

Edible Wild Plants of the Prairie: An Ethnobotanical Guide

By Kelly Kindscher

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The Plains Indians found medicinal value in more than two hundred species of native prairie plants. Unfortunately, modern American culture has not paid much attention.

White settlers did learn a few plant-based remedies from the Indians, and a few prairie plants were prescribed by frontier doctors. A couple dozen prairie species were listed as drugs in the U.S. Pharmacopeia at one time or another, and one or two, like the Purple Coneflower, found their way into the bottles of patent medicine.


But in both the number of species used and the varieties of treatments administered, Indians were far more proficient than white settlers. Their familiarity with the plants of the prairie was comprehensive—there probably were Indian names for all prairie plants, and they recognized more varieties of some species than scientists do today. Their knowledge was refined and exact enough that they could successfully administer medicinal doses of plants that are poisonous. All of the species used by frontier doctors were used first by Indians.

In *Medicinal Plants of the Prairie*, ethnobotanist Kelly Kindscher documents the medicinal use of 203 native prairie plants by the Plains Indians. Using information gleaned from archival materials, interviews, and fieldwork, Kindscher describes plant-based treatments for ailments ranging from hyperactivity to syphilis, from arthritis to worms. He also explains the use of internal and external medications, smoke treatments, moxa (the burning of a medicinal substance on the skin), and the doctrine of signatures (the belief that the form or characteristics of a plant are signatures or signs that reveal its medicinal uses). He adds information on recent pharmacological findings to further illuminate the medicinal nature of these plants.

Not since 1919 has the ethnobotany of native Great Plains plants been examined so thoroughly. Kindscher's study is the first to encompass the entire Prairie Bioregion, a one-million-square-mile area bounded by Texas on the south, Canada on the north, the Rocky Mountains on the west, and the deciduous forests

of Missouri, Indiana, and Wisconsin in the east. Along with information on the medicinal uses of prairie plants by the Indians, Kindscher also lists Indian, common, and scientific names and describes Anglo folk uses, medical uses, scientific research, and cultivation. Descriptions of the plants are supplemented by 44 exquisite line drawings and over 100 range maps.

This book will help increase appreciation for prairie plants at a time when prairies and their biodiversity urgently need protection throughout the region.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

This reference book covering 122 plant species is the result of an 80-day walk across Kansas and eastern Colorado. A general discussion of the Prairie Bioregion precedes individual descriptions which include common, American Indian, and scientific names and what they mean. Also included are a formal description, discussion of food uses, and cultivation information. The food use information is gleaned from an extensive list of references, spiced with the author's own experience in preparing and eating these foods. This is the first book on edible plants of the region and should be a valuable reference for botanical, regional and North American Indian lore collections. Drawings not seen. Katharine Galloway Garstka, Intergraph Corp., Huntsville, Ala.

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Review

"Unique and important. . . . A definitive contribution to the study of wild edible plants and American Indian ethnobotany."—**E. Barrie Kavasch**, author of *Native American Harvests: Recipes and Botanicals of the American Indian*

From the Back Cover

"Unique and important. . . . A definitive contribution to the study of wild edible plants and American Indian ethnobotany."--E. Barrie Kavasch, author of *Native American Harvests: Recipes and Botanicals of the American Indian*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lupe Ware:

Now a day individuals who Living in the era wherever everything reachable by match the internet and the resources within it can be true or not need people to be aware of each data they get. How individuals to be smart in receiving any information nowadays? Of course the answer is reading a book. Examining a book can help individuals out of this uncertainty Information specially this Edible Wild Plants of the Prairie: An Ethnobotanical Guide book as this book offers you rich info and knowledge. Of course the details in this book hundred pct guarantees there is no doubt in it you may already know.

James Collins:

The knowledge that you get from Edible Wild Plants of the Prairie: An Ethnobotanical Guide is a more deep you looking the information that hide inside the words the more you get serious about reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to comprehend but Edible Wild Plants of the Prairie: An Ethnobotanical Guide giving you thrill feeling of reading. The writer conveys their point in a number of way that can be understood by simply anyone who read it because the author of this guide is well-known enough. This kind of book also makes your own personal vocabulary increase well. It is therefore easy to understand then can go with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We advise you for having that Edible Wild Plants of the Prairie:

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Mathew Jones:

Reading can be called brain hangout, why? Because if you find yourself reading a book especially a book entitled Edible Wild Plants of the Prairie: An Ethnobotanical Guide your mind will drift away through every dimension, wandering in most aspects that maybe not known for but surely will become your mind friends. Imagining each word written in a guide then become one type conclusion and explanation this maybe you never get just before. The Edible Wild Plants of the Prairie: An Ethnobotanical Guide giving you an additional experience more than blown away your brain but also giving you useful details for your better life within this era. So now let us show you the relaxing pattern is your body and mind will likely be pleased when you are finished reading through it, like winning a. Do you want to try this extraordinary shelling out spare time activity?

Donald Purcell:

The book entitled Edible Wild Plants of the Prairie: An Ethnobotanical Guide contains a lot of information on it. The writer explains your ex idea with easy means. The language is very straightforward all the people, so do certainly not worry, you can easily read that. The book was written by famous author. The author gives you in the new age of literary works. You can actually read this book because you can continue reading your smart phone, or product, so you can read the book throughout anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can available their official web-site along with order it. Have a nice go through.

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