

Indigo Rose

If you have access to some soil and are planning a garden come spring in a place that gets sun, consider “Indigo Rose,” which Rosie’s catalog describes as “the darkest tomato bred so far, exceptionally high in anthocyanins.”

Anthocyanins are flavonoids that contribute purple pigment to eggplants (and cannabis), red to grapes, blue to blueberries. They are potent antioxidants.

The Indigo Rose tomatoes look like big cherries (which are also high in anthocyanins). “Developed by Jim Myers at Oregon State University using traditional plant breeding techniques...”

Some hip dispensary ought to buy a thousand seeds (price: \$10.15) and give out packets to their grower-members. A wee first step out of the single-issue trap.



Another plant worth pushing is milkweed. Most varieties are butterfly-attractors. The flowers are star-shaped and beautiful. Rosie was reading a high-end catalog the other day and saw an ad for a *Syriaca* comforter.

She thought that *Syriaca* was from milkweed —the fluff that provides a parachute for each light, flat seed— and confirmed it on Wikipedia, which also informed us:

“Failed attempts have been made to exploit rubber (from the latex) and fiber (from the seed’s floss) production from the plant industrially. The fluffy seed hairs have been used as the traditional background for mounted butterflies. The compressed floss has a beautiful silk-like sheen. The plant has also been explored for commercial use of its bast (inner bark) fiber which is both strong and soft. U. S. Department of

Agriculture studies in the 1890s and 1940s found that Milkweed has more potential for commercial processing than any other indigenous bast fiber plant, with estimated yields as high as hemp and quality as good as flax. Both the bast fiber and the floss were used historically by Native Americans for cordage and textiles. Milkweed oil from the seeds can be easily converted into cinnamic acid, which is a very potent sunscreen when used at a 1-5% concentration.

“The flowers often constitute small traps for insects who cannot take off again. Several insects live off the plant, including the Monarch Butterfly... The flower nectar has a high glucose content and was used by natives as a sweetener.”

Hemp isn’t the only useful plant that we’re missing out on, being so disconnected from nature in this dying culture.

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About this issue

Our thanks to Paul Stanford —an old friend of Tod Mikuriya’s, too— and The Hemp and Cannabis Foundation for paying the printer, making it possible for us to maximize content. You can find our other backers —and material from our back issues— online at BeyondTHC.com. We’ve been using the site as a kind of paste-up board while putting together this account of our recent history. You’ll also find all our graphics in color and good material that we didn’t have room to print. We like having the bigger canvas and the opportunity to weigh in on breaking news.

