

GOSHUTE ELDER MAUDE MOON TALKS ABOUT GOSHUTE PLANT USE



Goshute Woman

Goshute elder Maude Moon discusses traditional use of plants by her people. Moon's comments were translated into English from her native Goshute language.

I will share a story with [you]. This plant which is used by us when we have stomach ailments, pain. Wherever we have pain, this medicine is used as a poultice and it is rubbed on the skin. This poultice can be used anywhere on the body where there is pain. . .

There is another plant that is known as the h)aaazii'... it is gathered in the fall and the seeds are consumed by the people. When my paternal grandmother gathered this plant, it looked very good. . . The people would eat the seeds of the h)aaazii', like this in the fall. My paternal grandmother would do that to it. She would also gather eapa__i__ in the fall and she would prepare only the seeds of this plant. She would put water into a bowl, place some of the seeds, then grind it, like this. Once the seeds have been grinded, then it looks very good.

There is another plant that we know as waada... but that plant does not grow around here. The waada grows up towards the north, a place known as Bee Canyon. I have seen it growing up there. That plant is very dark, but when it becomes ripe in the fall, it becomes much darker. . . The people harvest that plant, prepare and eat only the seeds.

There is another plant that we call izha'an namba__i__, but this plant is used for medicine and not taken by mouth for consumption. The people do not eat any part of that particular plant. Izha'an namba__i__ is a one of the best medicines that we have. This medicine is used to cure those who are extremely ill. I have never seen anyone drink this medicine. I have seen people with extreme pain, smash this medicine, make it into a poultice and place it on their skin, where they are having pain. I have also seen people clear their throats by poking, along with this medicine.

There is another plant, the watercress, that is another medicine used by the people, I almost forgot to

mention this medicine. This plant has a covering around the... the covering around the plant's root... The root of this plant is the seed and it is hidden by a covering around the root, which looks somewhat like a lampshade, that is where one can find the seed.

This plant grows apart from other plants, it grows along here. That is what I remember from my observations of the preparation of this particular plant. In preparation of this particular plant, my paternal grandmother would break off a piece of the plant and throw it away. My paternal grandmother would tell me that when the plant is stored along with that part of the plant still attached, after it is dried, will change the taste, making it taste bad. But, when one breaks off that particular part of the plant and throws it away, store it, then the taste is very good. . . .

There is another plant that grows along a ravine known as dutsi'ape, its stem is also used by the people and it is very good. The stem of the dutsi'a is very sweet. The dutsi' tastes somewhat like that of the sagebrush. I remember when we would go to the other side of cedar mountain to gather, prepare and eat sagebrush stem. We would go there and gather these plants. As young child, I would go there and gather the plants, sometimes I would roast them and boil them, this is my experience with that plant. I did not realize how important this plant was to my paternal grandmother. Some of the women would travel on horseback to gather the dutsi'a stem and return with a lot. The women would come home with the stem of the dutsi', prepare them and boil them.

I have observed the ways of the old people, with my own eyes. I have experienced collecting the bark from the sagebrush, south of here, walking among the sagebrush. A small sagebrush was another plant that had a good taste... it was delicious. I have also observed how the people used the small sagebrush plant. We would go to the other side of waade'i and collect the small sagebrush and eat the stem. We would roast them and boil them and sometimes we would eat them raw. That is what we used to do when we were children.

We would also collect the (siigoo') and eat them. The sego lily grows where the sagebrush plants have burned, that is where these plants grow. The sego lily plants grow to be larger than normal. We would take our maternal grandmother's and our mother's digging stick and go to that place and dig for the sego lily roots and eat them. We would gather what we had dug up, bring them home and spread them out to dry. (We would do the same with the other plants that we went out and gathered.) We had abundant knowledge of all the traditional foods and medicine.

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