

Oral presentation

Winnebago ethnobotany and botanical resources project

Kelly Kindscher^a, Rhonda Pitts^b, Al Martyn^b, Nikki Crowe^c

^aKansas Biological Survey, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66047; ^bLittle Priest Tribal College, Winnebago, Nebraska 68071; ^cHaskell Indian Nations University, Lawrence, KS 66046

Introduction. This project has identified 157 culturally important plant species of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska. For this work we developed a database of historical and current use of plants, and will have selected plants propagated to distribute among tribal members.

Objectives. We are creating a database and herbarium that contains plants and information about their uses. Interviews are being conducted with tribal elders. Both of these are an effort to honor traditional knowledge of the Winnebago people and to expand the variety of plants they use in their lives.

Methods. We have read and entered all the published information on the Winnebago ethnobotany into a database and computer files. We have identified plants in the field to ascertain which of the historically useful plants still occur on the Reservation in northeast Nebraska. We have recorded locations using a global-positioning system unit of commonly useful plants in order to encourage use of plums, milkweed, chokecherries and other foods.

Results. Of the 157 plant species used by the Winnebago historically, 96 were used for medicine, 54 we used for food, 19 were used for fiber or materials and 8 were used as dye plants. The plants represent 54 families, with the Asteraceae being the largest family of use followed by Rosaceae at 19.

Conclusion. Although their use on the Reservation is limited today, we hope that by providing educational materials about them, we can encourage the revitalization of plant use.

Keywords: Hocak, Nebraska

Selected References

1. Kindscher, K., and D. Hurlburt. 1998. Huron Smith's Ethnobotany of the (Winnebago). *Economic Botany* 52:352-372.
2. Gilmore, M. R. 1991. Uses of plants by the Indians of the Missouri River region. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln. Reprinted from the Thirty-third Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, published by the Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., in 1919.
3. Kindscher, K. 1992. *Medicinal Wild Plants of the Prairie: an Ethnobotanical Guide*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.

Presenting Author: Kelly Kindscher, Kindscher@KU.edu