

36200 Yellow Wood, Old Fustic

C.I. Natural Yellow 11

synonym: dyer's mulberry

german: Gelbholz, Fustik, geschnitten

french: fustik, bois jaune

Old fustik, or yellow wood, is derived from the heartwood of dyer's mulberry, a large, tropical tree (*Chlorophora tinctoria*, or *Maclura tinctoria*) of the mulberry family, *Moraceae*.

The trees grow in South and Middle America, and in the warmer regions of North America. They also grow in Western India and in the Antilles. The climate in South Europe is not tropical, but it is warm enough for the Mulberry tree. Dye makers have used its bright yellow heartwood to make an effective dye.

Yellow wood extract is made by cooking the wood. This is reddish-yellow and after diluting orange-yellow. Three different kinds of extracts are available: liquid extract (pale yellow – reddish-yellow), solid extract (yellow-brown – olive colored) containing about 15% water which is sold as cake or with about 5 % water which is sold as granules.

The dye produces yellows on wool mordanted (fixed) with alau. Brighter colors are reached with tin. Acidified lead oxide gives orange-yellow hues, chromium and copper salts give olive-green hues. Iron gives dark olive-green and black hues. Although the colors are not very light fast, yellow wood used to be very important for the manufacture of khaki-colored textiles. However, all colors are very fast to soap and alkalies.

Recipe for dyeing with Fustic according to Gill Dably

Ingredients

25% Alum

6% Washing Soda

100% Fustic

Mordanting

Dissolve the alum and the washing soda in cold water. Enter the prepared fibre and stir whilst bringing to the boil. Boil for 1 hour then leave to cool in the mordant bath overnight. Remove the fibre and squeeze out any excess moisture. Rinse just before entering the fibre into the chosen dyebath.

Dyeing

Boil the wood chips in a small amount of water for 30 mins. Add some cold water and strain to remove the wood. Add more cold water, enough to make up to the required amount, and enter the fibre. Slowly bring up to the boil and allow to simmer for 45 mins. Remove the fibre from the dyebath when cool, and rinse. Wash in soapy water and rinse again to remove the soap.

Quoted from: Gill Dably: *Natural dyes for Vegetable fibres*, 1992, p. 43 and 61.