



Historic Uses of Colorado Native Plants

a talk by Jim Tolstrup

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Slide List

- 1) Title Page – Historic Uses of Colorado Native Plants
- 2) Information in this presentation is for educational purposes only
- 3) Why Lakota names?
- 4) Plant names and usage
- 5) Cultural ways of knowing – Black Elk
- 6) Phenology – 13 Lakota Moons
- 7) Antoine Janis, 1824 - 1889
- 8) Medicine Wheel - HPEC Loveland
- 9) Ute Learning Garden - Grand Junction
- 10) Sacred Earth – Denver Botanic Gardens

11) Box Elder - *Acer negundo*

Historic Use: Sweet sap collected (like maple)

Cultivation: ‘Sensation’ a male selection that is resistant to boxelder beetle

Wildlife: Shelter for birds

12) Rocky Mountain Juniper - *Juniperus scopulorum*

Historic Uses: Venerated as a sacred tree throughout North America and much of Asia. Burned for cleansing and blessing. Used to treat diabetes.

Cultivation: Numerous cultivars in nursery trade. Does not tolerate excessive watering.

Wildlife: Shelter for birds, seeds for Robins, Cedar Waxwings, Chickadees, Finches, Nuthatches, Jays, Titmice, Grosbeaks, Songbirds

13) Chokecherry - *Prunus virginiana* var. *melanocarpa* (*Padus virginiana* var. *melanocarpa*)

Historic use: Fruit pounded with rocks, soaked in water, formed into patties then dried for winter use.

Cultivation: large shrub or small tree. Flowers are extremely fragrant. Can form extensive clumps. Requires moisture.

Wildlife: Host plant for Tiger Swallowtail, food source for birds, bees, butterflies, mammals.

14) Blue Spruce - *Picea pungens*

Historic use: Chewed as gum, used as adhesive.

Cultivation: Widely utilized as a landscape tree. Moisture dependent.

Wildlife: Nuthatches, chickadees, and other birds eat seeds. Owls frequently utilize these trees for nesting in urban areas.

15) Lodgepole Pine - *Pinus contorta*

Historic use: Tipi poles, bark eaten in spring, medicinal

Cultivation: In Pacific Northwest, cultivars 'Chief Joseph', 'Spaan's Dwarf.'; invasive in NZ

Wildlife: Food source for mammals and birds

16) Pinyon Pine - *Pinus edulis*

Historic Use: Edible Seeds

Cultivation: Slow growing, medium sized tree. Requires excellent drainage.

Wildlife: Pinyon Jay, Mexican Jay, Clark's Nutcracker eat and distribute seeds

17) Ponderosa Pine - *Pinus ponderosa*

Historic Uses: Bark eaten in springtime

Cultivation: Fire adapted bark. Many overwatered trees died in "polar vortex" 2013

Wildlife: Abert's Squirrel is dependent on this species. Crossbills and other birds eat seeds.

18) Plains Cottonwood - *Populus deltoides*

Historic Uses: Ceremony, edible buds, bark for horse fodder.

Cultivation: Important restoration plant, hybrids not recommended, not recommended close to foundations and sidewalks

Wildlife: Shelter for birds, host for mourning cloak butterfly

19) American Plum - *Prunus americana*

Historic Use: Valuable food source dried for winter use

Cultivation: Excellent large shrub

Wildlife: nesting and forage for songbirds, bees

20) Smooth Sumac - *Rhus glabra*

Historic Use: Pith is burned out to make pipe stems

Cultivation: This plant requires room to spread

Wildlife: Food for birds, nectar for butterflies, moths.

21) Three-Leaf Sumac - *Rhus trilobata*

Historic Use: Berries make a sour drink

Cultivation: Require little or no irrigation once established. 'Gro-Low' a cultivar.

Wildlife: Food for birds, butterflies, moths

22) Golden Currant - *Ribes aureum*

Historic Use: Food

Cultivation: several named varieties have intense clove scent, requires moisture

Wildlife: Nectar and pollen for many pollinators. Fruit for birds and wildlife.

23) Buffaloberry - *Shepherdia argentea*

Historic Use: Food source

Cultivation: Beautiful, large, underused shrubs (dioecious)

Wildlife: Food for birds, thorny branches provide ideal cover for birds and small mammals.

24) Wild/Riverbank Grape - *Vitis riparia*

Historic use: Food source, ceremonial hoop

Cultivation: Hard to find but worthwhile

Wildlife: Cover and forage for birds.

25) Prairie Turnip - *Pediomelum esculentum* (*Psoralea esculenta*)

Historic Use: An important food source for plains tribes

26) Corn and Squash – Indigenous Horticultural Achievements

Historic use: (Teosinte) Mexico 10,000 BP. Flint Corn 3,000 BP.

The fiber/husks are sometimes used to roll a ceremonial smoke. World's most widely grown crop.

27) Supplemental Food Sources

Wild Onion - *Allium spp.*, Sand lily - *Leucocrinum montanum*, Spatterdock, Yellow/Rocky Mountain Pond Lily - *Nuphar lutea* (*N. polysepala*)

28) Tea

Bee Balm - *Monarda fistulosa*, Wild Mint - *Mentha arvensis*, Blue Giant Hyssop - *Agastache foeniculum*

29) (In)Digestion

Purple Prairie Clover - *Dalea purpurea*, Low Milkweed - *Asclepias pumila*, Dotted Gayfeather - *Liatris punctata*

30) Burnt Ceremonially

Sweetgrass - *Hierochloe odorata* (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*) introduced; Northern Sweetgrass - *Anthoxanthum hirtum*, Prairie Sage - *Artemisia ludoviciana*, Big Sagebrush - *Artemisia tridentata*

31) Hygiene

Great/Giant Ragweed - *Ambrosia trifida*, Cattail - *Typha spp.*, Sunflower - *Helianthus annuus*

32) Plants for Smoking

Tobacco - *Nicotiana spp.*, Kinnikinnick - *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*, Osha - *Ligusticum porteri*

33) Poultices

Scarlet Globemallow - *Sphaeralcea coccinea*, Common Ragweed - *Ambrosia artemisiifolia*, Rubber Rabbitbrush - *Ericameria nauseosa*

34) Colds, Fevers, Sore Throat

Sweet Flag - *Acorus calamus*, Gumweed - *Grindelia squarrosa*, Fetid Marigold - *Dyssodia papposa*

35) Pain Relief

Narrow-Leaved Purple Coneflower - *Echinacea angustifolia*, Peach-Leaf Willow - *Salix amygdaloides*, Common Yarrow - *Achillea millefolium* (*Achillea lanulosa*)

36) Women's Medicine

Fringed Sage - *Artemisia frigida*, Wild Licorice - *Glycyrrhiza lepidota*, Plains Coreopsis - *Coreopsis tinctoria*

37) Paint and Dye

Oregon Grape Holly/Creeping Barberry - *Berberis repens* (*Mahonia repens*), Northern Bedstraw - *Galium boreale*, Spiderwort - *Tradescantia spp.*

38) Fibers and Construction Material

Great Plains Yucca/Soapweed - *Yucca glauca*, Wild Blue Flax - *Linum lewisii*, Coyote Willow - *Salix exigua*

39) Sod Roof

Prairie Cordgrass - *Spartina pectinata*

40) Short Grass

Blue Grama - *Bouteloua gracilis*, Sideoats Grama - *Bouteloua curtipendula*, Buffalo Grass - *Buchloe dactyloides*

41) Tall Grass

Switchgrass - *Panicum virgatum*, Yellow Indian Grass - *Sorghastrum nutans*, Big Bluestem - *Andropogon gerardii*

42) Mariano Medina

Namaqua (Loveland) 1868

43) Hispanic Uses Medicinal Plants

Asclepias asperula - Immortal (Pleurisy Root) respiratory, *Spheralcea munroana* - Hierba del Negro (Orange Globe Mallow) hair loss, *Gutierrezia sarothrae* - Yerba de la vivora (Snakeweed) colds, coughs, headaches, dizziness

44) Hispanic Uses Medicinal Plants

Cucurbita foetidissima - Calacabizza (buffalo gourd) used to expel parasites, *Ephedra spp.* - Cola de caballo (Mormon Tea) used to treat asthma, *Verbesina enceliodes* - Anil del muerto (Goldweed) internally for liver and stomach ailments, externally for pain and swelling caused by arthritis and rheumatism

45) Industrial Uses

Ericameria nauseosa - Rubber Rabbitbrush (hypoallergenic), *Mentha arvensis* - Menthol, *Helianthus annuus* - Sunflowers, *Yucca spp.* - Sudsing agent, cosmetics, soap, *Stanleya pinnata* - Mine reclamation