

NATIVE PLANTS & PEOPLE

Students examine native plants in Fauntleroy Park that the First People would have harvested for various uses.

THEMES

Biodiversity
Watershed
Native Plants
Native Americans

GRADES

3 - 5

TIME

15-20 minutes

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Gain a basic understanding of the importance of native plants and their sustainable harvest to native people of the Pacific Northwest.
- Employ sight, smell, and touch to gain information.
- Cultivate an interest in learning more.

WHAT TO DO

- 1) Copy the worksheet (one per student or one per team) and review with students.
- 2) Bring enough worksheets and pencils for each student or team. If you copy on cover-weight paper, students won't need clipboards.
- 3) Send one adult down each of three trails near the big bridge in Fauntleroy Park to be a "stopper" beyond which students are not to go.
- 4) Encourage students to read about the plants, not simply find them.
- 5) Signal when the activity is over with a bell, whistle, drum beat, or hearty yell to rally students back at the big bridge.

OPTIONS

- Look for other points of interest (nurse logs, snags, seeds) along the way, as well as the plants on the worksheet. Also pay attention to sounds and smells.
- Use this activity to stimulate students to think about what they would like to learn more about or to introduce a service-learning or research project associated with the park or creek.

SUPPORT FOR YOUR FIELD TRIP

- *Plants & People* worksheet.
- *Self-Guided Nature Walk in Fauntleroy Park* at www.fauntleroy.net/fauntleroypark/naturewalk.
- A trail map at www.fauntleroy.net/fauntleroypark/trailmap.
- "Tips and Tricks for Taking Kids Outside" at www.fauntleroy.net/creek/tipsandtricks.
- A watershed volunteer to lead or co-lead your field trip.

SPECIAL MENTION

All the plants selected for this activity can be found in the vicinity of the big bridge.

Because some native plants are hard to spot after they go dormant, we suggest doing this activity between April and October.

The park is a highly stimulating environment where even the most disciplined students can have difficulty staying on task. Start with a few minutes of general look-around time.

Ordinary Seattle rain should not require postponing this activity. It does, however, make bridge decks slick; emphasize the importance of exercising due caution.

NATIVE PEOPLE'S USE OF NATIVE PLANTS

SPECIES FOUND IN UPPER FAUNTLEROY CREEK (FAUNTLEROY PARK)

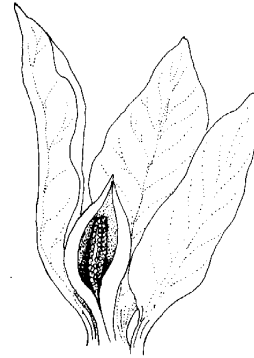
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RED ELDERBERRY BUSH

Although poisonous when raw, cooked berries were an important food. After boiling, seeds and stems were strained out to make a tasty sauce.

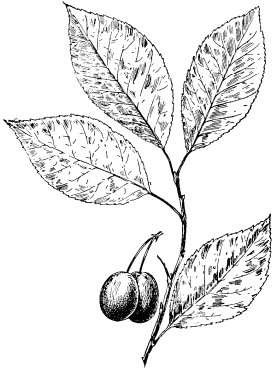
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SKUNK CABBAGE

Leaves were used to line berry baskets, drying racks, and pit ovens. Its early spring flowers were cooked and eaten only as "famine food."

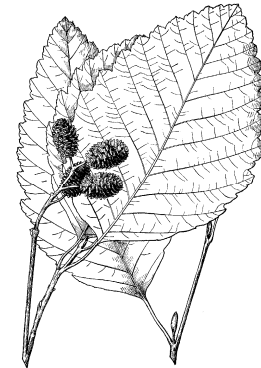
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INDIAN PLUM BUSH

Ripe berries were eaten fresh or cooked and dried for the winter. Chewed twigs were applied to sores. Bark tea was used for healing.

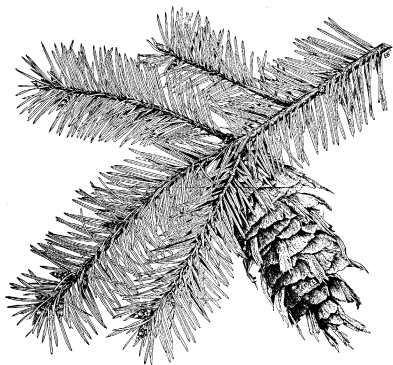
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RED ALDER TREE

The inner bark was valued as a medicine and also used to make a red or orange dye. The wood continues to be prized for smoking salmon.

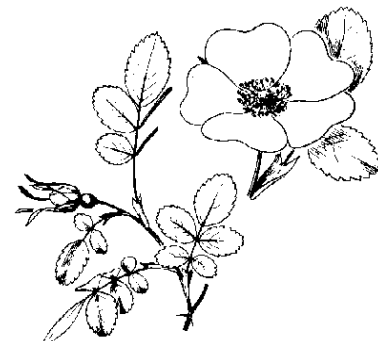
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DOUGLAS FIR TREE

The versatile wood had many uses, from harpoon shafts to spoons and caskets. Pitch was used for sealing canoes and as a salve for wounds.

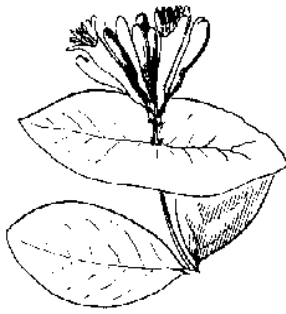
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NOOTKA ROSE BUSH

Branches, bark, and seed were used for medicines. Mashed leaves were applied to bee stings and skin sores. Leaves were layered with food in cooking baskets to add flavor and prevent burning.

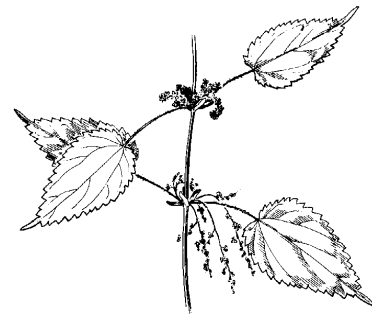
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ORANGE HONEYSUCKLE VINE

When stripped of leaves, the long stems were used for weaving and tying. The orange and gold berries were known to be poisonous.

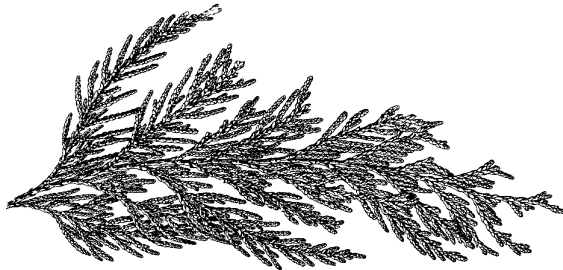
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STINGING NETTLE

Young leaves and stems were eaten as spring greens. Stems were an important source of fiber for such things as fishing nets and snares.

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WESTERN RED CEDAR TREE

Native people throughout the region relied on this "tree of life" for canoes, houses, cradles, clothing, dishes, medicines, and many other things. They harvested fallen trees or parts of live ones so that they didn't have to kill a tree in order to use it.

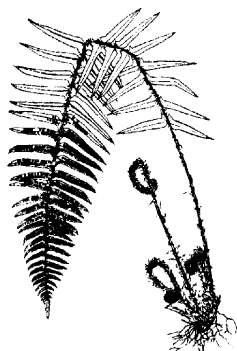
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RED HUCKLEBERRY BUSH

Berries were eaten fresh, dried like raisins, mashed and dried into cakes, or stored for winter in grease or oil. Single berries were used as fish bait. The juice, leaves, and bark were used as medicines.

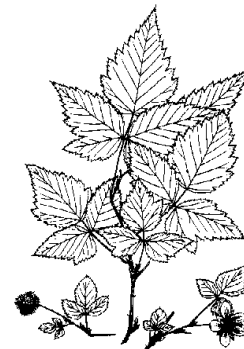
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SWORD FERN

Leaves were used to protect food cooking in pit ovens, as racks for drying berries, and as floor mats and bedding. Large "runners" were eaten only as "famine food." Rubbing tender leaves on the skin still keeps stinging netting from stinging.

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SALMONBERRY BUSH

Young shoots were eaten in the spring as a green vegetable. The early berries were greatly enjoyed after a winter without fresh fruit. Families or individuals could own patches of salmonberry and harvest all they needed before sharing.