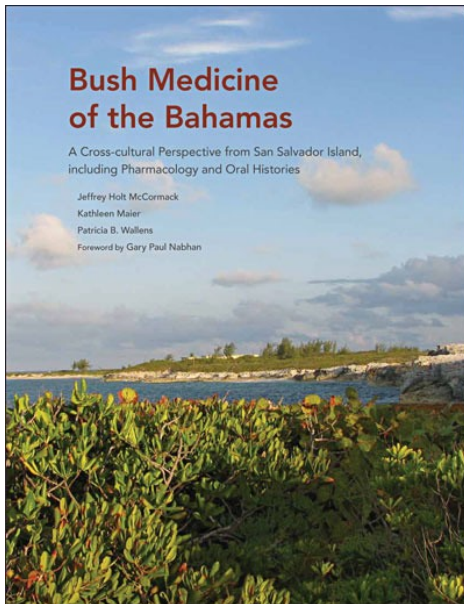


Bush Medicine of the Bahamas: A Cross-cultural Perspective from San Salvador Island, including Pharmacology and Oral Histories

Jeffrey Holt McCormack, Ph.D., Kathleen Maier, P.A., HG, and Patricia B. Wallens, M.A.
Foreword by Gary Paul Nabhan, Ph.D.



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Synopsis

The residents of the Bahamas practice a form of traditional medicine using tropical plants for curing diseases and treating ailments. Their enslaved African ancestors brought to the New World a practical knowledge of medicinal plants, and a legacy of “medicinal plant literacy” that helped them “read” and recognize the potential healing qualities of the many new and unfamiliar plants of the Bahamas. Under the influence of European and colonial practices, their diverse beliefs and healing practices were then simplified, distilled, transformed, reformulated, and further refined by generations of experimentation. This form of medicine is of value today not only for what it tells us of a unique culture but for what it might have to teach us about traditional healing. This book, a comprehensive treatment of Bahamian bush medicine, is dedicated to the preservation and continued use of this knowledge before it is lost. Chapters explore the cultural roots, principles, and practice of bush medicine. The Materia Medica covers 120 medicinal plants, including details of administration and dosage, pharmacology, and cross-cultural uses; non-botanical remedies are covered as well. Throughout the book, fascinating oral histories provide details of the healers’ practice and glimpses of the culture of San Salvador Island. Includes color illustrations of over 100 medicinal plants, and the people who use them.