

Some Hul'q'umi'num' Plants

Part 1: Pteridophytes

Equisetaceae (Horsetail Family)

1. **horsetail xum'xum'** [*Equisetum arvense* L.] • Horsetails are primitive plants that are closely related to ferns, despite their quite different overall appearance. The common horsetail is extremely widespread and often occurs in populated areas as a garden weed. This plant produces bushy-looking, branched stems that are green and separate brownish, unbranched stems that bear the reproductive spores.

Dennstaedtiaceae (Hayscented Fern Family)

2. **bracken fern suqeen ~ thuqeen** [*Pteridium aquilinum* (L.) Kuhn] • This common fern dies back in the fall, leaving its brown, wilted leaves on the ground throughout the winter. The fresh leaves have been used for wiping the slime from salmon and as an undermat when cleaning fish. The thick, underground, root-like stems have been used for food.

Dryopteridaceae (Wood Fern Family)

3. **sword fern sthxelum** [*Polystichum munitum*] • Fronds were used to line cooking pits. Spores used to cure sores and boils.

* From Gerdts, Compton, et al. *Hul'q'umi'num' Words: An English-to-Hul'q'umi'num' and Hul'q'umi'num' -to-English Dictionary*, School District 68, 1998. Thanks to the Elders of the Stz'uminus, Suneymuxw, and Snuw'nuw'us First Nations for sharing their knowledge. Thanks to our co-researcher Theresa Thorne.

Part 2: Gymnosperms

Pinaceae (Pine Family)

4. **balsam t'a'hw | balsam tree t'a'hwulhp** [*Abies grandis* (Dougl. ex D. Don in Lamb.) Lindl.] • The tree known locally as “balsam” (also referred to as “grand fir”) has pitchy bark that may be used for medicinal purposes.
5. **fir (Douglas-fir) wood ts'sey' also ts'sey'ulhp** [*Pseudotsuga menziesii* (Mirb.) Franco] • Douglas-fir wood has been used for the shafts of fishing spears and harpoons. The bark from old snags is said to be a good fuel for fires.

Cupressaceae (Cypress Family)

6. **yellow cedar pashuluqw** [*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis* (D. Don in Lamb.) Spach] • Canoes and paddles have been made from yellow cedar wood. In the case of paddles, the wood must first be seasoned for one year.
7. **red cedar xpey'ulhp** [*Thuja plicata* Donn ex D. Don in Lamb.] • The red cedar is a tremendously important species. Its wood and inner bark have been especially prized for making numerous items. Red cedar wood has been used for various items including houses, canoes, and spreaders used when barbecuing salmon. The inner bark of red cedar may be used for clothing, hats, ropes, headbands and headdresses. In the past, butter clams were strung onto strips of red cedar inner bark to dry over a fire. Cedar branches are split and used for baskets.

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Part 3: Angiosperms - Dicots

Aceraceae (Maple Family)

8. maple tree q'umun'ulhp ~ q'umul'ulhp [*Acer macrophyllum* Pursh (bigleaf or Oregon maple)] • Bigleaf maple wood has been used for paddles, bowls, spoons, utensils, for carving and to smoke fish. The “sap” (cambium), removed from the layer between the bark and the wood, has been eaten. The winged fruits, which fly through the air like a whirlybird, have been used as a lure for fishing lingcod (*Ophiodon elongatus*) and “red snapper” (or yelloweye rockfish, *Sebastes ruberrimus*). The large leaves have been used as an undermat for drying some edible fruits and roots.

Apiaceae (syn.: Umbelliferae, Parsley Family)

9a. cow-parsnip saaqw' [*Heraclium lanatum* Michx.] • Cow-parsnip is a large, herbaceous plant that produces large clusters of white flowers followed by small, flat seed-like fruits. The hollow stems and solid leaf stalks of this plant are edible, once peeled to remove the skin. The term *saaqw'* seems to refer to the entire plant of cow-parsnip.

9b. cow-parsnip (edible part) yaala' • Cow-parsnip stems and leaf stalks are edible when peeled. They must be peeled before they are eaten to remove the outer skin, which can cause skin irritation upon contact with bare, moist skin in the presence of sunlight. The term *ya:la* applies to the edible portion of cow-parsnips, possibly both the stems and the leaf stalks.

10. Indian consumption plant q'uxmin [*Lomatium nudicaule* (Pursh) Coult. & Rose] • Indian consumption plant, usually known only by its Hul'q'umi'num' name, is a small herb that grows in dry, open, often pebbly to sandy areas. It has yellow flowers that develop into small, flat fruits that resemble rolled oats and are usually thought of as “seeds”. These “seeds” often are used as medicine for respiratory conditions and are highly valued.

Araliaceae (Ginseng Family)

11. devil's club qwa'pulhp [*Oplopanax horridus* (Smith) Miq.] • Devil's club is the source of a medicine said to be good for “whatever ails you”. It is sometimes combined with other plants for medicine, such as red alder, black raspberry and Indian consumption plant.

Berberidaceae (Barberry Family)

12. Oregon-grape (tall) suni'ulhp [*Mahonia aquifolium* (Pursh) Nutt.] • Two species of Oregon-grape grow within the Hul'q'umi'num' territory. Tall Oregon-grape is a larger shrub that typically grows in drier, more open and often rocky areas than the dull Oregon-grape. Both species produce yellow flowers and blue berries. A decoction of Oregon-grape roots is used as an eyewash for swollen eyes and as an arthritis medicine.

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Betulaceae (Birch Family)

13. alder kwulala'ulhp [*Alnus rubra* Bong.] • Red alder bark may be boiled to yield a dye or to be used as medicine. The wood may be used for smoking fish.

Caprifoliaceae (Honeysuckle Family)

14. blue elderberries tth'uykwikw [*Sambucus cerulea* Raf.]

• Blue elderberry is found on southern Vancouver Island and the adjacent mainland of British Columbia. It is similar to red elderberry, but bears blue fruits covered with a whitish coating.

15. red elderberries tth'iwuq' [*Sambucus racemosa* L.] • Red elderberry is a large shrub that produces creamy white flowers and large clusters of small red berries. The fruits are edible, but are cooked before eating.

Elaeagnaceae (Oleaster Family)

16. soapberry (fruit) sxwesum soapberry bush

sxwesumulhp [*Shepherdia canadensis* (L.) Nutt.] • Soapberries contain a natural detergent-like substance that makes them soapy and bitter. Because of this, they can be whipped into a frothy mass, something like whipped cream. Soapberries may be gathered on southern Vancouver Island or obtained through trade then whipped with sugar and eaten.

Ericaceae (Heath Family)

17. arbutus qaanhlp [*Arbutus menziesii* Pursh] • Arbutus is a somewhat unusual tree because of its bark, which naturally peels off and away from the trunk and branches. The leaves or inner bark of arbutus may be chewed for toothache and stomach problems.

18. salal berries t'eqe' [*Gaultheria shallon* Pursh] • Salal bushes have thick, leathery leaves that stay green all year long. The dark purple fruits are edible.

19. Labrador tea bush me'hwulhp [*Ledum groenlandicum* Oeder] • This small, much-branched evergreen shrub bears long, often drooping leaves that are covered with dense, rusty hairs on their lower surface. The clustered white flowers produce small, drooping capsules. The leaves of this bog-loving plant may be used to make a fragrant tea.

20. cranberry qwum'tsal's [*Oxycoccus oxycoccus* (L.) MacM.] • This berry is described as red and cherry-sized.

21. red huckleberry sq'wuqwtsus [*Vaccinium parvifolium* Sm. in Rees] • Red huckleberries grow from moist to dry forests at a range of elevations. The small, red fruits are a traditional food. They may be eaten fresh or cooked and made into jam.

Plantaginaceae (Plantain Family)

22. plantain (common or broad-leaved)

sxu'enhween [*Plantago major* L.] • Common plantain is a widespread introduced plant that regularly occurs as a weed in lawns as well as along roadsides and elsewhere. It is commonly locally referred to as “frog leaf”. The leaves of this plant have been used as a poultice for sores and wounds.

Some Hul'q'umi'num' Plants

Rosaceae (Rose Family)

23. thimbleberry t'uqwum' [*Rubus parviflorus* Nutt.]

- Thimbleberries are red and very sweet. Because they are not particularly juicy, they are easy to preserve. They may be eaten fresh or preserved by drying or canning, or made into jam.

24. salmonberry lila' salmonberry bush lila'ulhp

[*Rubus spectabilis* Pursh] • Salmonberry shrubs produce pink to reddish-purple flowers and edible fruits that range in color from yellow to red to purple.

25. spirea t'ets'ulhp [*Spiraea douglasii* Hook.] • Spirea, or hardhack, is a thicket-forming shrub that produces tiny pink flowers in dense clusters. The wood has been used to make spreaders when smoking fish.

Urticaceae (Nettle Family)

26. stinging nettle tth'uxtth'ux [*Urtica dioica* L.] •

Stinging nettle is covered with stinging hairs that will cause an irritating rash upon contact. These irritating plants have been used to rub on the skin as a counter-irritant medicine to treat chest and shoulder pain while the roots have been used as an arthritis medicine.

Part 4: Angiosperms - Monocots

Alismataceae (Water-plantain Family)

27. wapato sqewth [*Sagittaria latifolia* Willd. var. *latifolia*] •

This aquatic plant grows from tuber-producing rhizomes and produces arrowhead-shaped leaves and white flowers. Both the tubers (potato-like structures) and rhizomes (specialized stems) are starchy and edible. This word also applies to the introduced potato.

Araceae (Arum or Calla-lily Family)

28. swamp lantern ts'aqwa' [*Lysichiton americanum*

Hult. & St. John] • Also known as skunk cabbage. This plant of swamps, bogs and other moist sites is so-named because of the strong odor produced by the flowers. These flowers are tiny and borne on a vertical stalk that is hooded by a distinctive bright yellow bract, or modified leaf. The elongated leaves, which may be very large, were used as an undermat for drying berries.

Liliaceae (Lily Family)

29. camas speenhw [*Camassia leichtlinii* (Baker) S. Wats.

(great camas) and/or *C. quamash* (Pursh) Greene (common camas)] • Camas bulbs may be roasted and eaten, and are said to be sweet and chewy. They have been gathered from island bluffs and baked, steamed or roasted in hot ashes, or mashed and formed into patties and then roasted on special flat rocks at the edge of the fire.