

Western Washington Edible Native Plants Rules & Regulations

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This resource provided by



Private Land - Always contact the landowner or owning organization ahead of time to inquire as to their rules and regulations, and to obtain permissions for personal harvest of plant resources.

Town & City – Contact your Town or City Planner for questions regarding personal harvest of fruits, nuts, berries, and mushrooms from town or city parks and public spaces within town or city limits.

Island County Parks - Plant harvest prohibited in all Island County Parks. The Island County Municipal Code 9.40.360 Damage to Property Prohibited states that no person shall cut, destroy, or in any way injure any shrub, tree, vine, grain, grass, or crops, standing or growing, or which has been cut down, in any Island County park area unless authorized in writing to do so the the Department. No person shall deface, remove, damage, or destroy any property, material, or equipment on any park property. Contact Jan VanMuyden, Island County Parks Superintendent, at (360) 679-7335 for questions regarding personal harvest of fruits, nuts, berries and mushrooms. Resources: <https://www.islandcounty.net/code/documents/ICCo9.pdf> (Page 32)

Whidbey Camano Land Trust – WCLT includes foraging and all “secondary forest products” in their management plans for each site, all of which are mostly similar. No commercial foraging of any kind is allowed on WCLT properties. Personal foraging is allowed *from the trail only*. WCLT does not set weight limits currently, but if personal foraging increases, they may. Please use discretion and harvest modestly. Common foraging species on our sites are berries, mushrooms and nettles. Foraging is also only allowed on sites with public access. For more information, please contact Jessica Larson, Land Steward, Jessica@wclt.org, (360) 222-3310.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife - Some WDFW lands allow personal harvest of specific forest products without a permit, but be sure to contact the WDFW before you harvest. Fish, shellfish, and hunting licenses can be purchased online. Contact (360) 902-2515 for additional questions.

Resources: http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/public_conduct_rules/index.html and <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/>

Washington Department of Natural Resources - No permit needed for personal harvest in state forests, but there are limits for specific forest products. Harvesting in DNR-managed campgrounds, picnic sites, natural area preserves, or natural resource conservation areas is prohibited, unless specifically stated in the site’s management plan. The limits for berries are three gallons of a single species per day, not to exceed nine gallons per year. Mushroom limits include three gallons in a single species per day, not to exceed nine gallons per year. For brush and ferns root ball removal, not more than two plants per person, per day and not more than four plants per person per year. Cone harvest should not exceed five pounds of cones per day. Bear grass harvest should not exceed more than five pounds per person per day, not more than 15 pounds per person per year. All conk species harvest should not exceed more than five conks per day. Firewood is limited to six cords per person per year and is by permit only. Contact (360) 856-3500 for additional questions about personal harvest in the Northwest region of DNR lands. Resources: <http://www.dnr.wa.gov/go#other-activities>

Washington State Parks - No permit needed for personal harvest on most state park lands, but there are limits for specific forest products. The recreational harvest, possession, or transport of edible plants and edible fruiting bodies including, but not limited to, mushrooms, berries, and nuts, is allowed up to an amount of two gallons per person per day, unless otherwise posted at the park. The harvest amount may be comprised of one or more species. The harvest may occur within the following park classification areas: Recreation, resource recreation, natural, natural forest, heritage, or in parks not yet classified. No harvest of edible plants or edible fruiting bodies, including mushrooms, is allowed within a natural area preserve. This rule is not intended to limit federally reserved tribal rights, including treaty rights. Contact (360) 902-8500 for additional questions about personal harvest rules for the Central Whidbey State Parks including Fort Casey, Fort Ebey, Ebey’s Landing, and Joseph Whidbey State Parks. Resources: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=352-28-030>

Bureau of Land Management - Personal harvest of berries is limited to 2 gallons of berries per person per day. Only berries should be removed and plant structures should remain in tact. Personal harvest of mushrooms is limited to 3 gallons per person per day. Mushrooms must be chopped at the site of harvest prior to removal to distinguish them from commercial harvest. Contact the Spokane office at (509) 536-1200 with additional questions. Resources: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/spokane/index.php>

Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest - Obtain a permit for personal harvest of any forest products. Special Forest Products permits are available for harvesting non-timber vegetative materials including seeds, roots, bark, berries, mosses, ferns, and edible mushrooms. Contact the local District Office at (425) 783-6000 or (800) 627-0062 to obtain a permit and answer additional questions.

Resources: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/mbs/passes-permits/forestproducts>

Olympic National Forest - No permit needed for personal harvest, but there are limits for specific forest products. No permit is required for personal use picking of mushrooms. Daily limit of mushroom harvest is one gallon of a single species per person per day, and three gallons of three separate species. There is also a state hauling limit per vehicles of three gallons of a single species, and nine gallons of three separate species of mushrooms. Wild berry harvest is free and permissible. Contact (360) 956-2402 for additional questions.

Resources: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/olympic/passes-permits/forestproducts> and http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5371210.pdf

North Cascades National Park Service Complex - The gathering or possession of edible fruits and berries is limited to one liter (1.1 quart) per person per day. Unlimited amounts of apples may be gathered or possessed for non-commercial use. The following edible fruits are allowed for personal harvest: Amelanchier spp. (Serviceberry), Arctostaphylos urva-ursi (Kinnickinnick), Berberis spp. (Oregon Grape species), Corylus cornuta (Hazelnut), Crataegus douglasi (Hawthorne), Fragaria spp. (Strawberry), Gaultheria spp. (Salal), Prunus virginiana (Chokecherry), Ribes spp. (Currant species), Rubus spp. (Blackberry and Raspberry species), Rubus vitifolius & Rubus ursinus (Dewberry), Rubus spectabilis (Salmonberry), Rubus parvifloris (Thimbleberry), Sambucus caerulea (Blue Elderberry), Sambucus callicarpa (Red Elderberry), Sorbus spp. (Mountain Ash), Vaccinium spp. (Huckleberry and Blueberry species). Contact (360) 854-7200 for additional questions.

Resources: <https://www.nps.gov/noca/learn/management/upload/Compendium-December-2015-Complete.pdf> (Pages 9-10)

Olympic National Park - Edible fruits, berries, nuts, and the fruiting bodies of mushrooms may be collected by hand for personal consumption except within 200 feet of nature trails, special trails, and nature study areas. The total limit of all species combined is 1 quart per person per day. For cranberries and native blackberries in the Ozette Prairie area, the collection limit is 3.5 gallons, which may only be collected once in a two week period. Exotic species like apples, pears, and non-native blackberries are exempt from the daily possession limits. Contact (360) 565-3000 for additional questions.

Resources: https://www.nps.gov/olymp/learn/management/upload/2014-Compendium-signed_20140818155824-1.pdf (Page 7)

Mt. Rainier National Park - The personal harvest of edible fruits, nuts, mushrooms, and berries can be gathered by hand with some restrictions. The limit is 1 gallon per person per day. The following edible fruits are allowed for personal harvest, including blueberries (Vaccinium spp.), highbush cranberries, gooseberries (Ribes spp.), salmonberries (Rubus spp.), blackberries (Rubus spp.), thimbleberries (Rubus spp.), serviceberries (Amelanchier spp.), and strawberries (Fragaria spp.). Edible fungi are also allowed. Contact (360) 569-2211 for additional questions.

Resources: <https://www.nps.gov/mora/learn/management/upload/2015-Supt-s-Compendium.pdf> (Page 7)

National Wilderness Areas - Any harvest, be it personal or commercial, is strictly prohibited.

Additional Resources for Foraging - Visit T. Abe Lloyd's blog article "Rules for foraging on public land in the Pacific Northwest" for additional foraging information beyond western Washington:

<http://arcadianabe.blogspot.com/2012/03/rules-for-foraging-on-public-land.html>

Disclaimer: Before touching or eating any native plant part, or anything else you find growing in a native ecosystem, it is vitally important to know what you are doing and to be able to identify correctly everything you find. The images, photographs, and content of this workshop and its associated resources are for *educational purposes only*. They are not intended to be in place of expert recommendations or serve as a guide to proper plant identification. Always consult your physician and experts prior to engagement in any kind of activity related to native plants. The presence of any image in this workshop should not be interpreted as implying any suggestion that the plant or item depicted is safe to eat for everybody. Prevailing rules and regulations should be adhered to in any beach, park, city, county, state, or federal lands that you visit, as well as respecting private property. The presenter and Whidbey Island Conservation District are not responsible for any adverse consequences resulting directly or indirectly from information contained in presentations, educational handouts, and conversations.