

Native flower essences – `divine children' of Aotearoa

Written by Kimberley Paterson

She emanates a tangible sense of power – reflective of the deep work she does. Franchelle Ofsoske-Wyber is a shaman, medicine woman, a healer, but most of all totally dedicated to honouring and working with the plant intelligence of New Zealand.

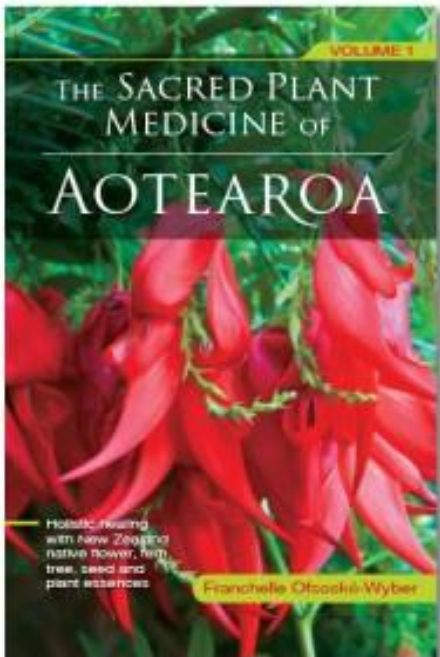
Franchelle says native plant essences from this land can lift emotions, heal wounded spirits, give hope when it has been lost and help restore physical vitality wellbeing. She says they are tools for personal transformation.

She comes to her work through a long and winding path. As a child Franchelle was deeply aware of the plant world – even saw nature spirits – and lived beside a Maori family who cultivated her innate spiritual sensitivity.

She is descended from a long line of healers. On her father's side she comes from a line of Cherokee medicine men; on her mother's side a lineage of Russian healers and shamans. Both her great grandmother and great grandfather were actively involved in healing and psychic work.

Franchelle began to learn about *Rongoa Maori*, or natural Maori plant medicine at seven; by then she could already see the patupaiarehe, the mysterious fairy people of Aotearoa – elemental nature spirits that varied greatly from the plant fairies those she saw illustrated in children's story books.

Today her passion and knowledge of the plant world sees people travel from around the world to study with Franchelle. She is a tutor at the Wellpark College of Natural Therapies and also founder of a range of native flower essences in the tradition of the Bach essences (developed by Dr Edward Bach in the 1930s).



Franchelle's work has involved decades of work, preparation and shamanic initiation to develop a range of sacred healing tools using the native flowers, ferns, trees, seeds and plants of New Zealand.

"What most people do not realise is that flower essences are a very ancient form of indigenous medicine that have been in use for many thousands of years and recognise the powerful spiritual link between plants, humankind and holistic wellbeing," says Franchelle (www.wellpark.co.nz).

“Down through the ages healers and wisdom systems of all cultures have been aware of the extraordinary intelligence that is imbedded in nature. All ancient and indigenous peoples insist their knowledge of plant medicines comes directly from the plants themselves – and not through trial and error experimentation.”

She says *Hawaiiki Tautau* is the ancient name for Aotearoa which means ‘the pulse of ancient Hawaiiki’ – and that our land has long been recognised for its unique flora and pristine energy.

Part of her work includes the invocation of ancient chants prior to gathering the herbs needed to make sacred plant medicine.

Akin to the way Native Americans sang to the spirit of an animal before they took its life for food, Franchelle undertakes such deep esoteric and spiritual protocols for collecting plants.

“Chants in the ancient mother language that first developed in Hawaiiki or Lemuria; the ancient language that the forces of nature quickly respond to and easily recognise ... primordial sounds and vibrations, magical keys from and of creation.

“In this way we formally honours the native plant as being a divine child of the land of Aotearoa,” she says. “The native flora of Aotearoa is some of the most ancient on the planet and here we have some of the oldest forests on earth.”

Franchelle collects plants where the power of the land is most potent: it is not permitted, for instance, to collect plants any time a shadow is cast on them from a mountain or from places considered tapu or restricted.

Franchelle works alongside her husband Tony, a horticulturist and deeply spiritual man who has studied the power of plants in New Zealand and overseas. Together they sell their First Light Flower Essences around the world.



She says: “As my work has progressed over the years I was made increasingly aware through direct personal experience of the enormous spiritual power associated with New Zealand’s native flora.”

Franchelle says the nature power of New Zealand is to provide people of the world with the healing necessary for the many physical, emotional, mental and spiritual challenges to be faced by them and the planet in the 21st century.

“To Maori elders, this age is known as Te-wa-o-nga-wai-ahuru or ‘Age of Cherishing Waters’ and to the Native American as ‘The Age of Floral Waters’ or ‘The Age of the Mother’ where humankind will once again remember that we are all one and how to work in dynamic co-operation with nature.”