

Farmers & Gatherers Species ID Hike

Here is a selection of some of the most useful plants and animals native to Fort Ross. Use this sheet to identify and mark off which ones you find on your Fox Walks. Use your nature journal to record notes and drawings of what you find.

POISON OAK - DO NOT TOUCH - Oils from leaves & stems cause itchy rash



Caution - The shiny leaves of this shrub grow in groups of three on smooth stems. They are green until fall when they turn various shades of red and orange. Sometimes it grows as a vine in the trees. (Note: The Kashia are reportedly immune to poison oak. Some people don't get a rash, but oils can spread from one person to another. Even if you don't have a bad reaction, it's best to avoid contact with poison oak, so you don't spread it to someone else.)

STINGING NETTLE - DO NOT TOUCH - Leaves & stems cause stinging pain



Caution - This plant has hollow, sharp stinging hairs on the leaves and stems. When contacted by humans or other animals these hairs can inject histamine and other chemicals that produce a stinging sensation. (Note: This is an edible, medicinal plant but you must harvest it wearing good gloves to harvest it and process it before consuming to avoid stinging pain!)

Trees

Bay Laurel -



Coast Redwood



Douglas Fir



Tan Oak



Plants & Flowers

Angelica - Often confused with Cow Parsnip & Yarrow



Common Yarrow - Often confused with Angelica & Cow Parsnip



Cow Parsnip - often confused with Angelica & Yarrow



Western Bracken Fern



Berries

California Huckleberry



Salal Berry



Thimbleberry



Wild or Woodland Strawberry



Marine (Ocean) Plants & Animals

Seaweed - Bull Kelp



Abalone - Red Abalone



Limpet - Whitecap Limpet



Mussels - California Mussels



Gathering - Helpful Information Key - Species listed in **English**, Kashia, Alaskan Native languages* & *Scientific name* as available

*Alaskan Native names are from the Alutiiq Museum web archive but this group is comprised of 8 different peoples

Trees

Bay Laurel - behem, *Umbellularia californica*

Habitat: Coastal forests, creeksides, foothills, canyons

ID: Evergreen, 6-80 ft tall, long shiny oblong leaves, cream to yellow flowers, round green berries that turn to brown or purple, fragrant peppery aroma hence its other name- the pepperwood or headache tree

Uses: The strong smell of the leaves repels insects and rodents; bay was used in teas and poultices for headaches, toothaches, sores, sore throats, and cramps. Bay nuts were roasted and eaten by various tribes

Coast Redwood - kasile / kasin, *Sequoia sempervirens*

Habitat: Coastal forests, within 30 miles of the coast, must have fog

ID: The tallest trees in the world, reddish brown fibrous bark, flat needled dark green leaves, small round cones

Uses: Building material, the bark was used for clothing, Kashia used redwood leaves in a poultice for earaches and sap for an energizing drink

Douglas Fir - kauwam, *Pseudotsuga menziesii*

Habitat: Coastal forests and mountain ranges

ID: 2nd tallest trees, needle-like leaves, reddish cone, rough gray brown bark

Uses: Kashia used this tree for firewood, the pitch could also be used as glue

Tan Oak - tish kale, *Lithocarpus densiflorus*

Habitat: Forests in the coastal ranges

ID: Grey to tan brown smooth bark with some fissures, thick serrated leaves, new leaves have scrubby orange hairs on both sides, produces acorns

Uses: The tanoak acorn is a staple of the Kashia diet, it is ground into fine flour

Plants

Angelica - tulebachuwa, Uriisaq, *Angelica tomentosa*

Habitat: Grows in wooded area of coastal mountain ranges

ID: whitish or yellow flowers in ball shaped clusters springing from rays on central stalk, lace-like, grows 3-6' ft tall with long narrow oval leaves, flowers in summer

Uses: Alaska Natives used Angelica in steam baths to clear sinuses, the inner stems were also used to heal skin ailments and swelling. Kashia had many medicinal uses for the plant - in tea for cramps and colds; the root was boiled or chewed for sore throats; Kashia also ate the young green shoots

Common Yarrow - Qangananguaq, *Achillea millefolium*

Habitat: Found in mildly disturbed soils, grasslands and open forests

ID: Grows 1-3 ft tall (shorter than Angelica) white flowers, closely clustered, feathered lace like leaves growing low to ground, flowers May to June

Uses: Kashia mashed the leaves and used this as a salve for sores. Alaska Natives used Northern Yarrow as medicine for many issues- as a poultice for aches and sores, as a tea for kidney and heart problems, internal hemorrhaging and cramps or dropped in the eyes and ears to treat ailments

Cow Parsnip - shoshokale or butakashosho kale, Ugsuuteq (N); Ugyuuteq (S) (locally Putchki), *Heracleum maximum*

Habitat: large range, open meadows and wooded areas, prefers damp soil

ID: Flowers in summer, white flower clusters, forming large flowerhead with large broad leaves maple-like shape in shape, 3-8' ft tall

Uses: Use caution as Cow Parsnip stems can cause a rash! Roots were pounded and used as a poultice for swelling and rheumatism by the Kashia. Alaska Natives ate the young inner stems raw or pickled, the leaves were used to wrap and flavor fish and they used the hollow stems as pea shooters

Western Bracken Fern - *Pteridium aquilinum*

Habitat: Meadows, woodlands and slopes, sun or shade

ID: 3-6'ft tall, medium green, large segmented fronds, feather shaped leaves

Uses: Kashia used juice from new fronds as deodorant, roots were split and used in basket weaving

Berries

Huckleberry - sununu, *Vaccinium ovatum*

Habitat: Forest edges or clearings along coasts, on wet meadows and slopes

ID: This is an evergreen shrub, new growth in fall is red, white blossoms form in winter and berries ripen by spring, berries can be red, black or blue, reddish bark with narrow branches

Uses: Edible berries, eaten raw or sun dried for winter stores

Salal Berry - koishosho, *Gaultheria shallon*

Habitat: Coastal, open sunny areas and in shady coniferous forests

ID: Evergreen shrub with round leathery leaves, urn-shaped white flowers, forms thickets

Uses:

Thimbleberry - hemkolo kale, *Rubus parviflorus*

Habitat: Wet woodlands, coastal and inland mountains

ID: Similar to raspberries, no thorns, 4-8' ft tall, soft, fuzzy broad leaves, five-petal white flower in spring and soft red berries

Uses: Edible berries, leaves used to wrap meat for baking

Wild Strawberry - kamsudu, *Fragaria vesca / californica*

Habitat: Woodlands along the coast or mountain ranges

ID: Small white 5-petal flowers, serrated green leaves, small bright red berries

Uses: Edible berry, Kashia celebrated the plant with a special dance each year during the Strawberry Festival, berries could be dried and stored through winter

Marine Plants & Animals

Bull Kelp - chanama, Nasquluq, *Nereocystis luetkeana*

Habitat: found in bays and near rocky shores, forms forests which provide shelter for otters

ID: large central stalk with a bulb-shaped gas bag, thinner wavy tendrils

Uses: Kashia Pomo ate dried or cooked bull kelp, used it to soothe sore throats and processed it into cordage for fishing lines. Alaska Natives had many uses for bull kelp- a food source both raw and pickled, as fishing line, as well as ropes and nets; and as fertilizer

Limpets - tsupih, sawak'iitaq, *Acmaea mitra*

Habitat: Intertidal zone, on rocks from Aleutian Islands to Baja California

ID: Cone shaped, about 1" in tall, white but often covered in pink algae

Uses: A Kashia food source, these were boiled in baskets and eaten whole

Mussels - no'koh or noko, qapilaat, *Mytilus californianus*

Habitat: Form large beds on rocks near shore, mainly intertidal in Aleutian Islands, Alaska & California

ID: About 5 in long, blue-black in color with white valves, ridged shell

Uses: Collected and eaten from October to May, could be dried for a week in the sun for preservation

Red Abalone - dukash, *Haliotis rufescens*

Habitat: Rocky areas with kelp, deeper than tidal zones (you aren't likely to see living abalone but may find their distinctive shells on the beach)

ID: Reddish pink encrusted shell, up to 11" in long, black mantle and tentacles with a yellowish foot, silver iridescent shell interior

Uses: Meat was first dried and then cooked in hot coals