

Which flowers displayed near the fireplace are edible?

Use caution when eating anything you have collected in the wild. Simply because someone in the past ate a plant and suffered no ill effects does not mean that you are not allergic to it, or that you have not confused a toxic herb or plant with an edible one.

Also remember: all of Palo Alto's Open Space Preserves are nature preserves, not only do we discourage collecting of plants, animals and objects; you will be subject to large fines and citations when caught collecting. Please, look at things in the park; take only pictures and memories, leave behind only footprints.

All that said, I have researched historical uses for all the plants in the interpretive center display.

If a plant is missing a note on edibility, I have not been able to find any information for that particular plant. If you have any doubt about whether or not it is safe to eat anything you find in the wild please DO NOT EAT IT!

Yellow Flowers:

California Poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*): juice from the crushed root has been used as a cure for toothaches and for making hair oil.

Common Fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii*): The seeds and foliage of fiddlenecks are poisonous to livestock, particularly cattle, because they contain alkaloids and high concentrations of nitrates. The sharp hairs of the plants can cause skin irritation in humans. However, the shoots, seeds or leaves of several species were used as food by Native Americans.

Smooth Mule Ears (*Wyethia glabra*): green shoots are ok to eat raw; the seeds can be dried and ground into flour

Yellow Mariposa Lily (*Calocortus luteus*): the bulbs and flowers can be eaten raw

California Buttercup (*Ranunculus californicus*): all members of the buttercup family are mildly poisonous when raw, the seeds can be roasted and ground into meal, and the roots can be boiled then eaten

Ground Iris (*Iris macrosiphon*): the bulbs can be dried and ground then used like flour or made into mash

Hirsute Grindelia (*Grindelia hirsutula*): the leaves can be chewed raw or dried and made into tea

Narrow Leaved Mule Ears (*Wyethia angustifolia*): the green shoots are ok to eat raw; the seeds can be dried and ground into flour

Woodland Layia (*Layia gaillardoides*):

Sticky Monkey Flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*): the leaves taste bitter but can be eaten raw

Western Leatherwood (*Dirca occidentalis*):

Pacific Sanicle (*Sanicula crassicaulis*):

Golden Yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*): the leaves and stem can be dried and made into a tea

Broom Rose (*Helianthemum scoparium*):

Red Flowers:

Indian Paintbrush (*Castilleja grisea*): the flowers are ok to eat raw

Hillside Pea (*Lathyrus vestitus*): a member of the legume family, probably edible but not confirmed

Owl's Clover (*Castilleja exserta*): the plant can be eaten raw but it is hard to digest and may cause intestinal discomfort, cooking it makes it easier to deal with, the plant is a good source of protein, flowers can be dried and made into tea

Red Maids (*Calandrinia ciliata*): the plant is edible raw or cooked

Wild Hollyhock (*Iliamna latibractiata*): edible by livestock and animals such as deer, unknown if it is safe for humans

Tomcat Clover (*Trifolium wildenowii*): the plant can be eaten raw but it is hard to digest and may cause intestinal discomfort, cooking it makes it easier to deal with, the plant is a good source of protein, the flowers can be dried and made into tea

Broad Leaved Filaree (*Erodium botrya*): young plants can be eaten raw or used in soups or stews

Farewell to Spring (*Clarkia amoena*): seeds can be dried and ground to make flour

Venus Thistle (*Cirsium occidentale*): the roots can be eaten raw, boiled or roasted; the peeled stems can be cooked and eaten as greens

Red Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*):

Hillside Gooseberry (*Ribes californicum*): the berries are traditionally used in making pemmican (a long lasting prepared food traditionally made from meat, bone marrow and a wide variety of fruit)

Meadow Rue (*Thalictrum aquilegifolium*):

Giant Trillium (*Trillium chloropetalum*): the greens may be boiled and eaten; the roots contain a fairly strong emetic and should be avoided

Indian Pink (*Spigelia marilandica*): the young plants can be eaten cooked.

Mosquito Bills (*Dodecatheon hendersonii*): the roots and leaves can be roasted or boiled then eaten; they are poisonous if eaten raw

Wood Rose (*Rosa gymnocarpa*): the rose hips and flowers can be eaten raw or cooked and are often boiled to make tea

Pacific Star Flower (*Trientalis latifolia*):

Chaparral Currant (*Ribes malvaceum*): currants can be eaten fresh or can be dried

Indian Warrior (*Pedicularis densiflora*): leaves may be used for tea

Scarlet Pimpernel (*Anagallis avensis*): not safe to eat, may cause dermatitis in some people

White Flowers:

Star Lily (*Toxicoscordion fremontii*): not edible, poisonous. Toxicoscordion translates as "poison garlic"

Clay Mariposa Lily (*Calochortus argillosus*): bulbs can be eaten raw or cooked, they can also be dried and made into flour, the flowers can be eaten raw, and the dried plant can be used to make tea

Fairy Lantern (*Calochortus albus*): The bulbs can be eaten raw, cooked, or dried then ground into flour. The seeds are also edible.

Hairy Fringepod (*Thysanocarpus curvipes*): the seeds can be parched or dried and eaten or ground into flour.

Poison Oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*): the name says it all (toxicodendron means poison tree) – this plant is poisonous, ingestion can cause swelling of the throat followed by suffocation.

Lace Parsnip (*Lomatium dasycarpum*): young green stems can be eaten, tea can be made from the leaves and flowers, the roots can be eaten raw or dried then ground into flour.

Santa Cruz Buck Brush (*Ceanothus cuneatus*): the leaves and flowers can be used to make tea.

Bristle leaf Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos tomentosa*): berries were eaten raw or cooked

Virgin's Bower (*Clematis virginiana*): all parts of the plant are poisonous, may cause skin irritation if touched

Milk Maids (*Cardamine californica*): the roots can be eaten raw.

Mission Bells (*Fritillaria sp.*): the bulbs of native species can be eaten raw or cooked; European species (escapes from gardens) may have high enough levels of alkaloids to slow down the heart.

Buckeye (*Aesculus californica*): All Parts Deadly the Indians used crushed seeds and leaves to stupefy fish, Native Americans cooked seeds cut or ground seeds then leached them for 2-5 days and ate no taste to toxicity, one bite you die

Wild Cucumber (*Marah fabaceus*): non-edible or poisonous, the seeds are especially toxic

Yerba Buena (*Clinopodium douglasii*): the leaves can be boiled and used for tea

Woodland Star (*Lithophragma glabrum*):

Chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*):

California Saxifrage (*Saxifraga californica*): young leaves are edible

Cow Parsnip (*Heracleum maximum*): the roots can be cooked; young stems can be eaten raw but should be cooked, the leaves can be dried then burned and the ashes used as a salt substitute. Note: caution should be used with this plant, Poison Hemlock may be confused with it, and the plant also has phototoxic sap and can cause allergic dermatitis after contaminated skin is exposed to sunlight.

Holly Leafed Cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*): Fruit ok raw, seeds cracked roasted and leached to remove cyanide (bitterness)

Miner's Lettuce (*Claytonia perfoliata*): very high in vitamin C, the young leaves can be eaten raw in salads

Slim False Solomon's Seal (*Smilacina stellata*): rootstocks eaten if soaked overnight in lye then boiled to remove lye, berries edible but a laxative

Purple Flowers:

Ithuriel's Spear (*Triteleia laxa*): the corm is edible, unknown if cooked or raw

Blue Dicks (*Dichelostemma capitatum*): the bulbs may be eaten raw or roasted.

Persian Speedwell (*Veronica persica*): plant is high in vitamin C, the leaves and stems may be eaten raw or cooked.

Inland Blue Larkspur (*Delphinium patens*):

Vinegar Weed (*Trichostema lanceolatum*): probably inedible or poisonous, Native Americans used the crushed leaves to stun fish

Blue Eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*): leaves and flowers can be used to make tea.

Sky Lupine (*Lupinus nanus*): the leaves and flowers are edible; caution should be used because in large quantities toxic amounts of alkaloids may be consumed.

Chia (*Salvia hispanica*): the seeds can be roasted and ground into meal then boiled into mush.

Blue Witch (*Solanum umbelliferum*): caution should be used when consuming all members of this family, there is an alkaloid called solanine present in the roots and fruit; too much of either is almost certainly toxic.

Purple Sanicle (*Sanicula bipinnatifida*):

Coyote Mint (*Monardella villosa*): the leaves, flowers and stem may be used to make tea.

Danny's Skullcap (*Scutellaria tuberosa*):

Hounds Tongue (*Cynoglossum creticum*):

California Coastal Larkspur (*Delphinium decorum*): poisonous, contains high levels of alkaloids in all parts of the plant

Jim Brush (*Ceanothus oliganthus*): the leaves and flowers can be used to make tea.