

Wild Bees and Native/Indigenous Food Plant Sources

These nine featured plants can give you an idea of the foods that bees have helped produce for thousands of years

Supporting different types of bee-friendly plants that bloom at different times is a great way to attract and feed local wild bees. Try planting one of these native plants. If you see these plants in the wild, help preserve them. Ask permission before gathering in the wild, leave behind some harvest for others, and never take whole plants.



For thousands of years Pacific Northwest Native/Indigenous People have used special plants for food and medicine, like those featured here. There is a deep bond between the plants and the bees that pollinate them and the people who eat them.

What is a food plant you would like to grow, and why?

● Oregon Grape



Photo by Scott Mitchell

Seasons in bloom: Spring and summer (May into July)
Bee species that visit: Many, such as mason and bumble
Indigenous/Native Plant Parts Food Use: The fruit is actually not a grape, and does not look like one. It is a tart fruit. All three species on the map are edible, and it is the state flower.

● Western Chokecherry



Seasons in bloom: Spring (April into May)
Bee species that visit: Over 60
Indigenous/Native Plant Parts Food Use: The fruit flesh is used in staple recipes like pemmican (the first energy bars), stews, jams, syrups, pies and pudding.

Thimbleberry



Photo by Matt Lavrin

Seasons in bloom: Spring (March into May)
Bee species that visit: Several
Indigenous/Native Plant Parts Food Use: Berries eaten raw, cooked into jam or jelly or made into pemmican or fruit leather. Peeled young shoots are eaten raw or cooked like asparagus.

● Huckleberries and Related Shrubs



Seasons in bloom: Spring and summer (March into August depending on the species)
Bee species that visit: Many, including bumble bees who buzz pollinate
Indigenous/Native Plant Parts Food Use: Oregon has ten related species, all with edible berries. They can be eaten fresh, cooked, dried, smoked or added to stews and soups.

● Salmonberry



Seasons in bloom: Spring (March into May)
Bee species that visit: A wide variety—pollen and nectar in flowers are easy to access.
Indigenous/Native Plant Parts Food Use: Berries eaten raw, right after picking. Young sprouts/seedlings can be eaten raw or cooked like asparagus. Can be cooked into compotes and preserves, or frozen.

● Oregon Crabapple



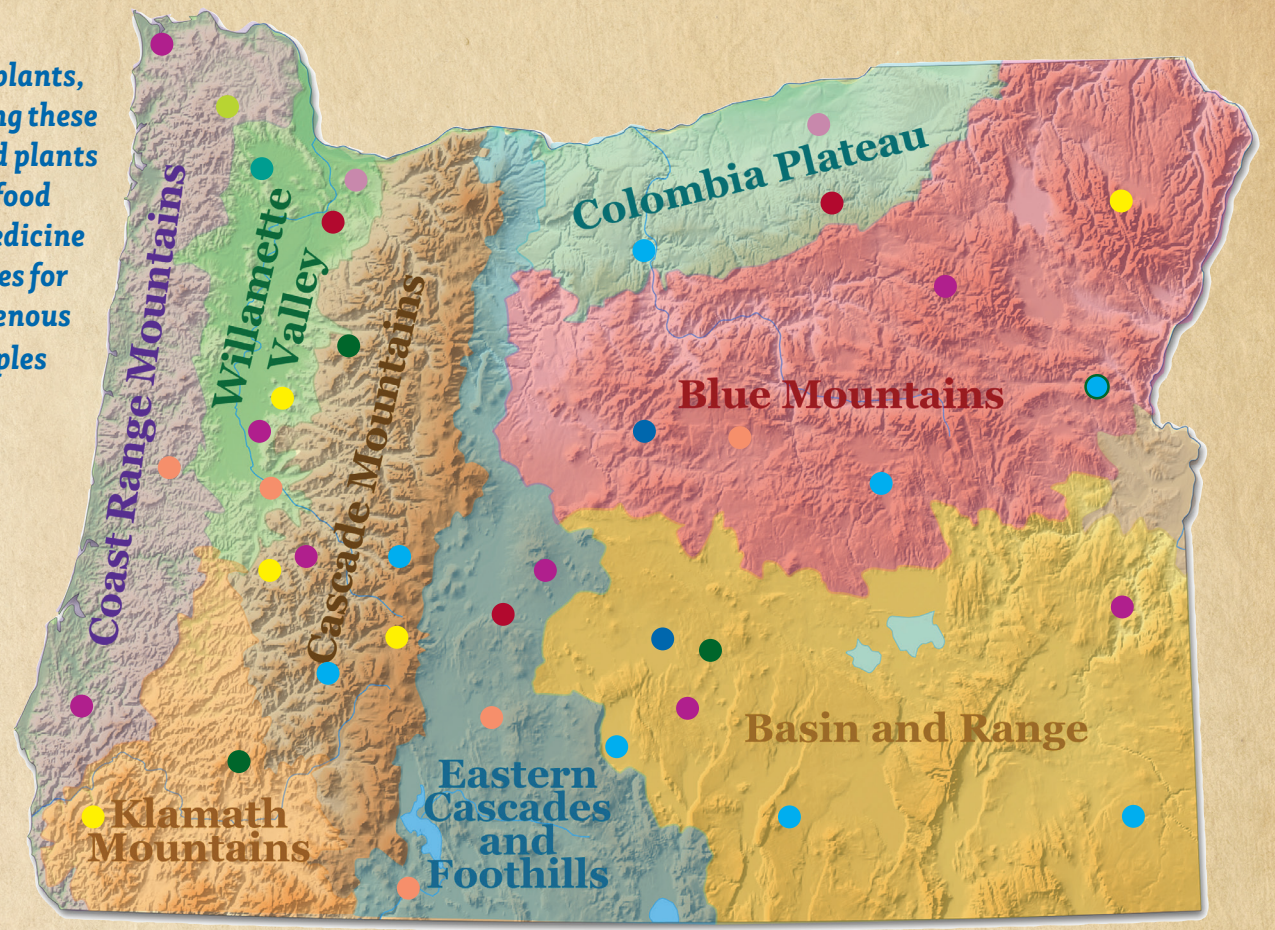
Seasons in bloom: Spring (April into May)
Bee species that visit: A wide variety - flowers are easy to access pollen and nectar from.
Indigenous/Native Plant Parts Food Use: Fruit is eaten raw or cooked, can be turned into jelly or dried like raisins.

Field Notes

Oregon has nine ecoregions. An ecoregion is a land or water area where the ecosystems are alike. For example, they have similar plant species, rocks, soil and weather. If we know an area's ecoregion, we can guess what plants and animals grow and thrive there.

Oregon Ecoregion Map:

Flowering Trees and Shrubs Pollinated by Oregon Bees



Many plants, including these featured plants are food and medicine sources for Indigenous Peoples

● Kinnikinnick



Photo by Scott Mitchell

Seasons in bloom: Spring and summer (March through June)
Bee species that visit: A variety but especially bumble. Their long tongues can get to the nectar in the deep flowers.
Indigenous/Native Plant Parts Food Use: Berries are often cooked, dried, and preserved, like with venison or salmon and dried into cakes.

● Oceanspray



Photo by J. Keiloe

Seasons in bloom: Spring and summer (May into August)
Bee species that visit: Many that forage on it
Indigenous/Native Plant Parts Food Use: Seeds are eaten raw or cooked. Leaves are boiled with meat and other plants.

● Salal



Seasons in bloom: Spring and Summer (April into June)
Bee species that visit: Visited by a variety of bees, including bumble, whose long tongues can easily reach nectar in the deep, bell-shaped flowers.
Indigenous/Native Plant Parts Food Use: Berries are dried into loaves or cakes.