









## LET'S SHARE OUR NEWS

### LIVE, LOVE PERMACULTURE IN VILCABAMBA, ECUADOR

This coming February, we are excited to invite permaculture enthusiasts to join us for **Permaculture Ecuador**, a permaculture program we organized with **Canción Del Corazón**, a holistic ecology center in **Ecuador**.

We will be spending 2 weeks, from **February 1 to February 14, 2015** in the beautiful village of **Vilcabamba** in the Andes Mountains of **Ecuador**. During this time, we will explore the many aspects of resilient living through workshops, site visits and group adventures.

We chanced upon Canción Del Corazón (Spanish for "song of the heart") this summer and immediately became good friends with the founders *Phil* and *Suzan*. The center and village are amazing examples of the interconnectedness of the principles of permaculture: eco-construction, sustainable farming, nutrition, health, intentional communities, etc. It was really encouraging to see permaculture in action so concretely, and it gave us a clearer idea of what we hope to achieve in our future demonstration site in **Niha, North Lebanon**.

Together with Phil and Suzy, we are co-organizing a holistic permaculture immersion at Canción Del Corazón for the first time (in addition to their regular visits) to give more people the chance to live and love permaculture.

This isn't your typical classroom, our classroom is LIFE! Immerse yourself in the exploration of intentional lifestyle and acquire the tools to create your own. The workshops will include:

**Permaculture/Agriculture:** Rainwater Harvesting | Food Forest | Earthworks | Regenerative Forestry | Animal Husbandry | Greenhouse and Plant Nursery | Seed Saving | Mushrooms Propagation | Composting Systems and Aerobic Bio-brews | Plant Guilds

**Natural Building:** Cob & Adobe | Rustic Wood & Rock

**Renewable Energy:** Solar, Microhydro & Wind | Solar Thermal Design | New Paradigm Energy

**Bioremediation:** Grey Water | Compost Toilets & Humanure | Rainwater Flush Toilet

**Community Experience:** Social Dynamics | Governance | Tropical Permaculture Farm Tours | Intentional Communities

**Wholistic Wellness:** Yoga | Wisdom Circles | Sound and Movement | Full Moon Drumming | Integral Awareness and Heart Coherence | Sacred Geometry | Temazcal

**Conscious Eating:** Probiotics & Lacto-fermented Foods | Garden to Table Living Foods Diet | Ethnic Vegetarian Cuisine & Cooking Classes

To make this adventure as affordable as possible, we've set up sliding scale costs:

\$1,500/person: Private bedroom (Couples: \$2,500)

\$1,250/person + kitchen work exchange: Shared bedroom

\$1,000/person + kitchen work exchange: Tent outside (tarpred site - bring your camping gear)

Prices cover food, workshops and site visits. Travel to and from Vilcabamba not included

For more details, visit our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/jardinsansfrontieres> or email us at [Permaculture.Ecuador@gmail.com](mailto:Permaculture.Ecuador@gmail.com)

Shared by Joey Khoury and Liza Charbel



### GREEN RESOURCES

#### GREEN HAND ORG. LIBRARY

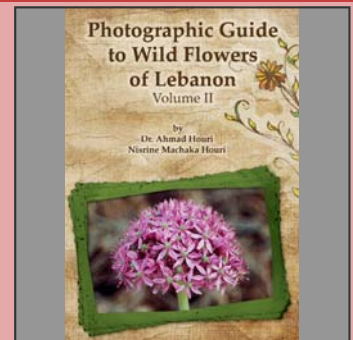


Public library offering books and records of Lebanese flora and agriculture

Contact: Zaher Redwan 03-760854

<http://www.greenhand.org.lb/default.aspx>

#### WILD FLOWERS OF LEBANON - BOOK

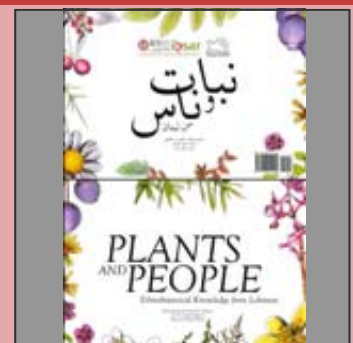


Well documented and easy to use pocket field companion to wild flowers

Sold at Malik's Bookshop, Antoine, Virgin Megastore, NHBS (UK), Koeltz (Germany)

<http://nisrinemachaka.com/publication.html>

#### PLANTS AND PEOPLE - BOOK



Ethnobotanical knowledge of Lebanese local plants and their traditional uses

Sold at American University of Beirut bookstore

<http://www.aub.edu.lb/UNITS/NATURE>

[CONSERVATION/PRODUCTS/Pages/books.aspx](http://www.aub.edu.lb/UNITS/NATURE/CONSERVATION/PRODUCTS/Pages/books.aspx)



## LET'S SHARE OUR NEWS

### TALKING WITH BIRDS

Walking, running, climbing, diving, swimming, jumping... we can get around using any of these means without the need for any external accessories. But, wait! We skipped flying... hmm... the only thing that man could not learn or implant in his body - yet. Flying like birds is the one physical frontier that we cannot conquer or possess. Those fuzzy little creatures that decorate our skies and gardens, and fill our forests with the magic of their voices, have been the inspiration behind mankind's earliest flying machines. For thousands of years, pioneer scientists spent lifetimes closely observing, studying and attempting to reproduce the mechanism of flight that birds naturally use to get from one place to another.

As a bird whisperer, I have a passion for raising birds, admiring them, watching them, befriending them and loving them. In my own little words I will share my experience in bird whispering with you briefly. I have had that hobby since I was a kid. I used to play with grandma's chickens, watch my aunt's bird, and count the migratory birds that flew through the sky of Lebanon. Day after day, this hobby evolved into a passion as I began to understand how to communicate with birds and started taking care of some in my own garden. With time, I started reading and learning about how to feed birds properly and how to heal the wounds of those that had been shot by hunters and left alone to die. During my university years, I learned how to take care of them more medically although I was specializing in physiotherapy. I thought, medicine is not only for humans, so why not use it to heal wounded birds as well?

As I spent more time watching and photographing birds, I became more involved in the lifestyle of different kinds of birds, and that helped me get closer and closer to them. I felt I had something in common with these amazing creatures. I developed a strong bond with them so I could sometimes talk to them, approach them, speak to them and even teach them.

One particular experience I want to share with you involves a bird that belongs to the family of Bulbuls (Pycnonotidae). On the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 2011, I saw a boy holding a nest with 3 little Bulbul chicks in his hands. I was angry about this and felt sad for these innocent birds, kidnapped from their mother's love and care. I asked him what he was going to do with them and he simply replied, "I want to raise them as pets"... So I asked him if he could give me just one of them, - and he did. When I got home with that little bird, I saw how very small he was - no more than 3 cm - and how scared he was. I fed him figs and bananas, and this is where it all started.

Time flew by, and the bird was growing stronger physically and emotionally. In my free time, I put him between my hands, warmed him up with my breath, fed him and cuddled him. I became the parents, the lover, the feeder and the main reason for him to live. Kito, as I later named him, grew to about 18-20 cm in length, and day after day, he became more and more attached to me. I had to teach him how to be strong by using his affection for me to protect him and set him apart from other birds. Usually, birds are not afraid to lose their siblings or parents; they only care about staying alive and finding their food and nightly safe shelter. But for Kito, it was different; his love for me meant he couldn't stand someone staring at me, or touching me, or even glancing at me from the corner of an eye. I taught him to whistle warnings, hellos and good mornings, and a few other things too. Kito now attacks when I tell him to, and stays on my shoulder when I ask him to. When cats or snakes or even strange people come to my house, he raises his wings and sounds his alarm whistle. When he sees me in the morning, he makes a special whistle to welcome me. With Kito, I learned bulbuls are incredibly smart and unpredictable. They are capable of more affection than any other bird. They can memorize what they are taught and, quite simply, they can speak to you, if only you know how to understand them and be one with them. I observed, raised, healed and looked after lots of birds, but I never saw a bird smarter than the Bulbul in all my life, even in other countries I visited.

Bird whispering is an amazing occupation, it lets you build sincere, loyal and eternal relationships that you cannot find elsewhere - even with humans. For me, birds are a gift from God, a grace to conserve, protect, enjoy and live with, and I hope we can appreciate this precious gift and save it from being destroyed by unethical hunters or greedy companies that destroy natural habitats. I encourage everyone, especially parents, to adopt or rescue a bird from a pet shop, and befriend it, so their kids will appreciate these creatures and grow up without the fixation of hurting birds or shooting them randomly. Birds are living spirits. Birds can talk.

*Shared by Michel Sawan, with Grace Salibi*



[▶ back to contents](#)



## PHOTO OF THE MONTH

You sent us your submissions and you voted for your favorites. Here it is, the PHOTO OF THE MONTH:  
To send us your photos, email us on [contact.soilslebanon@gmail.com](mailto:contact.soilslebanon@gmail.com)



Autumn carpet - Pennsylvania, US  
Photo by Julia Mahfouz

[▶ back to contents](#)

## GET IN TOUCH, GET INVOLVED


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## A THOUGHT TO SHARE ...

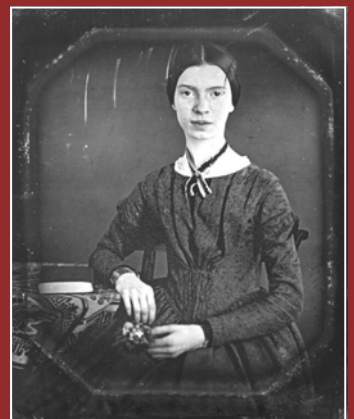
**"To make a prairie it  
takes a clover and one  
bee,**

**One clover, and a bee,**

**And revry.**

**The revry alone will do,**

**If bees are few."**



**–Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)**

***To make a prairie***

[▶ back to contents](#)

