ForeWord Reviews

HEALTH & FITNESS

Herbal Secrets of the Rain Forest: The Healing Power of Over 50 Medicinal Plants You Should Know About

Leslie Taylor
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As the title suggests, this book harbors many secrets. Some secrets are about herbal medicines of the rain forest while other information it brings to the forefront explains the herbs' untapped value as a means of survival for the entire rainforest ecosystem. Rain forest devastation is accelerating rapidly, and is three times the rate of 1994. Twenty thousand square miles of rain forest disappear forever every year! An estimated 137 species are lost every single day-any one of them could have the ability to stop or prevent cancer-just as the Madagascar periwinkle gives leukemia victims up to an 80% improvement in the survival rate.

These medicines represent the Amazon's new gold. They give economic incentive for preserving the rain forest, utilizing sustainable harvesting techniques, and bring together an unlikely alliance of the pharmaceutical industry, ecologists, anthropologists, plant collectors and shamans. The groundwork is already in place, and the rain forests still exist. All that is needed is the market to grow. Once consumer demand of rain forest medicines and products exists in a large enough force, the rain forest will have been given the economic means to survive. This is the second secret this book uncovers: that, yes, we can save the rainforests after all!

Leslie Taylor provides us with an excellent reference tool that details documentation of 54 different useful plants of the rain forest. Information includes current plant use, methods of preparation, summary of current research and clinical data, history of indigenous use, and phytochemical constituents. This is presented in an easy to use format. Written in an engaging manner, the information may be easily understood by the average consumer while still in-depth enough for the herbal practitioner, manufacturer or clinician to utilize.

Finally, realizing that we need to learn how to bring this information into our daily lives, Taylor gives us practical herbal recipes, remedies, a helpful glossary, a listing of sustainable rainforest products and a list of nonprofit rainforest organizations. A most timely book.

Joyce Wardwell