

Tikahtnu Plants Symposium



2020



August 5, 2020

Dear friends and colleagues,

It is my privilege and pleasure to welcome you to the Tikahtnu Plants Symposium.

During the next two days, traditional knowledge from plant experts will be shared. Elders and culture bearers will teach proper harvesting practices, tree classification, and traditional uses of tree parts from Alaska.

Thank you for joining us to learn about traditional cultures and healthy ways of living. We are honored to host this event, and we strive to make you feel at home and provide opportunities to exchange ideas and learn about Alaska — birch, cottonwood, and spruce.

We hope you find this year's symposium rewarding and inspiring.

Sincerely,

SOUTHCENTRAL FOUNDATION

April Kyle
Interim CEO

Tikahtnu Plants

Symposium Agenda

SCF Tribal Drum | 4085 Tudor Centre Drive, Anchorage, AK 99504

Wednesday, August 5

- 9:00 **Blessing:** Buz Daney
- 9:15 **Panel discussion:** Sustainable harvesting practices - David Harrison, Jacqueline Schaeffer, Dr. Gary Ferguson, Jon Ross
- 10:30 **Presentation:** Spruce Tip Harvest and Use - Dr. Allison Kelliher
- 11:00 **Plant walk around University Lake**
- Noon **Lunch**
- 1:00 **Workshop:** Spruce Pitch Lip Balm - Dr. Allison Kelliher
- 2:00 **Break**
- 2:30 **Presentation:** Chaga - Jon Ross
- 3:00 **Presentation:** Spruce Life Cycle - Patrick Ryan
- 4:00 **Adjourn**

Thursday, August 6

- 9:00 **Blessing**
- 9:15 **Reflection from yesterday**
- 9:30 **Discussion:** Birch and Cottonwood - Dr. Ferguson and Jackie Schaeffer
- 10:30 **Presentation:** Birch with Food - Amy Foote
- 11:00 **Plant walk and draw a plant**
- Noon **Lunch**
- 1:00 **Workshop:** Cottonwood Cream - Jackie Schaeffer
- 2:00 **Break**
- 2:15 **Workshop:** Birch Syrup Breakfast Bar - Amy Foote
- 3:15 **Break**
- 3:30 **Close out/surveys**
- 4:00 **Adjourn**

Welcome to the Tikahtnu Plants Symposium

Approved Provider Statements:

Southcentral Foundation works in partnership with the Northern Arizona Health Education Center to provide continuing education units to participants in a wide variety of educational activities.

Contact Hours:

SCF has requested general credit CEUs.

Conflict of Interest Disclosures:

Presenters and conference planners for this activity do not have any relevant relationships or conflict of interests to disclose.

Requirements for Successful Completion:

CEUs are determined by hours logged in the webinar. Please make sure you have completed the course evaluation form.

Speakers



David Harrison

David Harrison, SCF Tribal relations specialist, is from Nay'dini'aa Na and domiciles in his indigenous homeland. At the age of 19, David began working toward building a healthy community to help gain sovereignty over indigenous land, water, and air. He began studying traditional medicine in 1992 after traveling 50 miles into the Talkeetna Mountains on a spiritual journey. During this journey, David learned he was to study the medicine, so he began looking and learning about traditional medicines from many indigenous spiritual leaders across the western hemisphere. When David was 47, he earned a bachelor's degree in federal Indian law and minored in social services to help understand Western thought processes and to be able to explain the issues from a Tribal perspective.



Patrick Ryan

Patrick Ryan is the education specialist for the Alaska Botanical Garden. He became a junior master gardener specialist at Texas A&M in 2003 and started the Junior Master Gardener program at the Alaska Botanical Garden in 2004. Pat estimates he has taught over 400 children at the garden. He was a first grade teacher for 21 years in Anchorage and always included plants as science in the classroom. He has been an Alaska master gardener since 1984. He is a board member for Alaska Agriculture in the Classroom. Pat is a member of the Community Forestry Council and the Anchorage Bear Committee Education Group. He has been gardening for over 50 years and has always been interested in nature. Pat spent his youth climbing trees and doing science experiments outdoors. He views gardening as a big science experiment where you can learn as much from failures as successes. Pat believes anyone who plants a seed is connected to a miracle. He thinks a person should be amazed to see a tree, a flower, or food coming from seeds, soil, sun, and water.



Jacqueline Qataliña Schaeffer

Jacqueline Qataliña Schaeffer is Iñupiaq from Kotzebue, Alaska. She studied interior design and sustainable building in London and the U.S. Jacqueline is currently a senior project manager for the Division of Environmental Health and Engineering at the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium. She has worked in comprehensive planning, energy, housing, and water/sanitation in rural communities across Alaska, utilizing a holistic approach to project development. Her passion has led her to infuse traditional Inuit knowledge into strategic planning to change the top down approach into a locally-driven, grassroots approach. This innovative approach allows local leadership to be empowered to own and lead the discussions and decision making. Her background in design and sustainable building science allows a perspective that places the end user at the center of change. Jacqueline believes her ancestors' traditional knowledge will help bridge gaps in our multi-cultural lifestyles and create balance in how we adapt to our rapidly changing climate. Her current work includes innovation sanitation solutions for unserved communities, Tribal resiliency adaptation planning, and community engagement for relocation.

Jacqueline also works with various indigenous groups to revitalize the return of traditional practices, including Inupiaq language, traditional healing treatments, medicinal plants, harvesting practices, storytelling, skin sewing skillsets, and dancing. Her commitment to serving the indigenous people of Alaska allows her to utilize a variety of skills and talents.



Allison Kelliher, MD

Dr. Allison Kelliher is Koyukon Athabaskan and was raised close to the land in Nome, Alaska. She graduated from University of Alaska Fairbanks in 2001 with a bachelor of science in chemistry. During those years, Dr. Kelliher combined pre-medicine and psychology coursework with Alaska Native Studies and worked for the Institute of Arctic Biology in Fairbanks and the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. Dr. Kelliher obtained her medical degree in 2005 at the University of Washington School of Medicine, focusing on rural, underserved, and Alaska Native and American Indian populations. Upon graduation she worked for Norton Sound Health Corporation in Nome on the Genetics of Coronary Artery Disease in Alaska Natives study. Dr. Kelliher completed primary care training at the Alaska Family Medicine Residency in 2009, later achieving board certification in both family and integrative medicine. As a family physician, she has worked in Southern Arizona on the Tohono O'odham reservation and for the Pascua Yaqui Nation, as well as for the Alaska Native Primary Care Center since 2012. She worked for Southcentral Foundation as a Tribal doctor and now works in private practice. She enjoys spending time with family and traveling and is passionate about the value of traditional foods.



Gary L. Ferguson II, BS, ND

Dr. Gary Ferguson is a licensed naturopathic doctor and healthy communities consultant living in Anchorage, Alaska. For the past 17 years, Dr. Ferguson has worked across Alaska to address the social, economic, cultural, and environmental factors that contribute to the health, well-being of Alaskans. He is a facilitator, motivational speaker, health coach, and technical consultant to communities and agencies around how to more deeply address contributing factors to health, well-being. He is Aleut/Unangan, originally from the Shumagin Islands community of Sand Point, Alaska. Dr. Ferguson has a deep passion for reclaiming the indigenous medicines of the First People of Alaska, and is a regular speaker and teacher in promoting Alaskan plants as food and medicine. He is the co-creator of the Store Outside Your Door Initiative. His past positions include providing clinical services to his home region at Eastern Aleutian Tribes, serving at the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium as senior director of Community Health Services and at the Rural Alaska Community Action Program as chief executive officer.



Amy Foote

Over 25 years of honing her culinary skills at Alaskan bush lodges, hotels, boutique restaurants and now health care. Chef Amy has spent the past six years building the traditional native foods program at the Alaska Native Medical Center. Chef Amy and her team provide nearly 3000 meals per day to patients, Elders, and visitors to the campus. Regularly attending cultural gatherings and spending time with Alaska Native Elders, her passion for culture and traditional methods is key to the success of the program.

While achieving the long-time goal of doubling the traditional meals offerings for patients she is also innovative in her use of Alaskan ingredients creating such items as chagamisu, fiddlehead fern pizza or wild blueberry and beach asparagus salad.

On a personal note Chef Amy has a passion for her environment, foraging and respectfully harvesting, utilizing traditional methods, preparation, and preservation. "These methods and traditions must be honored and taught from generation to generation." Chef Amy teaches these traditions to her children. "We make our own everything from moose roast to jerkies, jams, jellies, pickles, tea's, lotions, and salves. All from what surrounds us. Not only are we nourished by the ingredients we are fulfilled by the time in nature harvesting them."



Jon Ross

Jon Ross is the son of Linda Ross (Mann) who is Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina from Kahtnu Qayeh (Kenai, Alaska), and Alan Ross who is Scottish Gasht'ana from Vancouver Island, British Columbia. He was raised in Kenai, Prince George, BC, and Kodiak. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in psychology and counseling from Toccoa Falls College in Georgia, he returned to Alaska and started work in Anchorage with Southcentral Foundation. After nine years at SCF, and earning a Master's Degree in Business Administration at the University of Alaska Anchorage, he left his job as vice of community services to be the President and CEO of the Alaska Native Heritage Center where he worked for eight years. He is currently a consultant for his own small business, Tsiltan Management Group, and he works for SCF as an improvement advisor for the Native Men's Wellness Program. He is married to Leannandra Bergeron who is Eagle Kogwantan Box House Clan from Ketchikan and Klawok, Alaska. Jon and Leannandra have four daughters, Alexandria, Jessica, Lily, and Lauren; they live in Peter's Creek and Kasilof, Alaska. Jon has been studying his Dena'ina language and culture since the mid 90s. He has been involved in the Tribal leadership with his Tribe from Kenai for the past 20 years. He has a passion for Dena'ina, the local people of Tikahtnu (Cook Inlet), and actively works to promote the history, culture, and language of Dena'ina.



Angela Michaud, DC, CSCS

Angela Michaud the senior clinical director of the Traditional Healing Clinic and senior director for Executive and Tribal Services for Southcentral Foundation, an Alaska Native customer-owned health care system. Prior to joining SCF, she earned her bachelor of science degree with an emphasis on exercise sports science from Oregon State University, in Corvallis, Oregon and received her doctor of chiropractic degree from Palmer College of Chiropractic in Davenport, Iowa. She is also a certified sports and conditioning specialist.

As the Traditional Healing senior clinical director, she has worked with her team to develop a Tribal Doctor Training Program, that is now certified through Ilisagvik College, to help raise up our next generation of traditional healers.

Angela resides in Anchorage, Alaska, with her husband and their three children. She focuses on teaching her children about their Tlingit culture, subsistence hunting and fishing, health and wellness. She is also an owner and property manager of multiple real estate properties and helps with the management of her husband's chiropractic clinic.

The Giving Trees

Spruce, Cottonwood, and Birch

Wisdom, knowledge, and care should be used when gathering plants. Alaska Native healers and others that gather plants for healing often demonstrate this through their careful sharing of plant knowledge.

All plants have strength about them and all people respond to each plant differently. Not all plants are good for everybody. Use caution when first using a plant in any form for the first time. Some plants should be taken only in moderate doses as they can become harmful.

Please be aware that different parts of the plant are strong at different times of the year. Know your intended use of the plant, and when it is most appropriate to harvest that plant.

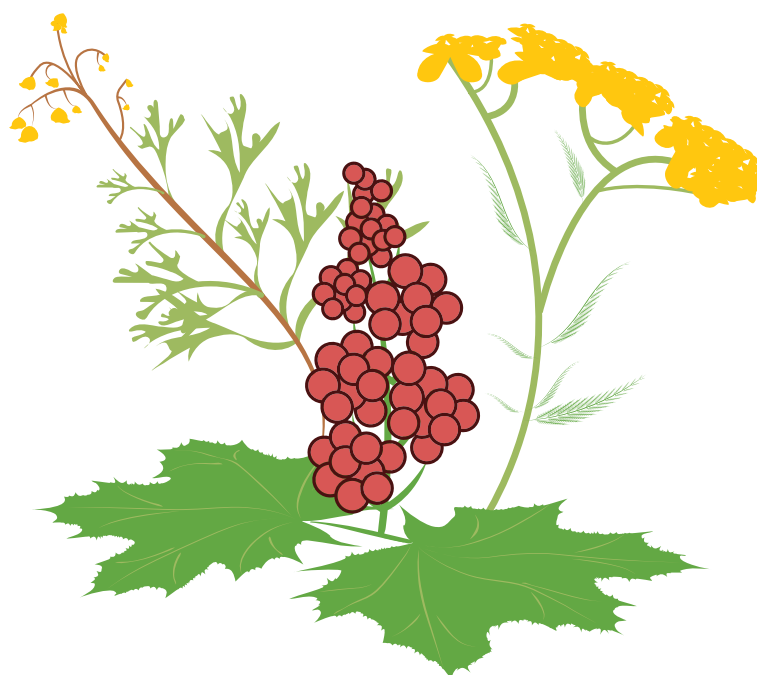
Dosing:

The appropriate dose of any plant product depends on several factors such as the user's age, health, and several other conditions. At this time there is not enough scientific information to determine an appropriate range of doses. Keep in mind that natural products are not always necessarily safe and dosages can be important. Be sure to follow relevant directions on product labels and consult your pharmacist or physician or other health care professional before using.

The information shared is not comprehensive at this conference. Always gather enough information to be sure any plant you are working with is safe to consume or even touch.

Resources:

- Medicinal Flora of the Alaska Natives by Ann Garibaldi Discovering Wild Plant by Janice J. Schofield
- The Boreal Herbal by Beverley Gray
- Tanaina Plantlore Dena'ina K'et'una by Priscilla N. Russell Wilderness Medicines by Eleanor G. Viereck
- WebMD.com
- USDA.gov





Spruce

Other Names:

ts'iivvii in Gwitchin. Sitka spruces other names include: Tideland, yellow, wester, silver, and coast spruce. Black spruce's other names include bog, and swamp spruce. Other names for white spruce include western white, Canadian, and Alberta spruce.

Family, Genus and Species:

Pinaceae/ *Picea sitchensis* (Sitka spruce), *Picea mariana* (black spruce), and *Picea glauca* (white spruce)

Physical Description:

White spruce most commonly lives in the interior, Sitka spruce grows coastally, and black spruce grows more often in the north in areas covered in permafrost. The different varieties of spruce have slightly differing characteristics. Overall, the tree can grow up to 70-100 feet in the best conditions. The leaves or pine needles grow on all sides of the twig and when mature are firm and sharp at the end. The tree grows pinecones and the different species of spruce have varying cones.

Indications of Use:

Spruce is used amongst many cultures all over Alaska. Many people boil the branches in water to release a vapor into the air during cold and flu season. It is also used for congestion. Spruce is high in vitamin C and potassium. The spruce pitch has healing properties; it is used for cuts and scrapes. When used for cuts or scrapes it also helps as a barrier. It is an antifungal and is also used to relieve pain. Spruce tips have been known to act as an analgesic, antifungal, antimicrobial, antiseptic, and disinfectant. They are high in vitamin C, contain carotenoids, and are rich in minerals such as potassium and magnesium. Traditionally Alaska Native and American Indians have used the spruce needles to treat sore throat and coughs.

Spruce tips contain chlorophyll has been researched and shown to have wound healing properties, cancer fighting properties, deodorant properties, antiaging, and acne treatment properties. Boiling the needles to create a tea can purify blood and treat common colds. Use the tea as a wash to treat rashes or hives.

Contraindications:

Spruce should not be used during pregnancy. Pure spruce oil can irritate the skin and should be used only when mixed with other oils. Spruce is sharp, be careful when picking not to poke yourself.

Traditional Knowledge/Stories:

Spruce has many traditional uses besides medicines. The long, strait, dried poles are used to hang and dry fish during summer and fall subsistence. My poppa said he remembers spruce being used for fish traps. When we were younger, he would gather the spruce sap for us to chew on like gum. My children also enjoy spruce sap gum and like to suck on the fresh spruce tips in the spring. I have used fresh spruce tips for jelly and baking. The branches also make a great quick shelter when needed. The late Elder, Peter John, told me to look along a bank where the roots are exposed, find the root of a dead spruce, and use the widest part to carve ipoon (large wooden soup spoon). One Tribal doctor trainee recalled her poppa was suffering from a bad cough, and an Elder brought him tea made of spruce tips to help ease his cough. People have used the pitch or gum to protect and heal cuts and scratches it's possible that it does not have a medical property, but helps keep the area clean and dry and prevents infection.

References:

- Viereck, E., (1987). **ALASKA'S WILDERNESS MEDICINES** *Healthful Plants of the Far North*. Alaska Northwest Books. Seattle. WA. Retrieved from <http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/curriculum/Books/Viereck/index.html>
- Liivlaid, N. (May 2014). **5 Reasons to Eat Spruce Tips & 8 Ways to Use Them**. Nutriplanet Live Healthy. <https://www.nutriplanet.org/2014/05/5-reasons-to-eat-spruce-tips-8-ways-to-use-them/>
- **Discovering Wild Plants**, By Janice J. Schofield, P.72
- **Medicinal Flora of the Alaska Natives**, By Ann Garibaldi, P. 30-31
- **The Boreal Herbal**, By Beverly Gray, P.261-26



Cottonwood

Other Names

Balsam poplar, balm of Gilead, trembling aspen, quaking aspen, and American aspen

Genus and Species

Populus balsamifera, *P. trichocarpa*, *P. deltoids*, *P. fremontii*, *P. nigra*

Family

Salicaceae

Physical Description

Deciduous tree, fast growing up to 150-200 feet tall, grey bark furrowed with age, buds are large, sticky, and full of fragrance. Found near river valleys, flood plains, and open forests.

Indications of Use

Parts to use from cottonwood are leaves, buds, catkins (dangling flower), and inner bark. Plant properties include being analgesic, anti-coagulant, anti-rheumatic, antiseptic, astringent, bitter, diuretic, tonic, (mild) sedative, anti-microbial, anti-inflammatory, anti-pyretic, expectorant, anti-oxidant, relieve sores and strained muscles, bruises, scrapes, cuts, rashes, bug bites, infections, respiration, and digestion. Salicin and populin are active components in cottonwood products. It can also be used for a facial steam or foot bath.

Catkins are high in vitamin C, leaves are high in tannins, and inner bark has small amount of protein, fat, and carbohydrate. It can be prepared as an infused oil or salve, tincture, poultice, or tea.

Contraindications

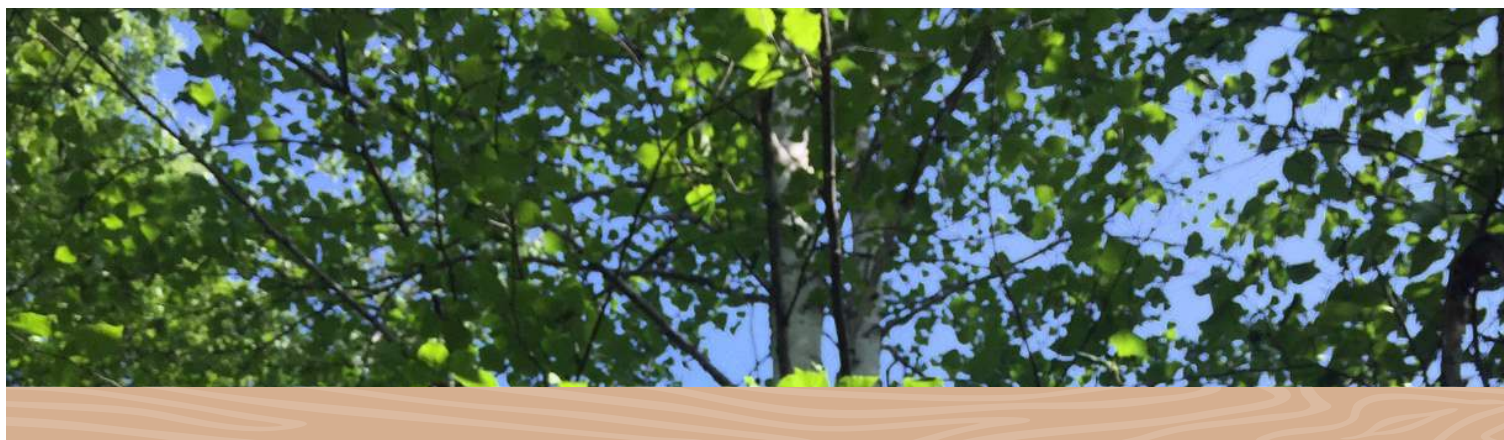
High allergen to people allergic to trees. If allergic to bees or aspirin, avoid cottonwood.

Traditional Knowledge/Stories

Picking the cottonwood buds, my fingers were so sticky it made a second layer of skin to my fingers. I had to rub my fingers together to try to get the tar like substance off my fingers. The next time we picked cottonwood buds, we used gloves. Bark is traditionally used like bread during famine and could be dipped into grease.

References

- The Boreal Herbal, By Beverly Gray pg 256-258
- Discovering Wild Plants by Janice Schofield pg 67-70



Birch

Other Names:

Lady birch, lady of the forest, paper birch, and Kenai birch

Genus and Species:

Betula papyrifera

Indications of Use:

Birch leaves can be used to make a comforting tea. It is used for gout, rheumatism, edema, and for dissolving kidney stones. Used as diuretic with leaves to make a juice. Decoction of leaves for mouthwash. The young shoots and leaves can be used as a laxative. Birch bark decoction used for bathing skin eruptions. Inner bark is astringent and bitter.

Birch sap for spring tonic, fresh birch sap for boils and sores. Old way to get sap was to peel bark and scrape or suck sap off the wood. Can also be used to make sweet syrup from the sap.

Birch leaves are high in vitamin C. Used for urinary tract infections of urethra, ureters, kidney, and bladder. Used to treat arthritis, achy joints (rheumatism), hair loss, and skin rashes. Also used as spring cure for purifying the blood. Used for skin growths from sun damage also called actinic keratosis.

Oil extracted from birch buds or bark can be used to treat gout, acne, and rheumatism. Bark and twigs have similar qualities of wintergreen. Has been used to expel worms. Tea using twigs and bark aids in clearing mouth of canker sores. Birch oil has been applied to alleviate sore muscles or joint pain. Birch bark and buds have been used as antibacterial, antiviral, and cell regeneration qualities. Inner bark has been used for intermittent fever and cardiac edema.

Birch is used as a pain reliever due to being high in salicylate. Leaves and branches can be used to treat sprains, strained muscles, and headaches. Steaming leaves can clear congestion. In early spring, buds can be infused with oil to create a topical for inflamed skin.

Contraindications:

Birch may cause allergic reaction in people sensitive to celery-carrot-mugwort spice syndrome, which is allergic reaction to the three. It can cause an allergic reaction in people sensitive to apples, hazelnuts, soybeans, and peanuts. It is not recommended for those with high blood pressure due to possible increase in sodium from leaves. Not recommended to use birch leaves in conjunction with water pills, as both serve as a diuretic. Salicylic acid content from decoctions can cause problems in people hypersensitive to aspirin.

Resources:

- <https://nearsay.com/c/508035/375470/5-native-trees-anchorage-residents-should-use-in-landscaping>
- <https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=BEPa>
- <http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/curriculum/Books/Viereck/viereckbirch.html>
- <https://www.webmd.com/vitamins/ai/ingredientmono-352/birch>
- https://www.herballegacy.com/Birch_Medicinal.html
- <https://nahanni.com/blog/the-beauty-of-birch-a-tree-with-multiple-and-medicinal-uses/>
- **Alaska's Wild Plants: A Guide to Alaska's Edible Harvest (book)**



Fold and tear or cut to take home!



Spruce Pitch Lip Balm

Ingredients

- Spruce pitch infused oil (1/4 cup spruce pitch, 3/4 cup extra virgin olive oil)
- 2 tablespoons beeswax

Infused Oil Directions:

1. In a glass jar, place 1/4 cup of spruce pitch into oil and let set for 6-8 weeks.
2. Gently shake every day.
3. When infusion is complete, strain through cheesecloth. The oil is now infused with the plant properties and ready to use in the lip balm.

Lip Balm Directions:

1. Measure out infused oil.
2. Melt beeswax in the top of a double boiler.
3. Slowly add the infused oil, stirring continuously until well mixed.
4. When the oil and beeswax are well blended, remove from the stove and place on towel to dry the bottom.
5. Immediately, use a dropper to add mixture to lip balm tubes. Mixture sets up quickly, add before it thickens. If mixture does become too thick, reheat.
6. Allow to cool completely before placing the lid on tubes.
7. Label tubes with name, date, and ingredients.



Cottonwood Bud Cream

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cup infused cottonwood bud oil (1/2 cup buds to 1 cup extra virgin olive oil)
- 1 1/2 teaspoon of vitamin E oil
- 3 tablespoons of beeswax
- 1/4 cup + 4 tablespoons distilled water

Directions:

1. In double boiler, heat beeswax until melted. Add infused oil.
2. Stir slowly on low heat, whisk gently until combined. Remove from heat and wipe bottom of boiler dry.
3. Add vitamin E oil. Place in stand mixer.
4. Cool mixture to room temperature.
5. Turn stand mixer to low speed and slowly pour water into the mixture. Increase speed. Within minutes mixture will begin to cream.
6. Turn off stand mixer, and use spatula to scrape clean sides of mixing bowl.
7. Mix again until fully combined. Texture should be smooth and slightly runny.
8. Place cream in dry, sterilized jars. When completely cooled, secure lids and label jars.



Fold and tear or cut to take home!



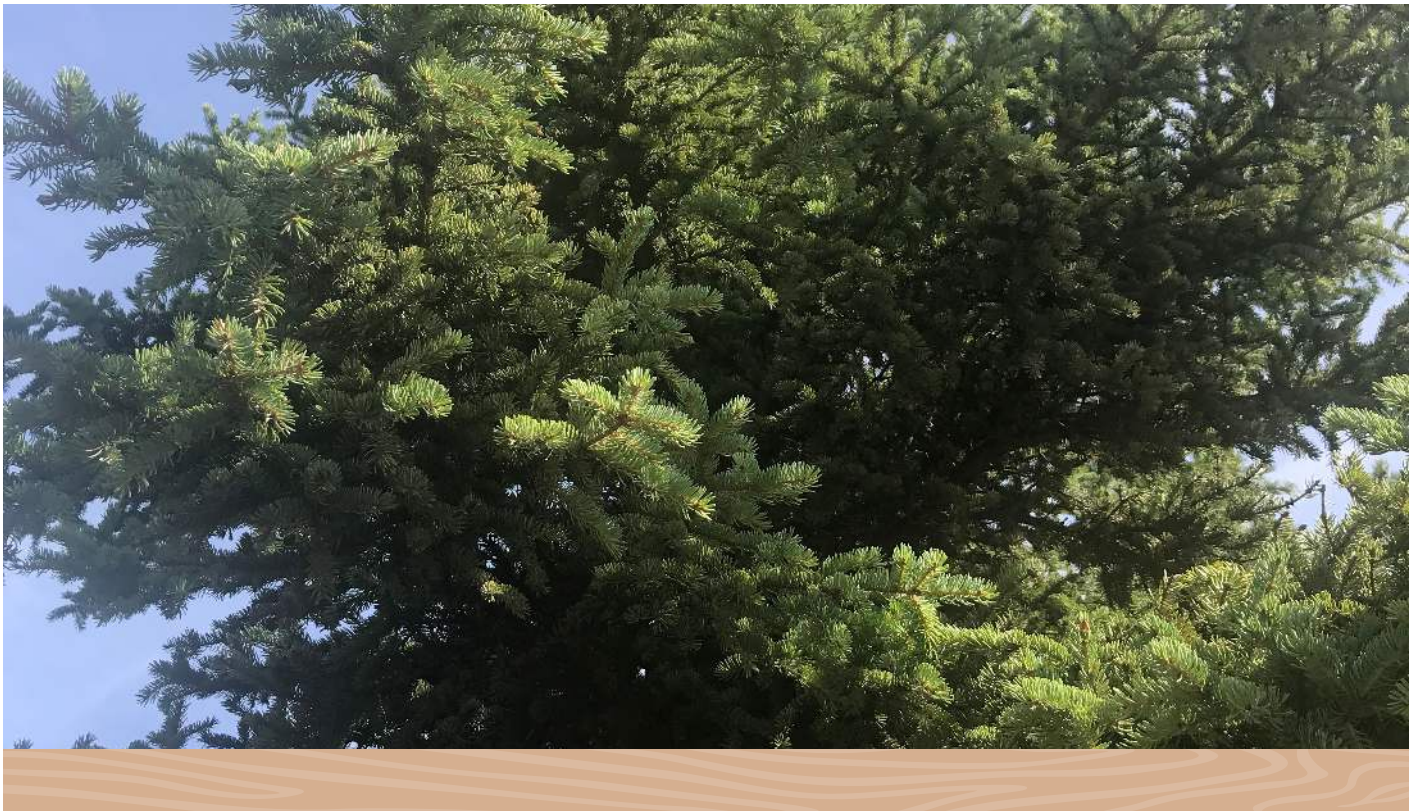
Birch Breakfast Bars

Ingredients:

- 2 cups oats
- 1/4 cup birch flour
- 1/2 cup almonds
- 1/4 cup shredded coconut
- 1/4 cup sesame seeds
- 1/4 cup pumpkin seeds
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon
- 1 banana, smashed
- 2 cups almond milk or coconut milk
- 3 tablespoons birch syrup
- Pinch sea salt

Directions:

1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl until mixed.
2. Spray baking pan with nonstick cooking spray and add mixture.
3. Bake at 375°F for 30-40 minutes.
4. Let cool completely and cut into bars.



Fold and tear or cut to take home!

Spruce Tip Salsa

Ingredients

- 4 cans diced tomatoes in juice
- 2 - 5 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 cup spruce tips, chopped
- 1/2 lemon, juiced (cut in wedges, well squeezed)
- 1/2 lime, juiced (cut in wedges, well squeezed)
- 3 ounces tomato paste
- 1/4 cup cilantro, chopped
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- Dash of hot sauce (optional)

Directions:

1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Flavor improves sitting overnight in the refrigerator.
2. Serve with whole-grain chips or on tacos.

#SCFPlants2020 Scavenger Hunt

What other plants can you find?

1. Take photos of the plants in the checklist below.
2. Share your photos on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter using #SCFPlants2020.
3. Each photo shared will give you one entry to win a prize.

Three winners will be chosen randomly at the end of each day.

- | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|------------------|------------|
| 1. Alder | 4. Chamomile | 7. Fireweed | 10. Spruce |
| 2. Wild Celery | 5. Cottonwood | 8. Pineappleweed | 11. Willow |
| 3. Birch | 6. Lady Fern | 9. Wild Rose | 12. Yarrow |

Extra entry for pictures of plants with correct labels of plants not listed above.

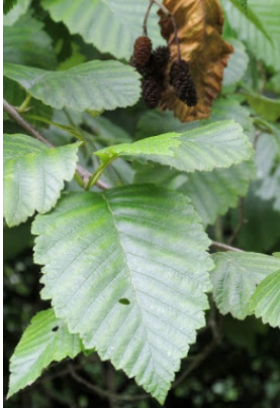
Check out the
Interactive Map!

Scan the QR
code below or visit
bit.ly/PlantWalk2020



Plant Walk Key

1. Alder



2. Wild Celery



3. Birch



4. Chamomile



5. Cottonwood



6. Lady Fern



7. Fireweed



8. Pineappleweed



9. Wild Rose



10. Spruce



11. Willow



12. Yarrow



**Please help us improve the
Tikahtnu Plants Symposium**
by taking two knowledge assessment surveys.

The surveys can be completed in the link sent via email.



Thank you
to all of the
volunteers!

Southcentral
Foundation

