

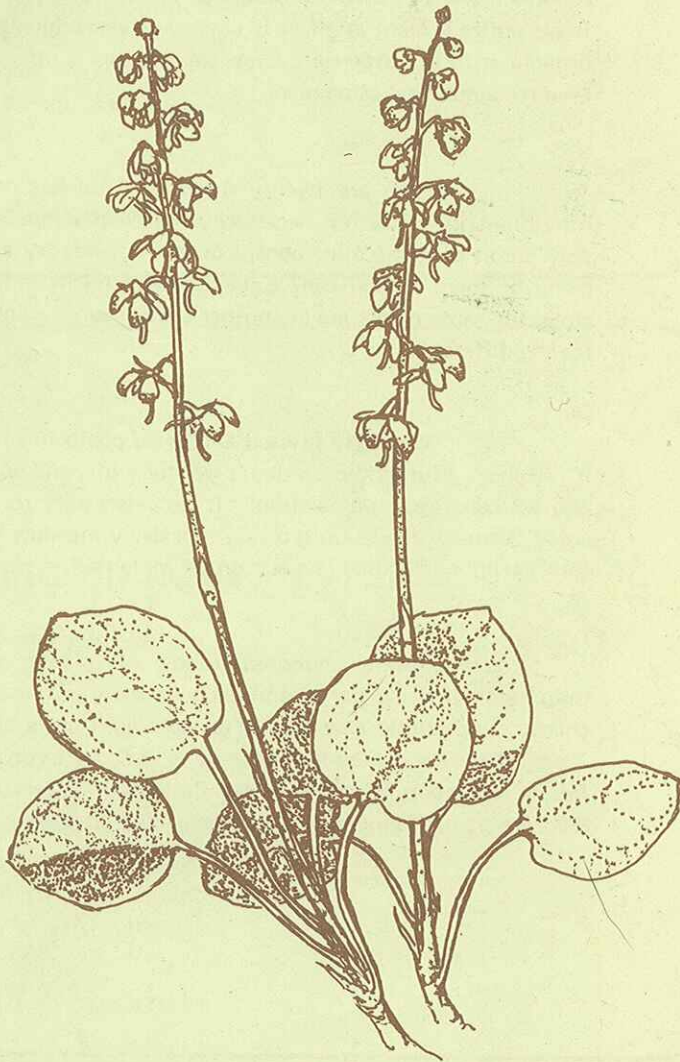


Province of  
British Columbia  
Ministry of  
Lands, Parks  
and Housing

J. GOWARD

# Twenty Plants

of Interior Parks



The plant kingdom in many ways forms the foundation for our survival, providing us directly with food, shelter and warmth, and perhaps indirectly with our sanity.

Yet we take few things so much for granted as the roadside "weeds", or the meadow or forest flower, or the forest itself. If we notice a plant at all, it is likely an eyecatching blossom that has brought it to our attention. Once the blossom is off, we may no longer even recognize that same plant.

Here are twenty shrubs and flowers common to most Interior parks. While not necessarily the twenty most common plants, they are at least the most conspicuous. Why not try and search out as many of them as you can? Later on, you might like to see how far along the same plants are at another campground — and to find reasons for the difference!

We study pressed and dried plants in a museum, and call it "science". But in the outdoors we study life, and wish to preserve it, and we call this "appreciation". It isn't necessary to collect plants to enjoy them. A dandelion growing in a dewy meadow delights us more than a trillium standing in a cup on a window sill.

Several hundred kinds of plants grow in British Columbia's Interior parks, and each of them possesses its own tastes, charms, and subtle character. You can learn more about them from *Trees, Shrubs and Flowers to Know in B.C.* by Lyons, *Field Guide to Rocky Mountain Wildflowers* by Craighead, Craighead & Davis, and *Wildflowers of Manning Park* by Underhill & Chuang.

## PEARLY EVERLASTING

*anaphalis margaritacea*

The flowers are white pearls with golden centres, clustered atop an upright stalk bearing green and silvery leaves. Don't confuse the Everlasting with the White Pussytoes (*Antennaria* spp.), a flower of similar form and habitat, but without the golden centres. Both plants are slow to wilt if picked in full bloom. Feel the dry tissuey blossoms.

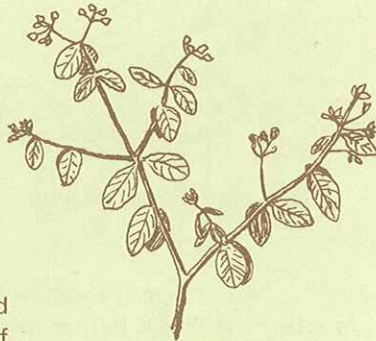


**where found: roadsides**

## SPREADING DOGBANE

*apocynum androsaemifolium*

Look for pointed egg-shaped leaflets that droop in pairs. The name of this plant comes from the unfounded belief that its presence repels dogs. The Dogbane flower is small, bellshaped, and delicate pink in colour, and grows in clusters at the ends of the stalks.

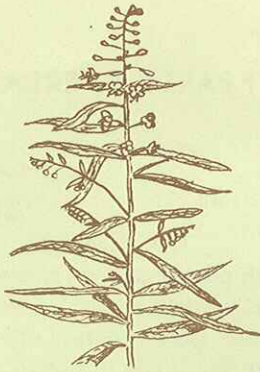


**where found: roadsides**

## FIREWEED

*epilobium angustifolium*

In midsummer, the Fireweed sets roadsides and burned-over places ablaze with masses of pink-purple blossoms. The leaves are long and willowy, arranged around the tall slender stem. The flowers do not bloom all at once, but gradually climb the stalk.



where found: roadsides

## FALSE BOX

*pachystima myrsinites*

An evergreen shrub of the open forests, False Box is fully as handsome as the true Box (Buxus) of gardens. The toothed oval leaves conceal tiny flowers, four-parted and crimson red. Look for them in early summer. False Box is a favourite food of the Whitetail Deer.

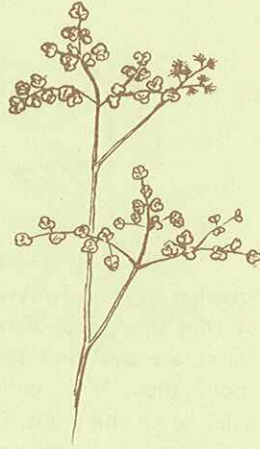


where found: open woods

## MEADOW RUE

*thalictrum occidentale*

Damp semi-open places are the favourite haunt of this delicate plant. The slender stalks support masses of small thin leaves and the green or purplish flowers or seeds, depending upon the season and the plant. Male and female flowers are on separate plants. Try to find Indian Paintbrush (Castilleja) growing nearby.

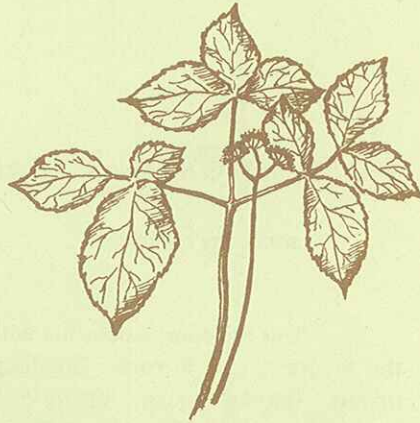


where found: open woods

## SARSAPARILLA

*aralia nudicaulis*

Sarsaparilla is often mistaken for Poison Ivy. Look for a low plant of open forests, with a three-branched stem. Each branch holds three to five pointed oval leaflets — each evenly toothed along the edges.



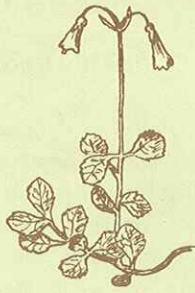
Tiny greenish flowers bloom in clusters beneath the leaves in early summer, and develop into bunches of deep-purple "raisins" later on.

where found: open woods

## TWINFLOWER

*Linnaea borealis*

Here is a true cosmopolitan, growing in mats everywhere on the floor of cool shady woodlands. The evergreen leaves are oval and finely toothed, and above them little pink bell flowers in pairs name the plant. Bend low to catch their exquisite fragrance.



where found: shady forests

## FALSE SOLOMON'S SEAL

*Smilacina racemosa*

This is a conspicuous lily with the fragrance of a rose. The large broad leaves grow along an unbranched stalk beneath a dense spray of white star flowers. Later in the season, find these replaced by mottled cinnamon and then red berries — a favourite food of Ruffed Grouse.

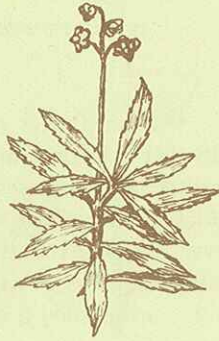


where found: shady forests

## PIPSISSEWA

*chimaphila umbellata*

The toothed leathery leaves are evergreen, and are borne on the lower part of the stalk. In midsummer, look for a cluster of 3 or 4 delicate pink flowers. See how these all contemplate the forest floor — a characteristic of the Wintergreen Family.

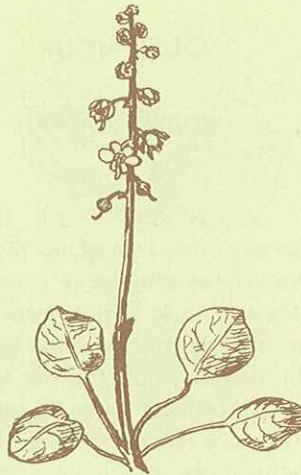


where found: shady forests

## PYROLA

*pyrola spp*

Pyrola consists of small, glossy "pear tree" leaves arranged around a single stalk of bowed flowers. We have several kinds, the flowers ranging from green through white to pink in colour. All are members of the Wintergreen Family.

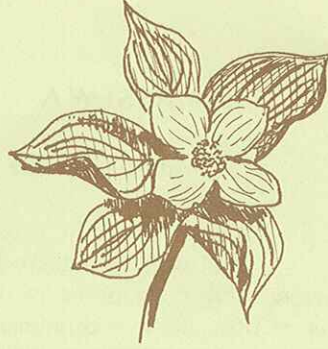


where found: shady forests

## BUNCHBERRY

*cornus canadensis*

This flower grows in low mats that in late summer sport their bunches of tiny scarlet berries. Notice the distinctive veining of the leaves, and note that the "blossom" actually consists of white modified leaves surrounding a central group of tiny green flowers. Do you see why the Bunchberry is also called "Dwarf Dogwood"?

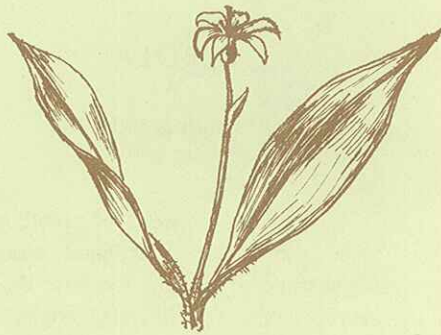


**where found: shady forest**

## QUEENCUP

*clintonia uniflora*

A plant of shady forests, the Queencup blooms six-petaled and snowy white on a single stalk arising from two or three large shiny basal leaves. In August, look for the single berry, brilliant blue in colour. They are not recommended for human use, but grouse do eat them.

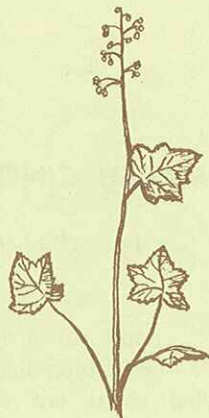


**where found: shady forest**



## FOAMFLOWER

*tiarella unifoliata*

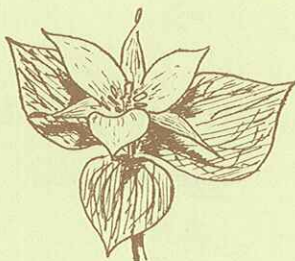


Tiny white stars gather around a single erect stalk above a delicate array of small "maple" leaves. The flower blooms for most of the summer, but in August look for a small "daggers" poking through the blossoms, foretelling the end of the season.

**where found: shady forests**

## WESTERN TRILLIUM

*trillium ovatum*

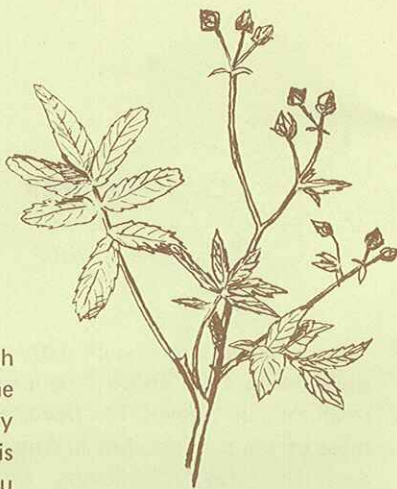


Trillium is one of the harbingers of Spring for many people. In summer look for the three large triangular leaves growing from a single stalk, and bearing a husky fruit. This is a plant protected by law. Please let it be.

**where found: shady forests**

## MARSH CINQUEFOIL

*potentilla palustris*

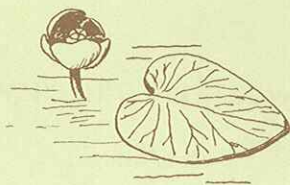


Look for a leafy plant with purple flowers blooming near water. The creeping stems are stout and carry sharply-toothed "ladder leaflets". Here is a member of the Rose Family. Do you see why?

**where found: marshes**

## YELLOW POND LILY

*nuphar polysepalum*



Quiet waters of shallow lakes and streams are the home of this large-leaved waxy plant. Look for the glossy yellow cups raised to the sun above floating leaf pads. The wax is a water-proofer.

**where found: lakes and ponds**

## CANADA MINT

*mentha arvensis*

Find this fragrant plant with its small misty blue flowers growing in wet open places. The blossoms are nestled next to the square stem at the bases of toothed, feather-shaped leaves. Try to find the Canada Mint with your nose!

where found : marshes



## MARSH SKULLCAP

*scutellaria galericulata*

A tubular dusty-blue flower growing with the leaves from a square stalk will be the Marsh Skullcap. Look for it in marshy open places near its cousin, the Canada Mint. Can you see how Skullcap gets its name?

where found: marshes



T. GOWARD

## WATER PARSNIP

*sium suave*



Water Parsnip grows amidst the grasses and sedges at the margins of lakes. The tiny white flowers bloom in umbrella clusters atop a fragile stalk. Notice that the leaf stems grow from sheaths. Beware — this plant is poisonous.

**where found: marshes**

## GREEN BOG ORCHID

*habenaria saccata*



As the name implies, this is another plant of boggy ground. The narrow, pointed leaves ascend the single stem to a spire of intricate greenish blossoms. Try to detect the fragrance.

**where found: marshes**

Single additional copies of this pamphlet may be obtained from Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, 1019 Wharf Street, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2Y9, and from Regional and District offices of the Division.

M50-13

Text and Drawings by  
Trevor Goward

Queen's Printer for British Columbia ©  
Victoria, 1982

PB 218  
REVISED 1980