

# Edible Berries

## EDIBLE BERRIES

### SALAL

*Gaultheria shallon*

A very common, thicket-forming, evergreen shrub found all over the Drift Creek Camp locality. Height varies from creeping to 15 feet tall. The thick, leathery leaves are egg-shaped, 2-4 inches long, sharply and finely toothed. The urn-shaped, white or pinkish flowers occur in groups of 5-15 at the ends of the twigs. The edible, reddish-blue to dark purple “berries” (actually fleshy sepals) ripen in late August. Salal berries were the most plentiful and important fruit for Native Americans.

[Photo 113.1358]

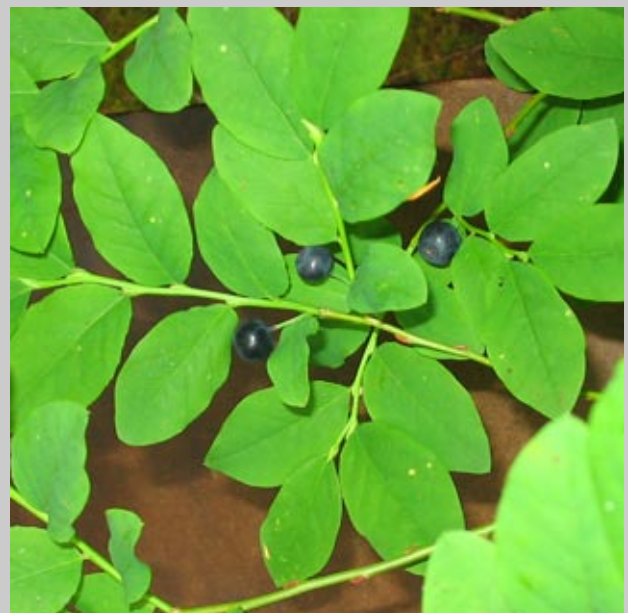


### OVAL-LEAVED BLUEBERRY

*Vaccinium ovalifolium*

An erect to spreading deciduous shrub with large, edible, blue-black berries having a bluish bloom. Berries ripen in August and are borne singly in leaf axils. The leaves are larger than those of the red huckleberry, about 1-2 inches long, oval, blunt-rounded at both ends. The leaves have no teeth and there are no midrib hairs on the lower side of the leaf (a characteristic of the Alaskan blueberry, *V. alaskaense*). The oval-leaved blueberry is plentiful on the hillside behind the lodge. The red huckleberry is more common at the top of the ridge.

[Photo 113.1356]



## *Red Huckleberry*

### **RED HUCKLEBERRY**

*Vaccinium parvifolium*

An erect shrub up to 12 feet tall with small (1 inch) deciduous leaves. Branches are bright green, strongly angled; the oval leaves are not toothed. Flowers are greenish-yellow or pinkish and occur singly in leaf axils. Fruits ripen in August and are bright red, edible, but a bit tart. This is the dominant *Vaccinium* in the Oregon Coast Range and very plentiful at the top of the ridge behind the lodge. The berries were popular and eaten fresh or dried by all coastal aboriginal groups. The juice was used to stimulate the appetite or as a mouthwash. The leaves and bark were used in a decoction that was gargled for sore throats and inflamed gums.

[Photo 112.1298]



## *Thimbleberry*

### **THIMBLEBERRY**

*Rubus parviflorus*

A large leaved (up to 12 inches), thornless raspberry usually forming dense thickets by means of an extensive network of rhizomes. Young stems are glandular-hairy. The 3-5 lobed maple-leaf shaped leaves are finely fuzzy on both sides. The large white flowers occur in clusters and have petals, which are crinkled like tissue paper. The raspberry-like red fruits are hairy and juicy, their flavor dependent on site and personal taste.

[Photo 113.1340]



## **SALMONBERRY**

*Rubus spectabilis*

A tall, branching shrub with zigzag twigs armed with scattered prickles. Often form dense thickets springing from branching rhizomes. Leaves with three leaflets, which are sharply toothed. Several large, pink to magenta flowers form on short branches. Fruits are yellow or reddish, mushy raspberries; flavor reviews vary from insipid to great. One of the earliest berries to ripen, they were of great importance to many coastal aboriginal groups. Young sprouts were gathered in early spring and summer, peeled, and eaten raw.

The name comes from the fact that the berries were often eaten with salmon.

[Photo 113.1345]



## *Choke Cherry*

## **CHOKE CHERRY**

*Prunus virginiana*

A shrub or small tree with clusters (up to 10 or more) of small cherries, often dark purple or black. They are quite edible but seedy. The choke cherry next to the caretaker cabin at Drift Creek Camp has ripe cherries in August.

