

## Native Plants

Native, or indigenous species of plants are those that occur in the region in which they have evolved prior to European settlement.

Plants evolve over time in response to climate and interactions with other species inhabiting the community. Consequently, native plants acquire certain traits that make them uniquely adapted to local conditions.

Hundreds of these plants were known and used by the First Nations people for food, medicinal and spiritual purposes. Everything from rope and baskets to clothing, canoes and houses were fabricated from the basic commodities provided by the local plants and trees.

### Prickly Pear Cactus

This low-growing succulent can be found growing in the driest of hillside locations among rocks and grasses. It's flowers are peach or yellow in colour and the spiny stem breaks off easily and attaches itself to shoes.



### Antelope Brush



Antelope Brush grasslands are part of a larger grassland community connected to the western United States. The plant itself is listed as rare and endangered as is the community in general. It is the most favoured food source of the Bighorn Sheep and is host to over 100 species of insects. It blooms with fragrant yellow flowers.

### Ponderosa Pine (also Yellow Pine)

Named for its great size, the first written description of a Ponderosa was by Lewis and Clark in 1804. This distinctive, drought tolerant tree sloughs off its lower branches to protect itself from ground fires. It's long needles grow in bunches and it's thick, puzzle-shaped bark has a scent of vanilla and a colour of cinnamon.

Okanagan natives used the reddish pitch as chewing gum. Trees can reach 500 years of age.



### Saskatoon Bush

White flowers  
Blue berries



### Arrowleaf Balsamroot



A member of the Sunflower family, this perennial blankets the hillsides of the South Okanagan each spring with bright yellow flowers. Sheep and deer forage on the new leaves and flowers. Found in the dry grasslands and open forests amid the sages and Ponderosa Pines, they prefer sandy, well-drained soil.

### Yarrow

An aromatic perennial herb, Yarrow grows anywhere from 10 cm. to 100 cm. tall. Popular in herbal medicines, the name 'Yarrow' comes from the Anglo-Saxon 'Gearnæ', which means 'to prepare', as in preparation of healing medications.



### Big Sagebrush



The Big Sage grows to over 2 metres tall and is greyish green in colour. It is very aromatic and the First Nations people used the bush as a fumigant and dried as a smudge. It flowers yellow in late summer and has a distinctive 3-pointed leaf.

## What are Invasive Plants?

Invasive plants are non-native plants or 'weeds' that have been introduced to British Columbia without the insect predators and plant pathogens that help keep them in check in their native habitats. Without their natural enemies, these invaders are able to rapidly outcompete native plants, ornamental species and agricultural crops. The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands has classified some of the most harmful invasive plants as 'noxious weeds'.

### Hound's Tongue



### Knapweeds



### Leafy Spurge



### Orange Hawkweed



### Dalmatian Toadflax



## Discover



## NARAMATA



**Grasslands** While the South Okanagan is the northern limit for many arid grassland species such as Antelope Brush and Big Sagebrush, the grasses themselves continue northward and to higher elevations. Bunch grasses grow in clumps or tufts, rather than forming a sod or mat. These perennial, drought resistant plants are attractive and popular in xeriscape ornamental gardens. They are however susceptible to damage and extirpation from over-grazing.



### Giant Wild Rye



### Idaho Fescue



### Rough Fescue



### Oregon Grape

Yellow flowers  
Blue berries



### Mock Orange



### Bluebunch Wheatgrass

