

Colorado History Garden

Native and Edible Plants of the Southwest

This garden is integrating the themes of culture, Colorado history, and native plants into the garden. The design will be in a spiral shape. Students will learn about native plants and their current and historical uses.

Materials Needed:

Fencing for Basket Weaving (low field fence, 2 feet in height, 14 feet in length)
Willow Branches

Edible Plants Already in Garden:

Weeds: common plantain, lambs quarter, pigweed
Berry Bushes: Serviceberry, gooseberry, currant,

List of Colorado Native and Edible Plants

PLANT	USAGE	HISTORY
Echinacea/ Purple Coneflower		
Yucca-Perennial cacti	Edible flowers, fiber used in basket weaving; roots are used as soap and for cleaning hair	*****
Sweet Vetch-Annual seed	Roots eaten by early settlers and Indians, used as a substitute for licorice	A favorite root for bears
Sunflower-Annual seed	Edible seeds,	Used sunflower oil on body before going into battle
Blanket Flower-Wildflower	Used as eyewash, footbaths, saddle sores	Represents health among Indians
Blue Flax-WILDFLOWER/HERB	Stems used to make linens, seeds used in flours, edible; early settlers used the herb to make a poultice of powdered seed to treat battle wounds, and mumps	
Columbine-WILDFLOWER	Edible flowers, leaves can be eaten in salads	State flower
Prickly Pear Cactus-Perennial cacti	Fruit of the flower and meat of the cactus can be eaten and used in soups	***
Oregon Grape-Herb	Edible berries; used in jellies	Indians made a yellow dye from the bark and wood of shrubby varieties
Evening Primrose-Herb	Roots are edible, used for whooping cough	
Wildmint/ Catmint-	Flavored meats, teas, and children's teething	
Indian Paintbrush-Wildflower	Edible flower, eat the nectar	Research the Indian legend behind paintbrush
Wormwood Sage-Perennial herb	Season meats, used for colds,	
Yampa, Squaw Root	Roots were ground and made into cakes by Indians; gathered roots and ate as potatoes	****
Fireweed-wildflower	Edible leaves and flowers	**Indian legend