

In its broadest sense, ethnobotany is the study of how people interact with plants. The tradition of using plants to fulfill daily needs dates back to the beginning of human civilization and continues today. We all practice ethnobotany when we decorate our homes with plants, add spices to our meals, or select a certain type of wood to build something useful.

Major efforts have been made over the last 50 years to record the historical and modern uses of plants, whether they be for medicinal, spiritual, practical, or culinary purposes. Here are some of the sources at the Seattle Public Library that provide information on the many ways plants have met the needs of people worldwide.

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Native American Ethnobotany Database

(The University of Michigan)
<http://www.umd.umich.edu/cgi-bin/herb>

For more information,
please call the
**Science & Technology
Department at
(206) 386-4620.**

Visit the Library's Web site at
www.spl.org

WASHINGTON PARK ARBORETUM

The Washington Park Arboretum, established in 1934, is a living museum of woody plants maintained for the purposes of conservation, education, research, and display. As a regional public garden with more than 4,600 different types of plants from over 60 countries around the world, the Arboretum is a cultural treasure with international horticultural significance.

The Arboretum is dedicated to providing environmental education to the community and serves more than 400,000 people each year. As one of the largest green spaces in Seattle, the 230 acres of outdoor "environmental classrooms" offer abundant learning opportunities for all ages. The education programs place a strong emphasis on local and worldwide ethnobotany. The Arboretum teaches about this subject year-round through tours, school programs, and other activities for all ages.

ETHNOBOTANY

The Use of Plants by People



Artist Patianne Stevenson



The Seattle Public Library