

SOME NATIVE PLANTS



Nootka Rose *Rosa nutkana* is a native deciduous shrub that will vary in size with various environmental inputs (soil type & moisture regime). Branches have thorns and pink aromatic flowers that bloom late spring. Branches and young leaves were boiled into tea and used as an eyewash for cataracts and to help improve eyesight. Rose hips seeds were eaten but not the hairs which would cause 'internal itchy irritation'.

Tall Oregon grape *Mohonia nervosa*

a native evergreen with tough leathery foliage, shiny on top and dull underneath. In late spring yellow flowers emerge producing bitter berries that resemble small grapes. Known to treat digestion problems, liver, gall bladder and eye troubles. Also used as an antibiotic and an anti cancer agent which can help protect bone marrow.



Arbutus *Arbutus menziesii* an evergreen member of the Garry oak community recognized by its red bark that is exfoliated annually. Late spring brings dense clusters of flowers that produce red berries. The bark was an ingredient to treat a number of illnesses.

Ocean Spray *Holodiscus discolor* aka 'iron wood'

is common deciduous shrub blooming late spring. The wood was used as weaponry, & digging sticks. Medicinal tonics prepared from the dried brown flowers were ingested to treat diarrhea, measles, chickenpox's.



Snowberry *Symphoricarpos albus* also known as waxberry or corpse berry is considered poisonous. A deciduous shrub with white berries that remain throughout winter.

IN THE NATIVE PLANT GARDEN



Douglas fir *Pseudotsuga menziesii* coniferous trees with tell tale cones can grow up to 70m tall. It proves itself as an excellent model of succession on GOE. The wood was used for weaponry and canoes. The pitch was used as a sealant for water vessels and in medicinal salves for flesh wounds.

Western Red Cedar *Thuja plicata*

known as the 'Tree of Life' and the greatest spirit. It is the perfect substance to provide all material from basic shelter, clothing, hats, rope and baskets to medicines and ceremonial masks and instruments. Cedar trees can grow up to 70m and live early 1000 years. They prefer moist nutrient rich and wet soils.



Red Alder *Alnus rubra* is a deciduous fast growing tree,



but short-lived (~50 years). Red alder may be a keystone species in the community since it plays the important role of nitrogen fixation, contributing up to 320 kg/ha of usable nitrogen per year. The bark was used to treat infections and respiratory illness because it contains strong antibiotic properties.

Sword fern *Polystichum munitu* thought to keep evil spirits away, is an evergreen commonly found among the coastal Douglas fir forest. Large fronds provided flooring, bedding, and medicine. Fiddle heads were eaten, however recent research suggests carcinogen properties.



Salal *Gaultheria shallon* a common evergreen understory native shrub with the most plentiful berry that was dried for winter stocks. It also served as an important trading item. Young sprouts were chewed as appetite suppressant and a poultice.

NATIVE AND EXOTIC INVASIVE GRASS

Native Species to Garry Oak Ecosystems are presently absent in the Native Plant Garden due to competition from invasive species, but replanting is on the restoration list.

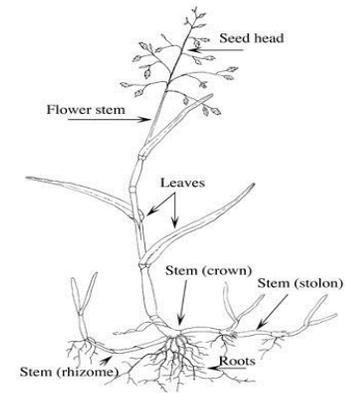


Roemers Fescue



Onion Grass

Invasive Exotic Grasses in the Native Plant Garden are bountiful, resourceful and adaptable. They have high fitness levels thus are strong competitors within their ecological niche creating overlap. The grasses are xerophytic; they adapt well to periods of draught and thrive when moisture regimes increase.



Rye Grass



Wild Oat



Early Hair



Spike Bottle



Sweet Vernal



Orchard Grass



Brome/Rip gut



Velvet Grass



Colonial Bent

GARRY OAK ECOSYSTEMS

Garry oak *Quercus garryana* is a member of an endangered ecosystem due to urban colonization and climate change. Not only are the ecosystems endangered but so are many of the species which inhabit these areas. Ecosystems prefer low-lying grasslands, low to mid-elevation with rocky outcrops with slopes comprised of xerophytic, native vegetation.



White oak trees grow to about 25m in height and live for ~400 years. The Garry oak trees in the Native Plant Garden are around 100 years old. Garry oaks are deciduous as leaves fall in autumn, along with their acorns. The leaves are lobed, glossy green and roughly 12cm in length. Buds emerge in the spring with inflorescence (female) and catkins (male) flowers. The bark is grey and scaly with large grooves, gnarly nubs and serpentine limbs. The bark was used in the 'Saanich four barks' medicine to treat tuberculosis and other ailments.

Acorns produce only one seed, maturing in one season. Acorns are egg-shaped, 2-3 cm long, shallow cups, bumpy and hairy within. They prefer warm moist conditions to germinate.



Rocky out crops are a prime

example of xerophytic communities within the Garry Oak ecosystems enhanced by well-drained slightly acidic soil. You can also find a variety of ferns, mosses, lichens, and in late fall certain types of fungi. In the spring a variety of lily's and iris's. Satin-Flower are the first to emerge.



Map shows historical scale on distribution of Garry Oak ecosystems on the Southern tip of Vancouver Island. Green displays coverage from 1800 at 10,443ha where the Red displays coverage from 1997 at 512ha. Map is from Garry Oak Ecosystem Recovery Team. Before the last ice age most of the Victoria area was covered with Garry oak hard wood-grassland forests.

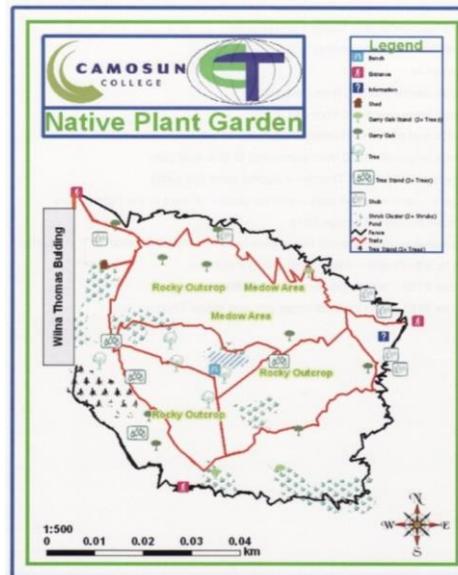


RESTORATION OF GARRY OAK ECOSYSTEMS

Volunteers Welcome!



For more information on how to get involved in volunteering with a Garry oak restoration team in the Victoria area, contact **GOERT** at info@goert.ca. Duties include light labor such as weeding, mulching, planting, monitoring, community engagement and fun!



Map is the creation of a past ET student (unknown).

NATIVE PLANT GARDEN AT CAMOSUN COLLEGE LANSDOWNNE CAMPUS



A Community of Biodiversity

Camosun means, "place to gather camas"

Camas *Camassia quamash* a field lily among Garry Oak Ecosystems GEO, was a food staple for local first Saanich peoples. In the spring, vibrant purple flowers emerge identifying the edible bulbs. The large bulbs are harvested in the spring as a source of carbohydrates and trading means, while the smaller ones are left for future harvest the following year. Be careful not to confuse bulbs with White Camas *Zygadenus venenosus* which grows in the same area, for it is known as death camas and can be potentially fatal.



This Brochure was originally created for Dr. David Blundon for an ecology assignment as an aid on the walk through the garden. 2008, Amber Brown.

Edited October 2013, Camosun College Alumni and Environmental Technology graduates: Amber Brown & Shannon Craig

The information is drawn from Plants of Coast BC, Pojar and McKinnon and Saanich Ethnobotany, Turner & Hebda