



California Indian Culture and Sovereignty Center
FOOD SOVEREIGNTY TOOL KIT



Responsibility

To support political and economic development, education, health and wellness, media and film, language preservation, and natural resource management.

Reciprocity

To reinforce collaborative research fostering indigenous research methods

Respect

To champion sovereignty and cultural preservation

Relationships

To create and sustain communication between tribes and scholars



The Indigenous tribes of California have an abundance of knowledge and a profound history rooted in their environment, which has inevitably shaped the culture of the state. In an effort to preserve the rich narratives of these tribes, the California Indian Culture and Sovereignty Center (CICSC) works to maintain their legacies, while simultaneously highlighting present-day stories that continue to shape their state.

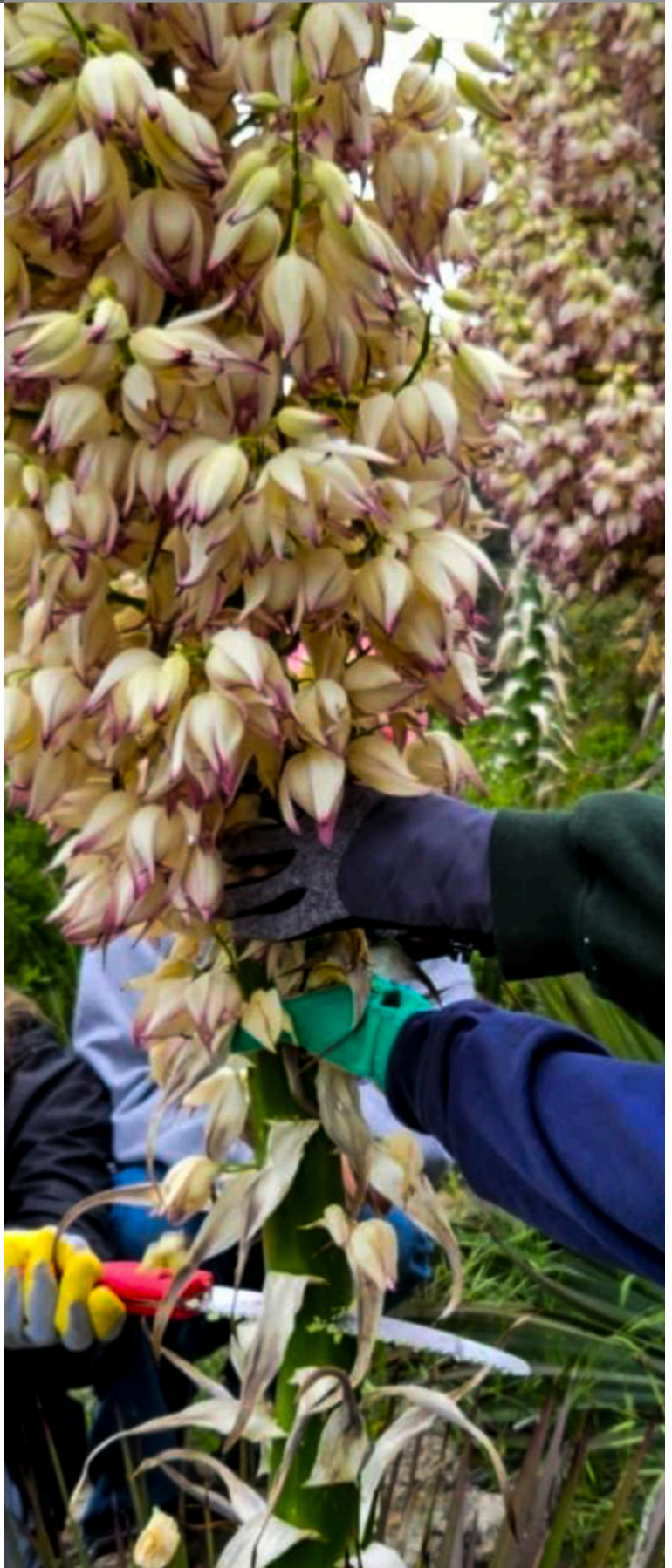


HISTORY



Our strategies for food sovereignty and security are rooted in our history. During the colonization of California, our communities suffered greatly and experience disease, starvation, murder, displacement, and other atrocities on a large scale. Before the introduction of the Spanish Mission System in 1769, it is estimated that there 310,000 Native people residing in California. It is important to note, that some California Indian scholars argue that the evidence points to a population far exceeding the estimated 310,000 California Indians living in the region before the arrival of the Spanish. However, by 1900, this number had drastically decreased to only 20,000.

The change in our diets brought about by foreign agricultural practices, gold mining, deforestation, urbanization, and other conditions figured greatly in the diminishment of our people during this time period. Our dietary challenges of today are associated with the health disparities in our communities. Our traditional diets were founded on the rich and diverse life within our places, and the tending of our homelands to sustain life. We are driven to protect our communities' places. Our once sustainable relationships with our lands and waterways have been disrupted. Then some of our communities lost their lands again during the Termination Era of the 1950s and 60's. Our ancestral lands and waterways hold the fruits of our diets. We seek to restore our access to them through creative stewardships with others to help put our homelands back into balance with our knowledge.



IMPORTANCE OF FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND FOOD SECURITY

The change in our diets brought about by foreign agricultural practices, gold mining, deforestation, urbanization, and other conditions figured greatly in the diminishment of our people during this time period. Our dietary challenges of today are associated with the health disparities in our communities. Our traditional diets were founded on the rich and diverse life within our places, and the tending of our homelands to sustain life. We are driven to protect our communities' places. Our once sustainable relationships with our lands and waterways have been disrupted. Then some of our communities lost their lands again during the Termination Era of the 1950s and 60's. Our ancestral lands and waterways hold the fruits of our diets. We seek to restore our access to them through creative stewardships with others to help put our homelands back into balance with our knowledge.

Native people also experience disparities in some of these health conditions. For example, Native people in California have the highest prevalence rate of cardiovascular disease (44.2%) of all races. Concurrently, many Native people are challenged to maintain a healthy weight, nutrition, eating habits, and physical activity. Native adults in California have the highest obesity prevalence rate (38.7%) of all racial groups (Conroy, Darsie, Ilango, and Bates, 2016).

Diabetes can be prevented and controlled through healthy eating and exercise. Historically, California Indians didn't have diabetes. We had a varied diet and engaged in much physical activity to sustain our food resources in a reciprocal relationship with our homelands. Acorns were central in our diets and eaten every day. Historically, an estimated 75% or more of California Indian communities ate acorns as a primary food source and acorns comprised an estimated 50% of our diets (Kroeber, 1925; Conti, 2006). Much of our food activities revolved around the very physically demanding practices of cultivating, gathering, and processing acorns from California native oaks.



Today, the majority of Native people in California eat acorns only on special occasions, if at all.

Research proposes that the high-fiber, low-calorie diets of traditional Native cultures greatly slowed sugar absorption into the bloodstream, thereby protecting us from developing diabetes (Reinhard et al., 2012). Native People have high rates of diabetes today because of drastic changes in our diets caused by colonization and the imposition of foreign diets and commodity foods on our tribal communities, income, access to healthy and traditional foods and other factors.

Sovereignty is generally defined as the right to enforce laws over one's people and territory. Food sovereignty is often defined as the "right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems" (Declaration of Nyéléni, the first global forum on food sovereignty). When it comes to both sovereignty and food sovereignty our community is currently experiencing a deficit. We lack a majority of control over our ancestral territories where our traditional foods can be cultivated and harvested to nourish our people. Diabetes and other nutrition related diseases are contributing to a diminished quality of life and higher mortality rates. CICSC aims to identify and address gaps in accessing traditional foods, thereby forging a path towards food sovereignty and improved health for tribal communities throughout Southern California.





IMPORTANCE OF FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND FOOD SECURITY

The Tribal Right to forage food resources in Southern California is a mission the CICSC hopes to accomplish. Developing and supporting policies with the California Department of Parks and Recreation will improve Native American health and diet by increasing the number of resources available in the region.

By partnering with the California Department of Parks and Recreation, tribes will have access to the land where the sustenance is grown, allowing them to incorporate aspects of a precolonial diet. To gain access and the rights to forage in the state parks and surrounding area, both tribes and the California Department will have to agree to gather and plant natural resources.

A

Establish a pilot partnership with the California Department of State Parks in Southern California. This can be achieved by identifying and expanding on any informal access agreements that might already exist between the tribes and the parks.

B

Formalizing informal agreements with California Parks through conservation easements, using language that will secure the tribe's management rights to resources on the properties.

C

Build strong partnerships with the public agencies that work with state parks and hold conservation easements on private properties. Establishing a consulting role to include language in easements that guarantee tribe's management rights to subsistence resources on those properties.

D

Form a tribal nonprofit to collaborate with private landholders for conservation efforts and earn eligibility for conservation easements.

E

Develop partnerships between tribes, state parks, and research institutions to study sustainable agriculture's economic and environmental benefits. Find private foundations to support innovative pilot projects promoting Native American TEK and sustainable agriculture due to insufficient research and funding.

F

Defining tribal "beneficial use" categories during the consultation process with CA water Resources Control Board can lead to future collaboration between state parks and tribes on land management issues.

Harvest Days

Harvest Days mark the beginning of the harvesting season for crops. These are important days that different tribal communities will gather crops in the traditional regions of their homelands. Many tribes use this time to educate those involved about the history of the harvest day and the various uses of the crop. Below Are some community harvest days and seasonal times to pick certain crops.

Agave Harvest and Roast- April

Malki Museum

11-795 Malki Rd.

Banning 92220

Tule Harvest- May

Kumeyaay Community College

Kumeyaay Lake Mission Trails

Piñon Nut Harvest-September with Kumeyaay Community College

- Acorns- September- Spring
- Blackberries June- July
- Elderberries- August- September
- Grapes- July- October
- Prickly pear- August
- Strawberries- April- June

SEASONS TO GATHER

SPRING

Raspberry leaves, raspberries, wood strawberry, cattails, prickly pear cactus pads, wild rhubarb, Gooseberries, Sugar bush, Manzanita, Yucca, Agave, Watercress

SUMMER

Prickly pear, Blackberries, Gooseberries, Wild Grape, Sugar bush, Manzanita, Wild Strawberry, Mesquite, Yucca, Agave, Buckwheat, Black Walnut, Watercress

FALL

Acorns, Black elderberries, Blue elderberries, Prickly pear, Buckwheat, Black Walnut, Watercress

WINTER

Prickly pear cactus pads, Wild rhubarb, Wild grape leaves, Watercress, Wild grape vines



CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLATE

FRUITS

BLACKBERRY
MANZANITA
ELDERBERRY
ROSE HIPS

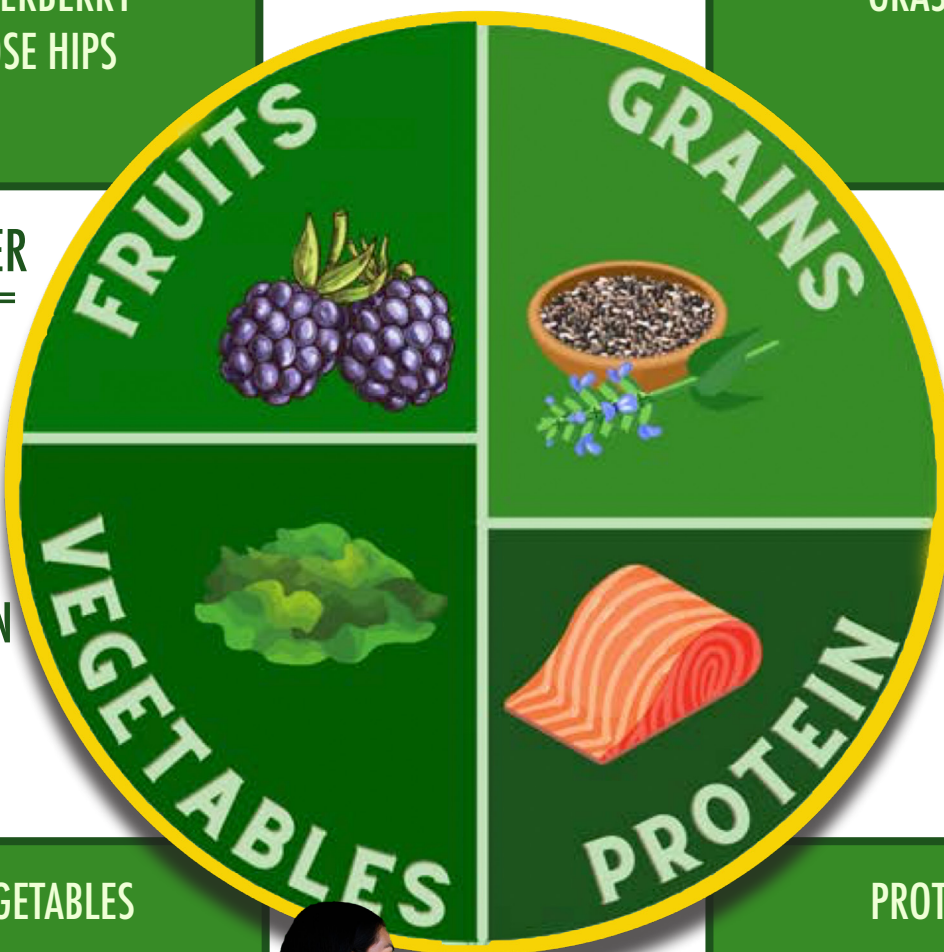
GRAINS

SEEDS
FLOWERS
GRASSES

DRINK WATER

15.5 CUPS
FOR MEN

11.5 CUPS
FOR WOMEN



VEGETABLES

LETTUCE
MUSHROOM
ROOTS
SEAWEED

PROTEIN

DEER
FISH
ABALONE
ACORNS



Traditional Plant Identification Cards

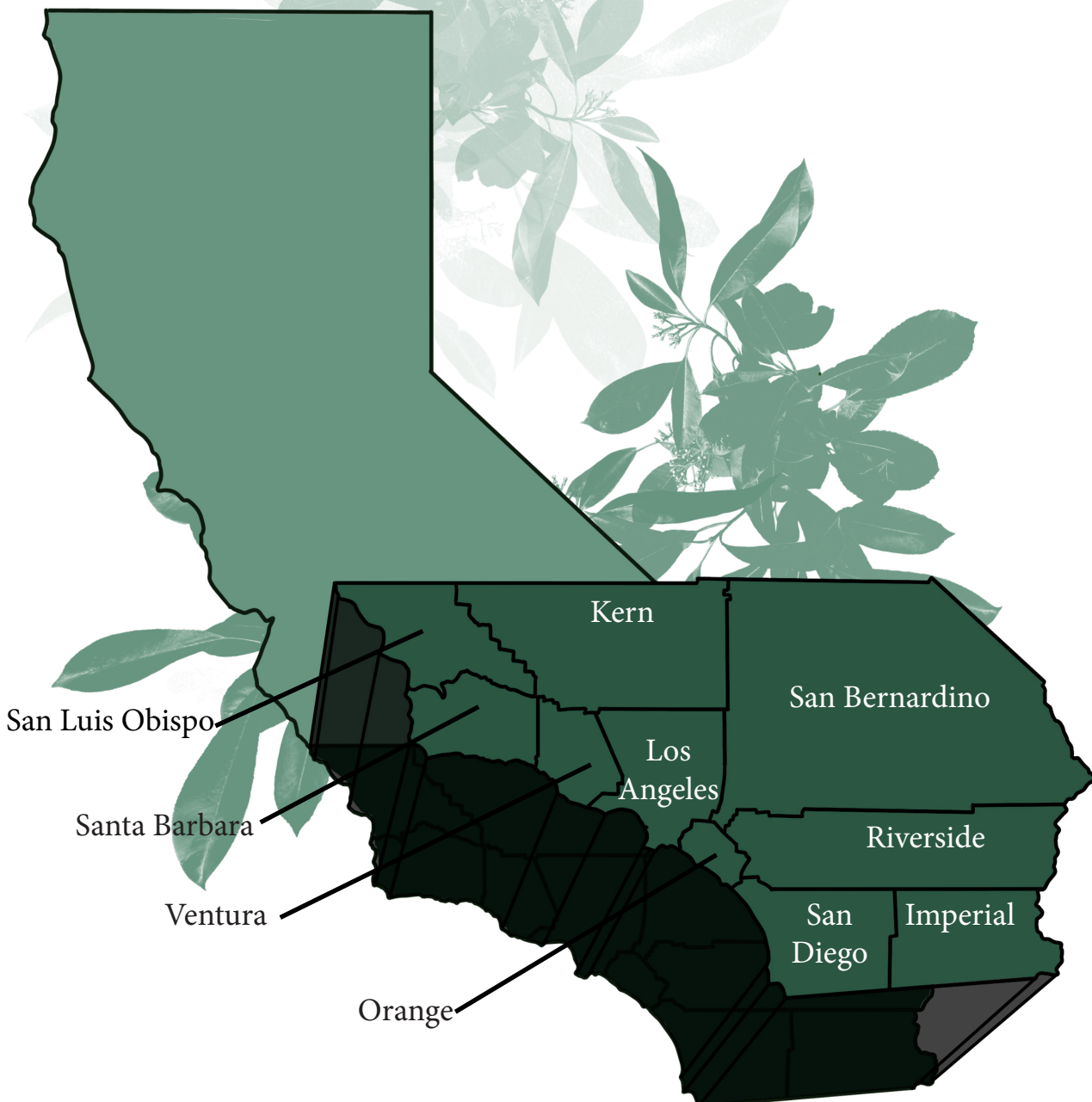
PLANT ID CARDS

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA NATIVE TRADITIONAL FOODS



Before gathering a new plant, ensure it is the correct plant to avoid possible adverse impacts caused by ingesting a misidentified plant. Keep in mind it is important to consider whether pesticides have been sprayed, as this can impact your exposure to toxins in the environment.

Southern California is made up of eleven counties, each with unique resources utilized by the local tribes. The counties have diverse regions and climates - coastal counties have access to the ocean while inland counties have deserts, which affect the types of things that can be found in those areas.



CHAPARRAL YUCCA

HESPEROYUCCA WHIPPLEI



WHAT: CHAPARRAL YUCCA IS NATIVE TO SOUTHWESTERN CALIFORNIA, NORTHERN BAJA CALIFORNIA, AND ALONG THE COLORADO RIVER IN NORTH WESTERN ARIZONA. IT HAS LONG, SHARP POINTED, AND STEMLESS LEAVES AND PRODUCES A CLUSTER OF PURPLE-TINGED WHITE FLOWERS ATOP A LONG STALK. IT CAN TAKE OVER 5 YEARS TO MATURE ENOUGH TO PRODUCE FLOWERS. THIS PLANT CAN GROW UP TO 10-15 FEET.

WHERE: MOSTLY BELOW 5000 FEET (1500 M). IN CALIFORNIA, CHAPARRAL YUCCA IS FOUND IN A VARIETY OF DRY VEGETATION TYPES, ESPECIALLY ON ROCKY OR SANDY SLOPES

WHEN: THE YUCCA FLOWERS BLOOM IN THE SPRING BUT THE REMAINDER OF THE PLANT STAYS DORMANT

NATIVE USES: FOOD (HEART OF THE STALK AND THE FLOWERS. CORDAGE, USED AS MATERIAL FOR BASKETS OR SANDALS.

BLACK OAK

QUERCUS KELLOGGI



WHAT: BLACK OAK IS AN OAK TREE THAT CAN GROW ANYWHERE BETWEEN 30-80 FEET TALL AND 1-4.5 FEET IN DIAMETER, ONE CAN DISTINGUISH A BLACK OAK TREE FROM OTHER OAKS BY ITS DEEPLY LOBED LEAVES AND RELATIVELY LARGE ACORNS. THEY CAN LIVE UP TO 500 YEARS, BUT THEY ARE EXTREMELY VULNERABLE TO SUDDEN OAK DEATH. THEY ARE CONSIDERED THE OAK TREE WITH THE MOST DESIRABLE ACORNS BY NATIVE AMERICANS IN CALIFORNIA

WHERE: SLOPES AND VALLEYS BETWEEN 2,000 AND 8,000 FT. IN THE COAST RANGES, TRANSVERSE RANGE, PENINSULAR RANGE, AND LOWER ELEVATIONS OF THE SIERRAS

WHEN: EARLY FALL WHEN LEAVES ARE JUST TURNING BROWN FROM GREEN

NATIVE USES: FOOD (SOUP, MUSH, OR BREAD), MEDICINE, DYES, UTENSILS, GAMES, TOYS, AND CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

ELDERBERRY

SAMBUCUS NIGRA SSP. CAERULEA



WHAT: ELDERBERRY IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FOOD SOURCES FOR BIRDS. THEY CAN BE FOUND ALL THE WAY FROM OREGON TO BAJA. NEW GROWTH CAN BE FATAL TO LIVESTOCK DUE TO GLUCOSIDE. THEY GROW TOUGH AND RAPIDLY. THEY HAVE CREAM OR YELLOW FLOWERS IN THE SPRING FOLLOWED BY DELICIOUS PURPLE BERRIES IN THE FALL.

WHERE: STREAM BANKS, SLOPE BOTTOMS, CANYONS, SLIGHTLY MOISTER PLACES THROUGHOUT THE STATE

WHEN: MID SUMMER TO EARLY FALL

NATIVE USES: BERRIES, LEAVES AND FLOWERS ARE USED FOR FOOD, MEDICINE, AND DYES, TWIGS AND WOOD ARE USED FOR MEDICINE, ARROW SHAFTS, AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

NARROWLEAF CATTAIL

TYPHA ANGUSTIFOLIA



WHAT: NARROWLEAF CATTAIL IS A PERENNIAL HERB THAT GROWS THROUGHOUT CALIFORNIA. ALL PARTS ARE EDIBLE WHEN GATHERED AT THE RIGHT STAGE OF GROWTH. THEY ARE FAST GROWING AND REQUIRE FULL SUN EXPOSURE. THEY ARE SUPPORTED BY BUTTERFLIES AND HAVE A SPRING FLOWERING SEASON.

WHERE: DRY GRANITIC SLOPES AND RIDGES

WHEN: MID TO LATE SPRING, HARVEST WHEN IMMATURE BEFORE DRY

NATIVE USES: MATTING, BEDDING MATERIAL, CEREMONIAL BUNDLES, AND HOUSING MATERIALS SUCH AS THATCHINGS, ROOFING MATERIALS, CLOTHING, DIAPERS, AND WHERE OTHER ABSORBENT MATERIALS ARE NEEDED, YOUNG SHOOTS EDIBLE, YOUNG FLOWERS HEADS EDIBLE

ONION

ALLIUM SP.



WHAT: WILD ONION HAS A SPRING SUMMER FLOWERING SEASON. EACH SMALL BULB PRODUCES UP TO 10-50 FLOWERS. THEY ARE COMMONLY FOUND IN BEE HARDENS AS THEY ATTRACT BOTH BEES AND BUTTERFLIES. THEY REQUIRE FULL SUN EXPOSURE TO GROW.

WHERE: WOODS, CLAY SOIL

WHEN: SPRING, EARLY SUMMER

NATIVE USES: BULBS AND LEAVES OF ONION ARE USED FOR FOOD. THE LEAVES CAN ALSO BE EATEN AS A SNACK

PINYON NUTS

PINUS MONOPHYLLA



WHAT: PINYONS ARE A MEDIUM SIZED TREE WITH A SLOW GROWTH RATE. THEY ARE COMMONLY FOUND IN THE SIERRAS, TRANSVERSE RANGE. THEY PRODUCE THE LARGEST CONES OF THE TRUE PINYONS

WHERE: ROCKY SLOPES

WHEN: EARLY SUMMER

NATIVE USES: TREE FOR FUEL WOOD, THE PINE NUTS FOR FOOD, AND MELT PINYON PITCH AS A WATERTIGHT APPLICATION FOR BASKETS AND POTTERY VESSELS.

STRAWBERRY

FRAGARIA VESCA



WHAT: THE WOODLAND STRAWBERRY CAN BE FOUND PRIMARILY IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA. IT CAN BE IDENTIFIED BY ITS SMALL WHITE FLOWERS WITH FIVE PETALS AND ITS BUSH-LIKE FORM. ITS BERRIES ARE SMALL AND JUICY. THEY CAN BE EATEN RAW. THIS PLANT CAN ATTRACT BUTTERFLIES.

WHERE: WOODLANDS

WHEN: SPRING

NATIVE USES: COMMONLY GATHERED AND EATEN FRESH

TULE

SCHENOPECTUS TABERNAEMONTANI



WHAT: TULE GROWS IN MOIST AND WET ENVIROMENTS, TYPICALLY NEAR BODIES OF WATER. IT CAN GROW ANYWHERE BETWEEN 3 TO 8 FEET. THE STALKS OF TULE ARE KNOWN TO BE BUOYANT AS THEY FLOAT ATOP WATER. TULE IS EXTREMELY ABUNDANT AND CAN BE FOUND IN ALL 50 STATES, INCLUDING HAWAII AND VARIOUS REGIONS OF CANADA.

WHERE: MARSHES, LAKES, STREAMBANKS

WHEN: LATE SUMMER, WHEN TIPS OF TULE BEGINS TO DIE BACK

NATIVE USES: STEMS AND STALKS ARE USED IN BASKETS, BOATS, DECOYS, ROPE, BEDDING, CLOTHING, AND HOUSING MATERIALS CAN ALSO BE EATEN BY STRIPPING AWAY THE OUTER BARK, YOUNG SHOOTS AND SPROUTS CAN BE EATEN.

WOOD ROSE

ROSA WOODSII



WHAT: THE WOOD ROSE CAN BE FOUND THOUGHOUT CALIFORNIA, TYPICALLY IN THE MOUNTAINOUS REGIONS. IT IS A FAST GROWING SHRUB WITH BEAUTIFUL PINK FLOWERS. IT ATTRACTS A LOT OF BIRDS AND USUALLY GROWS IN HIGHLY ELEVATED PLACES WITH AN ABUNDANT AMOUNT OF MOISTURE.

WHERE: MOIST PLACES WITH STREAM BANKS OF HIGHER ELEVATIONS

WHEN: LATE SPRING

NATIVE USES: ROOTS, STEMS, LEAVES, FLOWERS, AND FRUIT OF ROSE FOR FOOD, THE INNER BARK AND ROOTS ARE ALSO USED MEDICALLY.

CALIFORNIA INDIAN TRADITION DRINKS

RE-CONNECTING TO ANCESTRAL BEVERAGES

Traditionally, California tribes have used their vast knowledge and relationship with their traditional homelands to boost their health and wellness. Part of that health and wellness comes from the numerous positive health benefits that various traditional plants bring and the medicine they have to offer us. As American culture relies on modern sugary drinks and beverages, Native Communities turn to traditional teas to quench our thirst and the needs of our health.

Please note that every tribe and culture has traditional teas and medicine their ancestors turned to for their health as well. In this guide, we share a few traditional teas combinations that were shared with us by our Native community.

Please strive to utilize the plants that are free of pesticides. We recommend organic and ethically harvested sources. If you gather your own medicine for these teas please also ensure to follow the cultural protocols of the region.



TEA BLEND

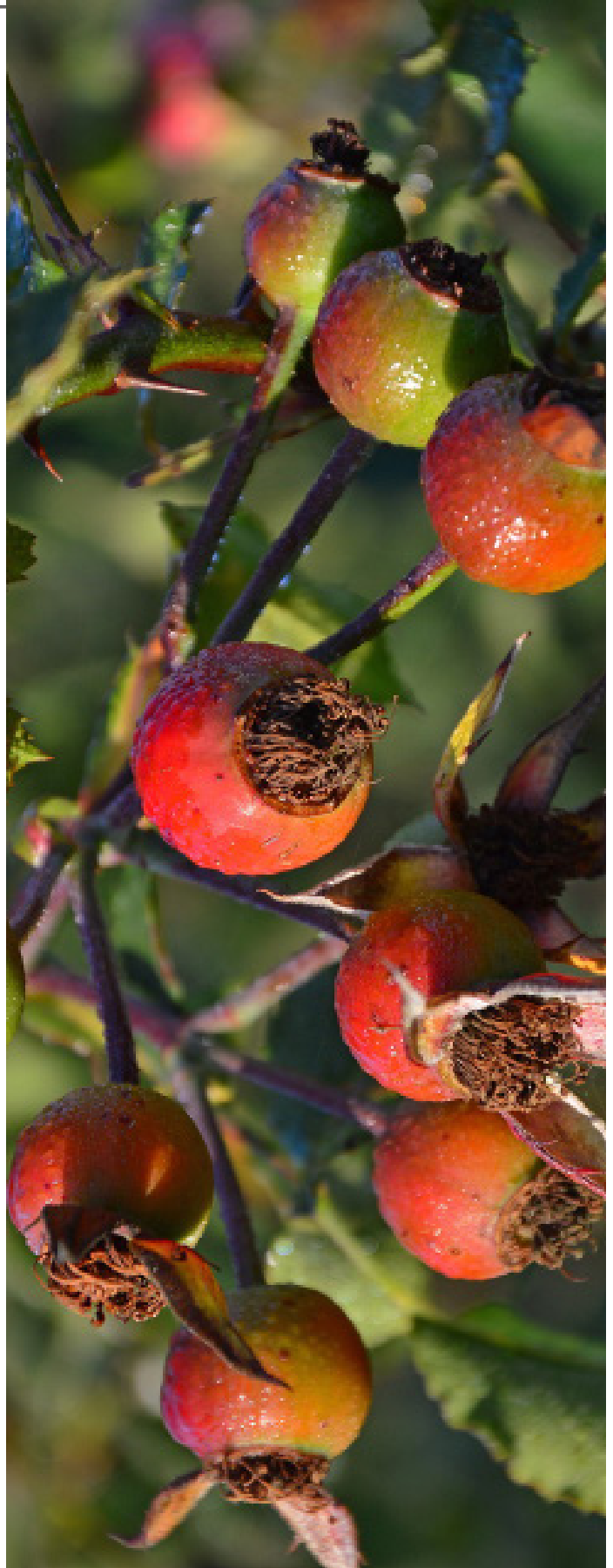
ROSE HIPS AND HONEY TEA

This delicious combination of tea mixes the perfect blend of sweet and tart. This delicious combination of highlights:

- A great source of vitamin C
- Boosts your immune systems
- Is high in vitamin A
- Rich in antioxidants
(Healthline & Pearce)

Traditionally, this tea is utilized in the winter months when the immune systems need an extra boost. It is recommended to drink when you are seeking to recover from a cold. Add honey as desired.

**Brew 1 teaspoon of dried
herbs per 1 cup of water
for 10-20 minutes**



TEA BLEND

ELDERBERRY FLOWER TEA

This tea highlights a culturally significant plant, the elderberry. The flowers are the complete highlight of this tea. Benefits include:

- boosts your immune system
- can help fight colds
- rich in antioxidants and more when combined with elderberries (Healthline & Pearce)

The flowers of this plant are not known for a potential cyanide risk like uncooked berry counterparts are. Traditionally this tea is also recommended when you are seeking to recover from a cold or flu.

Brew 1 teaspoon of dried herbs per 1 cup of water for 10-20 minutes



TEA BLEND

DRIED MANZANITA FLOWERS AND ELDERBERRY TEA

This tea highlights two popular traditional plants, the elderberry and the manzanita. The dried berries are packed with numerous health benefits, including:

- high in antioxidants
- high in vitamin C
- high in vitamin A
- good for heart health
- boosts your immune system
(Healthline & Pearce)

This tea combination adds to its counterparts of tea mixes mentioned above, as it is known traditionally to support from flu symptoms.

**Brew 1 teaspoon of dried
herbs per 1 cup of water
for 10-20 minutes**



TEA BLEND

PINE TEA

This tea highlights two popular traditional plant famous for its pine cones, but the highlight of the tea centers on the fresh spring tips. Health benefits associated with this tea include:

- high in antioxidants
 - high in vitamin C
 - high in vitamin A
 - good for heart health
 - boosts your immune system
- (Seven Generations & Pearce)

This strong tea is a great one to add to your arsenal of teas that support your immune system health. Its wide availability makes it easy to access.

**Brew 1 teaspoon of dried
herbs per 1 cup of water
for 10-20 minutes**



RECIPE CARDS

Coming soon recipe card collaboration with Sherman Indian High School



Picture of recipe

Name of recipe dish

Ingredients and instructions