil single strands
 - Use fresh or if dried, soak in water overnight before use
 - Woody vines can be used as spokes/stakes for baskets, and split into thinner pieces for cordage
 - Younger, more flexible vines are useful for weaving, less ideal for cordage



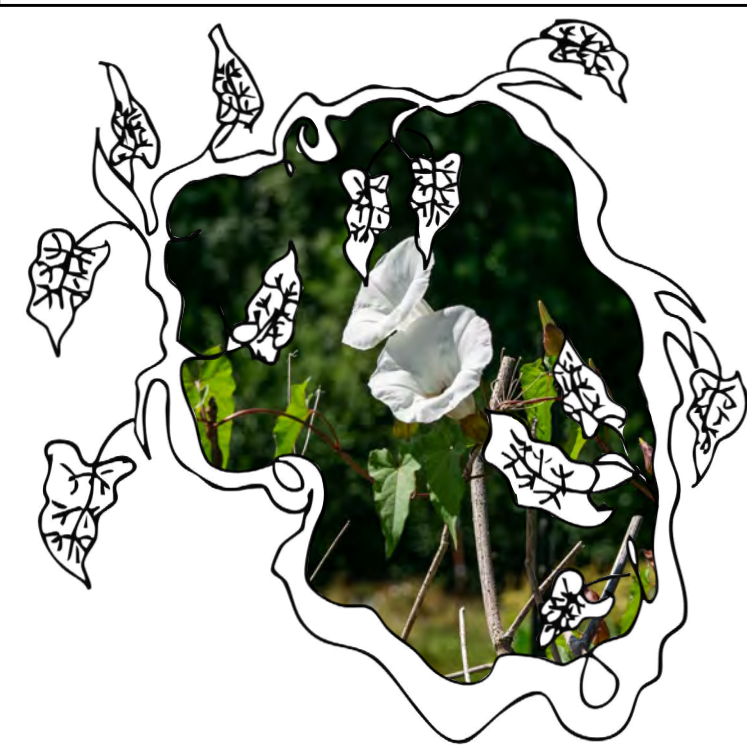
How did this plant become known to me? What drew us to each other?

How does this plant hold themselves? What impression does this make?

I cannot help that I know how to follow water and kiss moths at night they love the way my petals reflect the moon



I taught myself how to lean on poles and eat apples, I learned how to chase x-rays and weave metaphors



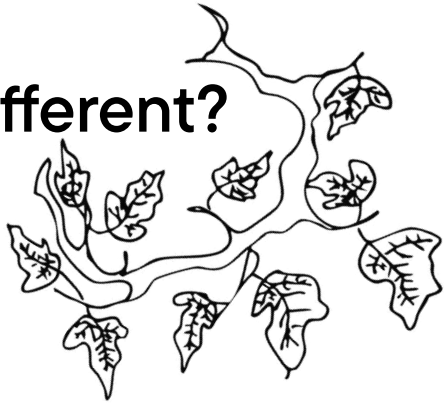
Field Bindweed* - Convolvulus arvensis L.

**also known as Morning Glory*

"I was made to share life just as much as I was made to take it"

- How to Harvest for Cordage:**
- Harvest in the spring or summer (or whenever it appears)
 - Vines, roots and leaves can be pulled out by hand or snipped with scissors
 - Remove leaves
 - Can be crocheted/finger knit fresh
 - Dry for at least four days for cordage
 - Once dried, soak in water for 5-10 mins and voila - cordage material!

What stories does this plant hold? How do I feel different?



Closing Questions

- What have you noticed growing around you?
- What is the language you use for the land around you? How has it shifted?
- What was your relationship with these plants? How has it changed?

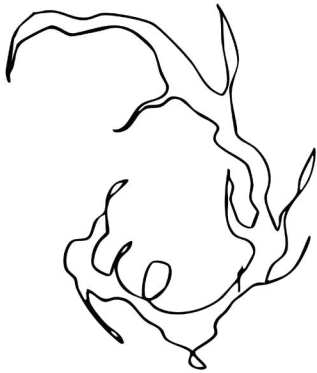
Plant ID Questions

- Where did you see it growing?
- What do the trunks, stalks, and branches look like?
- What do the leaves look like?
- What do the flowers look like?



I recite Timelines in the shape of peaks and valleys, pathways stipulated with thorns. It is only my shadow that they can rest in, I promised to keep the water cool.

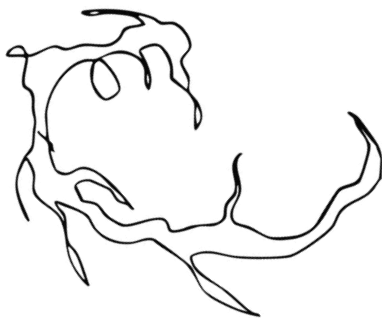
Lostness or the quality of lostness transforms into something else when life interacts with it



Himalayan Blackberry - Rubus armeniacus
"I am a purple stain of August; heavy in your hands"

How to Harvest for Cordage & Weaving:

- See if both green fruit and flowers on the stocks
- Inner fibre for cordage, outer fibre for weaving
- Gloves Gloves Gloves, preferably leather ones! Thorns hurt!
- The long runners that are in the shape of peaks and valleys are what can be harvested
- Early in the season, when these stocks are vibrant green, and the thorns are less thorny; the outer skin can be pulled off with inner fibres quite easy
- As the stock matures the outer skin can be pulled off to the inner fibres quite easily
- You can stomp on the brambles to loosen the inner fibres and still harvest the outer fibres quite easily

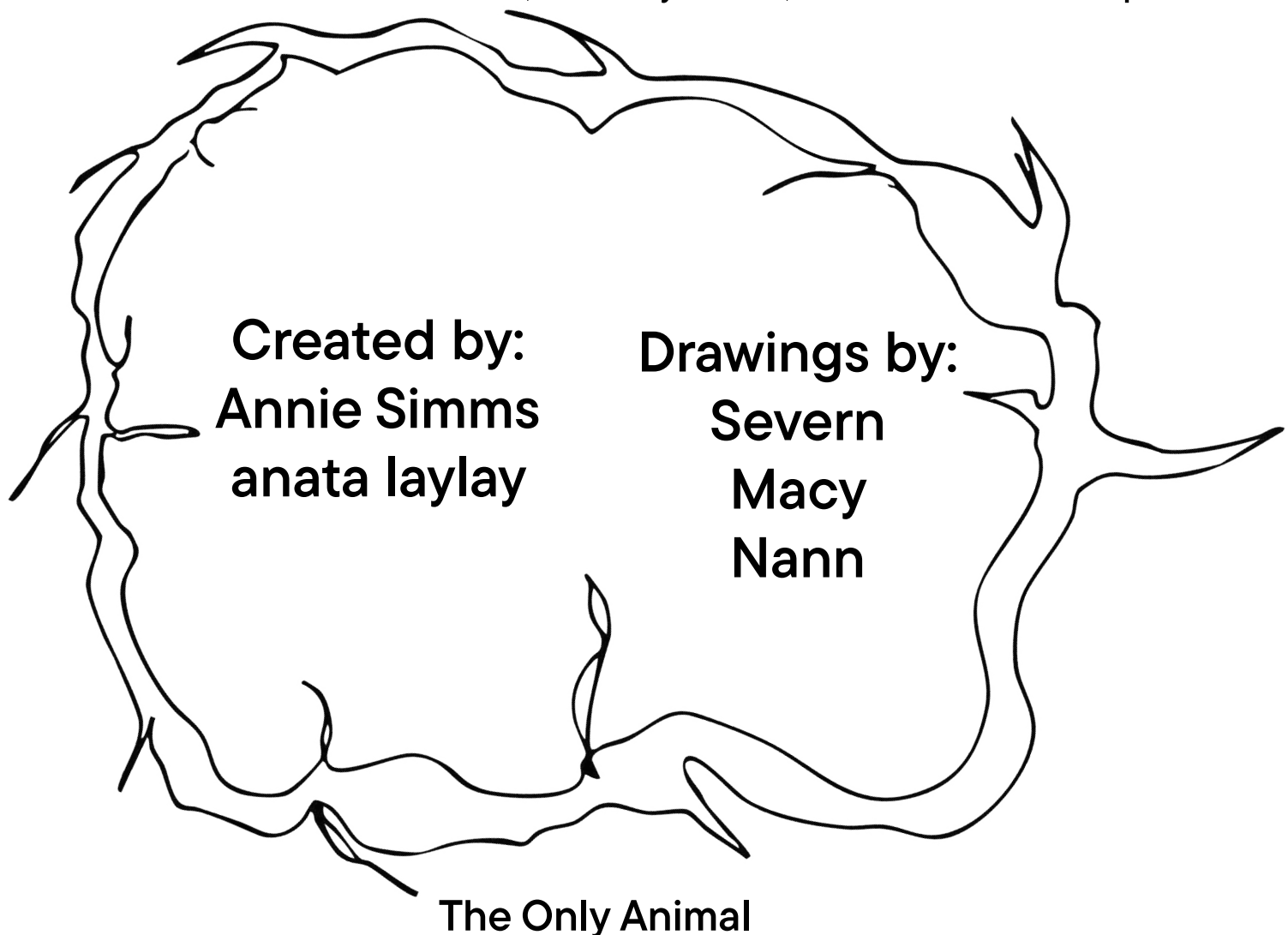


Citations:

Joseph, Leigh. *Held by the Land: A Guide to Indigenous Plants for Wellness = Wa Ch'ich'istway Ta Temíxw: Spén'em Txwnam'Ta Ha7lh Skwálwen*. Wellfleet Press, 2023.

Kimmerer, Robin Wall, and John Burgoyne. *The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World*. Thorndike Press, from Gale, a Part of Cengage Group, 2025.

sharonkallis. "Sharon Kallis." Sharon Kallis, 28 July 2024, sharonkallis.wordpress.com/.



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