

Gone Nuts

Beth Ann's Walnut Ink Recipe

1. Collect two pails of rotting, November walnut hulls that have fallen to the ground. (The ink will be made from the brown gooey substance between the outer casing and the nut shell.)



2. Fill large soup kettles $\frac{3}{4}$ full with hulls, cover with water, and bring to a boil. Boil the hulls the entire day, occasionally mashing the mixture with a potato masher.

3. At the end of the day, spoon out the hard walnut shells and outer casings and throw them away.

4. On medium heat, boil the liquid down for two days, stirring occasionally. This ink stains, so wipe up spills immediately.

5. Filter the liquid through a series of large and then finer sieves. For example, I started with a large net strainer, then a colander, then hosiery, and lastly coffee filters.

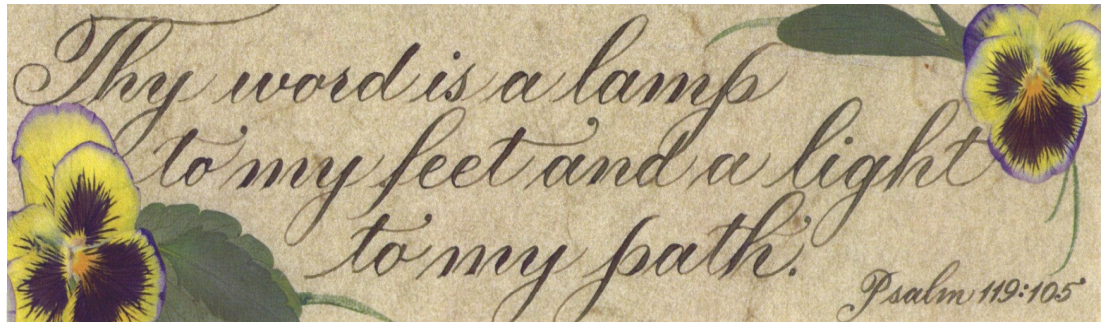


6. Spread the liquid onto baking parchment in pans and cover lightly to protect from dust.

7. Allow the liquid to dry; break it up every several days to speed the drying process. This may take several weeks. When the ink is completely dry, store the crystals in a jar. To reconstitute, add water; a few crystals go a long way.



8. Dip your pointed pen into the ink and let its rich, varying hue flow from the nib. The ink's smooth slippery consistency is perfect for pointed pen writing!



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