

A Checklist of Native Plants Used by Northwest First Peoples

Of the 3,200 or so vascular plant species native to the Pacific Northwest, it is likely that fully half of the species are, or were, utilized by Northwest First Peoples. Some of these plants are still used by current Northwest residents, but very few people alive today have the depth of plant knowledge that indigenous people had several centuries ago.

Please note that this is not meant to be a comprehensive list. It is just a personal checklist of some of the plants I am familiar with. For a more comprehensive checklist see *Native American Ethnobotany* by Daniel E. Moerman.

Edible berries/fruits

Red huckleberries
Mountain huckleberries
Kinnikinnik
Cranberries
Raspberries
Blackcap raspberries
Trailing blackberries
Salmonberries
Thimbleberries
Serviceberries
Chokecherries
Salal
Buffaloberry, soopalallie
Strawberry,
Currants/gooseberries
Wild crabapples
Hawthorn
Oregon Grape
Elderberry (mainly blue)
Rosehips
Highbush cranberry
Bunchberry
Indian Plum



Nuts

Wild hazelnuts
Acorns
White Pine seeds, *Pinus albicaulis*

Edible Roots, tubers, bulbs, corms,

Camas
Erythronium spp.
Tiger lily

Wild onions

Brodiaea/Triteleia

Fritillaria

Calochortus, Mariposa lily,

Spring Beauty, *Claytonia*.

Yampah

Bitterroot

Wapato

Hedysarum

Lomatium

Cattails

Bracken fern roots

Springbank clover (*Trifolium wormskjoldii*)

Silverweed (*Potentilla pacifica*, *P. anserina*)

Balsamroot

Edible greens,

Cow parsnip

Nettles

Fireweed shoots

Salmonberry and thimbleberry shoots.

Western dock

Beach Lovage, *Ligusticum scoticum*

Hydrophyllum

Balsamroot shoots

Lomatium dissectum shoots

Lomatium sp. leaves

Oxyria, Mountain sorrel

Edible barks,

Pines

Hemlock

Aspen

Cottonwood

Red alder (less so)

Edible seaweeds

Red laver

Edible mushrooms,

Edible lichens

Bryoria

Seeds used for food,

Balsamroot seeds

Lomatium nudicaule seeds

Grass seeds,

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Tea

Labrador tea
 Yerba Buena
 Strawberry leaves
 Mints
Aonardella
 Chokecherry
 Sumac
 Rosehips
 Nettle

Medicinal plants,

Comatium dissectum
 Devil's club,
 Danby's lovage.
 Sweetgale (*Myrica gale*)
Angelica
Artemisia species
 Yarrow
 Hundreds of others [See Northwest Native Plants with Known Medicinal Properties with 251 species at the beginning of this book].

Technology uses,

Cordage/fiber

Nettle
 Black indian hemp
 Dogbane
 Milkweed
 Sagebrush,
 Clematis
 Red Cedar bark
 Yellow Cedar
 Beargrass,
 Silverberry, *Elaeagnus*

Weaving materials, mats, basketry

Hazel
 Willow
 Red osier dogwood
 Cattails
 Rushes
 Sedges
 Grasses
 Cedar root
 Spruce root
 Birch bark
 Pine needles
 Maple
 Maidenhair fern
 Bittercherry bark

Glues, caulking,

Spruce pitch
 Pine pitch

Fir pitch
 Cottonwood bud resin

Tools, bows, arrows,

Mock orange
 Oceanspray
 Yew
 Maple
 Serviceberry
 Hawthorn
 Crabapple
 Rose
 Sagebrush
 Alder
 Birch

Cooking tools

Maple
 Alder
 Serviceberry
 Madrone
 Birch
 Yellow Cedar
 Dogwood
 Oceanspray
 Crabapple
 Yew

Lining cooking pits

Sword fern
 Other ferns
 Pine-grass
 Skunk cabbage leaves
 Butterburr leaves
 Raspberry
 Balsamroot leaves.

Buildings

Cedar
 Spruce
 Birch
 Maple
 Cottonwood

Padding/absorbent material

Fireweed
 Cattails
 Moss
 Milkweed

Dyes

Alder
 Devil's club
 Oregon grape
Lithospermum ruderale, Puccoon, Gromwell,
 Yarrow



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Chrysothamnus
Bitterbrush, *Purshia tridentata*
Elderberry
Hemlock (*Tsuga*)

Ceremonial, smudging,

Sweetgrass
Sagebrush
Western mugwort, *Artemisia ludoviciana*
Juniper
Devil's club
Osha

Smoking

Kinnikinnik
Tobacco
Pearly everlasting
Coltsfoot
Ligusticum
Valerian

Incense/fragrance

Fir
Yarrow
Angelica species
Artemisia
Vanilla leaf, *Achlys triphylla*
Mint
Devil's club

Plant Use Categories

by Daniel Moerman

Following are the categories of Native American plant uses listed by Daniel Moerman in *Native American Ethnobotany*.

Food

Appetizer
Baby Food
Beverage
Bread & Cake
Breakfast Food
Candy
Cooking Agent
Dessert
Dietary Aid
Dried Food
Fodder
Forage
Frozen Food

Fruit
Ice Cream
Pie & Pudding
Porridge
Preservative
Preserves,
Sauce & Relish
Snack Food
Soup
Sour
Special food
Spice
Staple
Starvation food
Substitution food
Sweetener
Unspecified
Vegetable
Winter Use Food.

Fiber

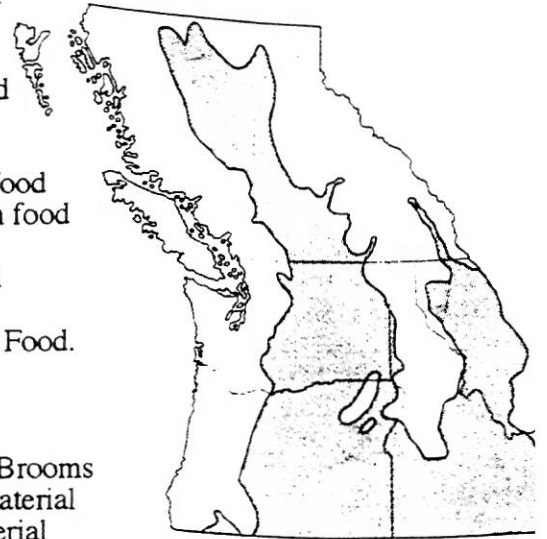
Basketry
Brushes & Brooms
Building Material
Canoe Material
Caulking Material
Clothing
Cordage
Furniture
Mats, Rugs & Bedding
Other
Scouring Material
Sewing Material
Snow Gear
Sporting Equipment
Unspecified

Dye

Black, Blue, Blue-Black, Brown, Gray, Green, Orange, Orange-red, Orange-yellow, Pink, Purple, Red, Red-Brown, Red-Yellow, White, Yellow, Yellow-brown, Mordant, Unspecified

Other

Cash crop
Ceremonial Items
Cleaning Agent
Containers
Cooking Tools
Decorations
Designs
Fasteners
Fertilizer
Fuel
Good Luck Charm
Hide Preparation



The Semi-Arid Northwest
The map above shows the land area in the region which receives less than 20 inches of annual precipitation. Map from *The Future is Abundant*.

Plant Use Categories

Hunting & Fishing Item
 Incense & Fragrance
 Insecticide
 Jewelry
 Lighting
 Lubricant
 Malicious Charm
 Malicious Magic
 Musical Instrument
 Paint
 Paper
 Plant Indicator
 Planting Seeds
 Preservative
 Protection,
 Sacred Item
 Season Indicator
 Smoke Plant
 Smoking Tools
 Snuff
 Soap
 Stable Gear
 Tools
 Toys & Games
 Unspecified
 Walking Sticks
 Water Indicator
 Waterproofing Agent
 Weapon

Drug/ Medicine

Abortifacient
 Adjuvant
 Alterative
 Analgesic
 Anesthetic
 Anthelmintic
 Anticonvulsive
 Antidiarrheal
 Antidote
 Antiemetic
 Antihemorrhagic
 Antirheumatic (external)
 Antirheumatic (internal)
 Basket Medicine
 Blood Medicine
 Breast Treatment
 Burn Dressing
 Cancer Treatment
 Carminative
 Cathartic
 Ceremonial Medicine
 Cold Remedy
 Contraceptive
 Cough Medicine
 Dermatological Aid



Diaphoretic
 Dietary Aid
 Disinfectant
 Diuretic
 Ear Medicine
 Emetic
 Expectorant
 Eye medicine
 Febrifuge
 Gastrointestinal Aid
 Gland Medicine
 Gynecological Aid
 Hallucinogen
 Heart Medicine
 Hemorrhoid Remedy
 Hemostat
 Herbal Steam
 Hunting Medicine
 Hypotensive
 Internal Medicine
 Kidney Aid
 Laxative
 Liver Aid
 Love Medicine
 Miscellaneous Disease Remedy
 Narcotic
 Nose Medicine
 Oral Aid
 Orthopedic Aid
 Other
 Panacea
 Pediatric Aid
 Poison
 Poultice
 Preventative Medicine
 Psychological Aid
 Pulmonary Aid
 Reproductive Aid
 Respiratory Aid
 Sedative
 Snakebite Remedy
 Sports Medicine
 Stimulant
 Strengthener
 Throat Aid
 Tonic
 Toothache Remedy
 Tuberculosis Remedy
 Unspecified
 Urinary Aid
 Venereal Aid
 Vertigo Medicine
 Veterinary Aid
 Witchcraft Medicine



The Ish River Bioregion
 Puget Sound & Straits of Georgia watersheds.