Medicinal Plants of the Washington Park Arboretum

The plants featured below are just a sample of the many species found within the Arboretum that have been used for medicinal purposes. To find a particular plant species, search by the botanical name using our interactive maps. For more information, please refer to "Learning More" on the reverse side.

NATIVE PLANTS:

Plants and their applications are as diverse as the tribes who use them. The First Peoples of the Puget Sound region - the Coast Salish - have lived in this area for more than 10,000 years and have long valued plants for medicinal and food benefits as well as a source of utility, clothing and beauty. Much of our knowledge of both indigenous and exotic species is derived from traditional tribal uses and their sophisticated and sustainable relationship with plants.

Distinctive holly-like leaves of **Cascade Oregon grape** (*Mahonia (Berberis) nervosa*) are a feature of this common understory plant in the Arboretum. Its berries are eaten raw, or in jellies. Both the berries and the inner bark can be used medicinally for liver, gallbladder and eye problems. The inner bark is bright yellow from berberine, which can be used as a dye and has antibiotic properties.

Yews (*Taxus* species) are native to Europe, East Asia, and the Pacific Northwest. Pacific yew bark was initially harvested for its Taxol (also known as paclitaxel), which is a chemotherapeutic drug used for treating certain cancers.

Western Red Cedar (*Thuja plicata*) is a tree of hundreds of uses and is also medicinally valuable. Thujaplicin is a fungicide that is found in older trees, and can be used in a salve. The leaves can be brewed into a tea to treat respiratory or urinary tract infections.

Red alder (*Alnus rubra*) has been used to treat tuberculosis, respiratory ailments, and is a strong antibiotic.

The bark of **Willow** (genus *Salix*) has been used for aches, inflammation, fever and pain relief. The leaves and inner bark of willows are rich in salicin, which is the predecessor to acetylsalicylic acid found in modern-day aspirin.

Salal (*Gaultheria shallon*) has thick, oval leaves and mildly sweet dark blue berries that can lessen heart and blood inflammation and are effective appetite suppressants. When the leaves are eaten young, they are an effective anti-inflammatory, can treat urinary tract infections, and stop bleeding wounds when used as a poultice.

Parts of the **Black cottonwood** (*Populus trichocarpa*) tree can act as an anti-inflammatory or are used for cough relief.

Douglas-Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) has anti-infection properties and is a vitamin C source.

The **Cascara** (*Frangula* (*Rhamnus*) *purshiana*) tree is used for constipation relief.

EXOTIC PLANTS:

Similar to native plants, local and traditional knowledge from their region - or region of origin - has informed our understanding of medicinal uses.

English walnut (*Juglans regia*): Nuts, shells and leaves are used to treat skin wounds and ailments, fungal infections, inflammation, sunburn, ulcers. Sometimes used to treat mouth and throat infections, and gastrointestinal ailments.

European ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*): Bark used to make a tonic for treatment of fever and rheumatism, leaves are used to treat joint pain, wounds and ulcers.

Ginkgo, maidenhair tree (*Ginkgo biloba*): Leaf extracts are used to treats symptoms of dementia, disturbed concentration, dizziness and sleep disturbances.

Houpu magnolia (*Magnolia officinalis*): Bark extracts are used to treat respiratory problems, fever, gastrointestinal problems, shortness of breath and many other ailments.

Mountain ashes (*Sorbus* species): Berries treat diabetes, scurvy, arthritis, kidney disorders.

Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*): Many parts of the tree can be used to make expectorants, antimicrobials and counterirritants among other uses.

Witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) Distillations of the leaf, bark and twigs can be used to treat skin ailments, diarrhea, and inflammation of gums and throat.

Caution: Plants Can Be Poisonous!

Plants should only be used for medicinal purposes under licensed medical care or direction. Please do not harvest or pick any plants in the Arboretum without prior written consent.

Learning More

The University of Washington Botanic Gardens is a premier center of botanical research, education and outreach. Our two sites include more than 320 acres of gardens and natural areas in the heart of Seattle.

At the Washington Park Arboretum, view these plants and more in person. To use our maps, simply enter in the name of the plant you wish to locate.

Visit: **botanicgardens.uw.edu/maps**

For more information please visit the Miller Library in Merrill Hall at the UW Botanic Gardens Center for Urban Horticulture location. There, you will find helpful librarians and over 16,000 books, many of which are available to check out.

REFERENCES:

The Encyclopedia of Medicinal Plants (Andrew Chevallier, 1996)

Medicinal Plants of the World (van Wyk & Wink, 2017)

Pacific Northwest Medicinal Plants (Scott Kloos, 2017)

Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast (Pojar & MacKinnon, 1994)

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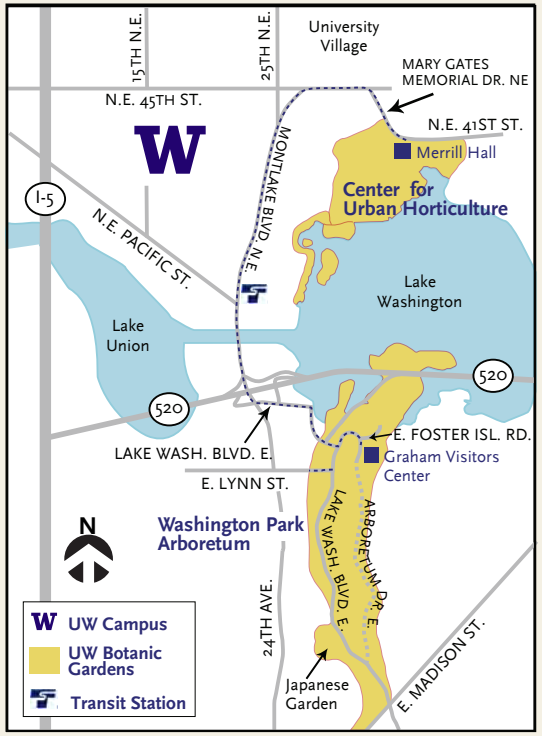

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Arboretum Medicinal Plants

University of Washington
Botanic Gardens

From time immemorial, plants have been used for their medicinal properties around the world. Many of these plants are still used today, in modern and traditional medicine.

The Arboretum acts as a valuable learning tool for observing many of these medicinal plants up close.