

Big Leaf Maple. Some of its leaves grow so big Native Americans used them as containers and plates. They also called the Big leaf maple the “paddle tree” because its wood makes excellent canoe paddles.

Douglas Fir. This tree’s cones have 3-forked bracts sticking out from the scales. These look like the tails and hind feet of mice hiding in the cone.

Lichens. Over 1,000 different lichens live in the Pacific Northwest. They are a combination of fungi and algae working together. They can be crusty, leafy, shrubby, or hairy and are often used for making dyes. Lichens can grow on tree branches, tree trunks, rocks and even on the ground.

Evergreen Huckleberry. Many native tribes ate these berries fresh with oil and salmon eggs, or dried them into cakes. Twigs were used to fasten skunk cabbage leaves into a basket. Birds love the berries.

Vine Maple. Native Americans used its long, hard, flexible stems for snowshoe frames, drum hoops and baskets. The leaves turn brilliant red and yellow in the fall. Birds and mammals eat the seeds, buds and flowers.

Ferns. There are many different kinds of ferns in the northwest. The black stems of **Maidenhair ferns** were used to decorate baskets. The **Licorice fern** root, often found growing in the moss on Big- leaf maple trees, tastes like licorice. Native children played a game called *Pele pele* with **Sword fern** fronds.

Western Red Cedar. This was the most important tree for Washington’s Native Americans. Among other things, they used its wood for canoes, totem poles, house planks, containers, dishes, tools and rattles. From its bark came diapers, clothing, baskets and mats.

Oregon Grape. This plant looks a lot like holly with its prickly leaves. Shred its bark or roots and you’ll see why it has been used as a bright yellow dye. Many animals like its very tart, blue, berries.

Red Alder. Red alder trees have gray bark with white-ish patches of lichen on their trunks. This is a good way to identify them. Their bark makes a red or orange dye which Native Americans used to dye their nets in order to make them hard for the fish to see.

Salmonberry. Yum! These are some of the first berries to ripen in the spring. The flower is a bright pink often visited by hummingbirds. Native coastal peoples ate the berries and early spring sprouts. Identify it by its zigzag twigs and “butterfly” leaves.

Salal. Salal has thick, leathery, evergreen leaves that snap and crackle when burned. It has dark, juicy berries that were eaten both fresh and dried into cakes by Native Americans. You can make a tiny cup by folding the leaves into a cone.

How many
can YOU
find?

NATIVE PLANTS





Big Leaf Maple



Douglas Fir



Lichens



Evergreen Huckleberry



Vine Maple



Fern



Western Red Cedar



Oregon Grape



Red Alder



Salmonberry



Salal

