

Gemma Hindi Foraging & Wild Food Guide, Forest School

Trainer and Education Manager, at Earthwild & Freelance

How did you get where you are today?

I became an activist aged 8 due to the destruction of the Amazon rainforest & the endangered UK Hedgehogs. Rio in 1992 and constant conflicts in Iraq taught me that we had to take action to make our world better. Afterschool and at weekends I worked in a garden centre, a wildlife photographic library & a nursery school to earn money. I always knew I needed to work in a field which connected people to their environment.

What tips would you give someone starting out in your field?

Find out what really drives you, it may not be something obvious, try out different things. I have many different job roles & have done many different training courses. Having a go at different things can help you to recognise that feeling you get inside when you are on the right path. And help you get more diverse work in the future.

What inspires you? Or who?

Anyone driven by their own geeky passions, especially if it involves connecting back to our own ancestral knowledge & skills. Explorers of miniature and obscure sections of the natural world. Indigenous cultures who have a deep understanding of natural processes and who could teach us so much, if only we would listen. The more you find out about interconnections within ecosystems, the more you want to discover- so nature inspires me too. It's an endlessly fascinating world out there & we have no idea of the scale of it.

What is a significant memory of being in nature as a child?

Growing up in London I didn't spend a huge amount of time in nature, although I was always dreaming about it. The disused garages at the end of my street had overgrown spaces with curtains of draping Ivy and Clematis. This was our secret den as children, and it was wild to me even though now as an adult I realise how small and sparse it was!

What project are you most proud of?

My Iraqi Wild Food Project- taking traditional Iraqi foods and remaking them using foraged wild herbs & spices found in south London. It's a way for me to connect to my Iraqi heritage & experiment with the flavours of British wild plants. All recipes are free from gluten, dairy & refined sugar (I can't eat these ingredients for health reasons).

What's your favourite game or activity?

Facilitating child-led play and learning in the woods. You never know what to expect.

What's your favourite eco-place in London, and why?

I crave being near water and woodlands, and I teach in both, so any riverside park.

Do you have a recommendation to LEEF members?

Let's form our own off-grid self-sufficient eco-village!

What are you working on at the moment?

The Iraqi Wild Food Project. Establishing my new business, Earthwild.

How would you like to see Environmental or Sustainability Education develop in the next 10 years?

Leading the world in advancing towards a fairer world for every living thing, which respects and works with indigenous cultures, ancient wisdom, science & eco innovation.



Profile of a LEEF Fellow



This fellowship was awarded on: Wednesday 24th November 2021

At: The Horniman Museum

LEEF fellowships are awarded to recognise excellence in Environmental and Sustainability Education

To find out more about LEEF;

www.leef.org.uk

hello@earthwild.org.uk

Instagram @EarthwildLondon

www.earthwild.org.uk



Wild Kleicha & Adult Training

