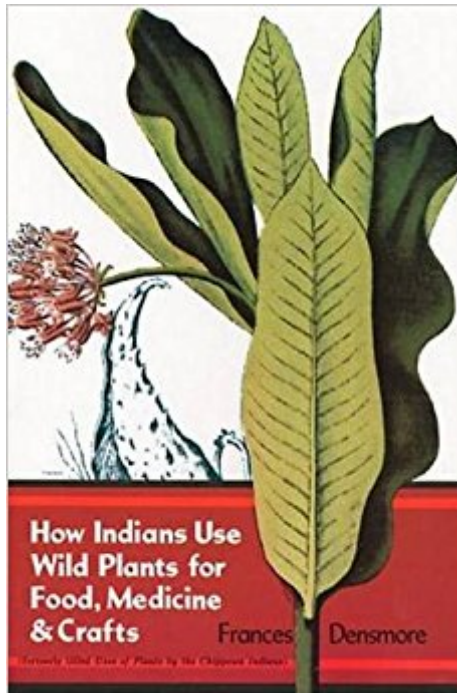




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How Indians Use Wild Plants For Food, Medicine And Crafts



Synopsis

The uses of plants " for food, for medicine, for arts, crafts, and dyeing " among the Chippewa Indians of Minnesota and Wisconsin show the great extent to which they understood and utilized natural resources. In this book those traditions are captured, providing a wealth of new material for those interested in natural food, natural cures, and native crafts. In separate sections describing the major areas of use, Miss Densmore, an ethnologist with the Smithsonian Institution, details the uses of nearly 200 plants with emphasis on wild plants and lesser-known uses. For those interested in natural foods she gives extensive coverage to the gathering and preparation of maple sugar and wild rice, as well as preparations for beverages from leaves and twigs of common plants, seasonings including mint and bearberry, the methods of preparing wild rice and corn, cultivated and wild vegetables, and wild fruits and berries. On Indian medicines she tells the basic methods of gathering plants and the basic surgical and medical methods. Then she gives a complete list of the plants with their botanical names, uses, parts used, preparation and administration, and other notes and references. Also covered are plants used as charms, plants used in natural dyes, and plants in the useful and decorative arts including uses for household items, toys, mats, twine, baskets, bows, and tools, with special emphasis on the uses of birch bark and cedar. This section will be especially useful for supplying new and unusual craft ideas. In addition, 36 plates show the many stages of plant gathering and preparation and many of the artistic uses. While a number of the plants discussed are native only to the Great Lakes region, many are found throughout a wide range. Those studying the Indians of the Great Lakes region, or those trying to get back to nature through understanding and using natural materials, will find much about the use of plants in all areas of community life. Because of Miss Densmore's deep knowledge and clear presentation, her study remains a rich and useful source for learning about or using native foods, native cures, and native crafts.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"A fascinating, well-illustrated study."

We are Ojibwa of the Chippewa L.C.O. Reservation tribe. Our family is Bear Clan, and this book was purchased as a gift for our favorite Auntie who loves all things traditional, she also loves to get at the root of modern traditions, & natural materials /plants. She has accumulated a lot of knowledge over the years, & is the family go to for information on such matters. We sent the book as a surprise gift. She was very excited when she called not just because of the surprise,** but also because she really likes the book. It has a lot of information in it. Much of which she already knew to be true, along with some new information; ** However you have to take into account the fact that she has been researching, and collecting such information for more than 5 decades, so it's not surprising that she would recognize much of the information. (Still learned a few new facts though!)**Because she DID recognize much of the information to be factual, and yet after 50+ years gained some new information -**We DO strongly recommend this book for all who are curious, or for those who are always on the hunt for more information

I am working with a Master Herbalist who is training me and this is one of several books recommended to me that I have purchased. The art of herbal remedies is a whole new world that is essential for anyone considering or now living off grid. I have gained so much knowledge in such a short time, and I have connected with local dealers that are purchasing bulk products that grow wild on my property. This same review applies to all of the herbal books I have purchased, I don't just recommend one but all of them for your library as a serious or novice herbalist!!!!

It was ok - but not what I expected. Mostly it was lists of plants, learning the native name for them was interesting but I would have liked more information from the person who did the original interviews with natives on how they used the plants and the folklore/story behind them. There is a much more expensive edition of this older book basically reprinted but its unclear if there is much

more information in that edition.

I agree with several reviewers. There is much information here but also a lot more needed. As others have said, if you didn't know what to do with the plant you won't know afterward. But you'll have names so you can research the plants. It also seems to be part of a collection of several volumes. Perhaps if that were mentioned in the description I could be looking for the other volumes. They may contain the much needed information.

Just what I've been looking for. I am an RN & I have always been fascinated by the herbal remedies used by the Native American tribes' medicine men & women. When you look @ the remedies closely, you'll discover the foundation of "modern" medicine - example - the Natives used willow bark in a tea or poultice for pain (even heart pain) - they didn't know the reason it worked is because the bark has the equivalent of aspirin in it! So much to learn of what the ancients knew!

The majority of the book is about medicinal herbs and their uses. The only sections on food are about maple syrup making and harvesting and processing wild rice. The material about these two food resources is excellent. There is nothing really about gardening or wild fruits, tubers, stems, leaves, or nuts. There is a section on basket making and different patterns of weaving. Overall, the title is misleading and should emphasize the medicinal plants.

A nicely written book covering many different wild plants and their uses. The font is a little small on some pages, and the book is definitely old-fashioned, but it has a wealth of knowledge that anyone interested in ethnobotany would like.

I learned alot from reading this book. It's fairly short, and has lots of interesting tidbits. Though I feel it should be renamed--it doesn't deal with most indian cultures, but rather the Chippewa Indians, as they are who Frances Densmore made an extensive study of. The title is a bit misleading. One thing I felt that would have improved the book would have been a bit more of a clear listing of the information in the book, but then again, it is rather dated material.

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