



Echo-logical

Native plants

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INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES

For thousands of years, our native plants have been vital to Indigenous people by giving them food, medicine, and spiritual guidance.

Not only are these plants crucial to the environment, they're vital to Indigenous traditions, culture, and ways of life.

Many recognize this, including Api'soomaahka, who created Naapi's Garden and the Katoyiss seed bank (see the QR below for more details), both of which are focused on local native plants, and have already done several projects to reintroduce and maintain healthy native plants.



HELPING OUR POLLINATORS

Native plants offer pollinators a good balance of pollen, nutrition and shelter that these species rely on.

Native plants bloom at the most convenient times of the year for local pollinators.

They are physically suited to native bees, butterflies and pollinating birds, while also supporting a wide range of insects that directly benefit birds and other wildlife.

RESOURCES



Native Plants

Our Environment's Backbone



WHAT ARE NATIVE PLANTS?

Native plants are species that naturally occur in a region. They evolve there over many years and become adapted to the climate, soil, wildlife and more.

These plants provide essential food and habitat for local pollinators and other wildlife as well as playing a significant role in supporting biodiversity. They also require less resources because they are already suited to their environment.

They are also a core aspect of Indigenous teachings and ways of life, inspiring many stories that carry invaluable teachings from generation to generation.

WHY DO THEY NEED OUR HELP?

Invasive species: foreign plants and animals can ruin the soil and alter native habitat, often taking over and dominating resources like sunlight, water, nutrients and minerals.

Habitat loss: grizzly bears aren't the only ones affected by habitat loss, as more and more wildlands get destroyed for development, these plants lose the environment needed to grow, leading to lower population and even extinction

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

01

It's much healthier for the local environment as native plants evolved to be there specifically!

02

Native plants support the biodiversity of other native plants and animals.

03

They save you money on things like water, fertilizer, or even mowing the lawn!

04

They support the local pollinators, like our bees and butterflies at the same time as boosting every plant and animal around them.



Scope + Goal

Our Native Plant Conservation Project focused on understanding and highlighting the importance of native plants in our region.

We identified key species, learned about their role in local ecosystems, and explored the factors that support their growth and survival. In addition to studying the plants themselves, we aimed to inform others about the value of native plants and the ways they contribute to biodiversity, healthy habitats, and environmental sustainability.

The project was both a learning experience and a way to show the significance of conserving native plant life in our area.





Why does it matter to us?



01

Natural habitat

These plants provide the natural habitat for our wildlife

02

Biodiversity

If we lose plants, we lose the foundation for biodiversity

03

Representation

Endangered animals much more common leaving plants forgotten

04

Awareness

Many people aren't aware of, let alone care about eco-action and climate change

05

Our future

The environment is our future and our home

Sharing/Advocating

Advocating for native plants and sharing information was an essential part of our project. We created pamphlets to educate the public on why native plants are important and how individuals can help protect them.

By providing clear and accessible information, we were able to engage the others and raise awareness about local biodiversity.

Our work highlighted the benefits of native plants for pollinators, soil health, and overall ecosystem interconnection. Through these initiatives, we helped people understand the value of conserving native plants and encouraged them to take part in protecting their local environment.



Native plants



The project focused on several key native plants, including;

Prickly pear

A resilient plant that thrives in dry conditions and provides food and shelter for local wildlife. It is also used medicinally to treat arthritis and for pain relief. In the past, it was used for home protection, being placed around a teepee for unwanted visitors.

Prairie crocus

One of the first flowers to bloom in spring, is important for early-season pollinators and adds vibrant color to the landscape. Although poisonous to ingest, it was used to help in childbirth as well as for muscle relief. Often associated with the bison because both are furry

Prairie smoke

Also known as the 3 flowered aven, it has 3 distinct stages of growth, and disappears without a trace when not in season. It was also used to make a tea for sore throats

By studying these species, we learned about their unique adaptations, roles, and contributions to the health of our local habitats.



Challenges

There were many challenges such as

- Finding reliable information
- Not getting replies/ghosting
- Availability
- Resource limitations

Luckily we pushed through and presented this project to dozens of people, with many more through pamphlets

and

What we've learned



- Through meetings with
- a Kainai Nation elder
Api'soomaahka
 - online research
 - Seed banks
 - Native plant groups

We learned about different plant's meanings, uses, how to maintain them, as well as which plants are accustomed to what weather. This can lead to future projects around native plants as we already have the information

Thank you so much for your time!

