

# It's not enough

It's not enough  
to be able to name the flowers  
We must get to know their stories  
and listen to all that they can teach us  
The hard working women  
who inhabited the cloisters  
of the Augustinian abbey in Iona  
listened to the plants  
that grew around  
their wild and rugged island  
They found healing for wounds  
in the absorptive sphagnum moss  
And soothing for guts  
in the tannins of Tormentil  
They befriended the star shaped beauty  
of St John's wort  
that hinted at light in the long days and nights  
of the harsh Scottish winter  
Their gentle inquiry  
and their patient listening  
unearthed underground mysteries  
And, as they held sacred the stories  
already there for the telling,  
they breathed new life into the next chapter  
of the stories of the flowers  
that promised healing for the world  
I can't help but wonder how  
if we humans were to listen carefully  
to one another's stories  
we might nurture a way of caring  
for the wounds of the world.

**Liz Crumlish, Iona August 2024**  
(from her blog)

