



NEBRASKA

STATEWIDE

*Arboretum*



A photograph of a vast field of wildflowers. In the foreground, there are several tall, green plants with bright yellow sunflowers. The background is a dense field of purple wildflowers, possibly Amaranth, stretching to the horizon under a hazy sky.

A Celebration Of People And Plants

# WILD EDIBLE PLANTS

Bob Henrickson, Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, Inc

“Across the fields and prairies,  
along the roadsides and  
wooded streams grow wild  
plants whose products rival the  
gourmet fare of anywhere in the  
world.”—Kay Young

- Certain wild plants are nutritious and tasty.
- Gathering involves discovery, exploration and learning.



Even if it is just your backyard,  
what happens there each  
season is important in learning

- We need an awareness and understanding of wild things to make choices that sustain us and not impede the natural systems.

WILD SEASONS

GREENS FOR GRAZING



# Sour Dock



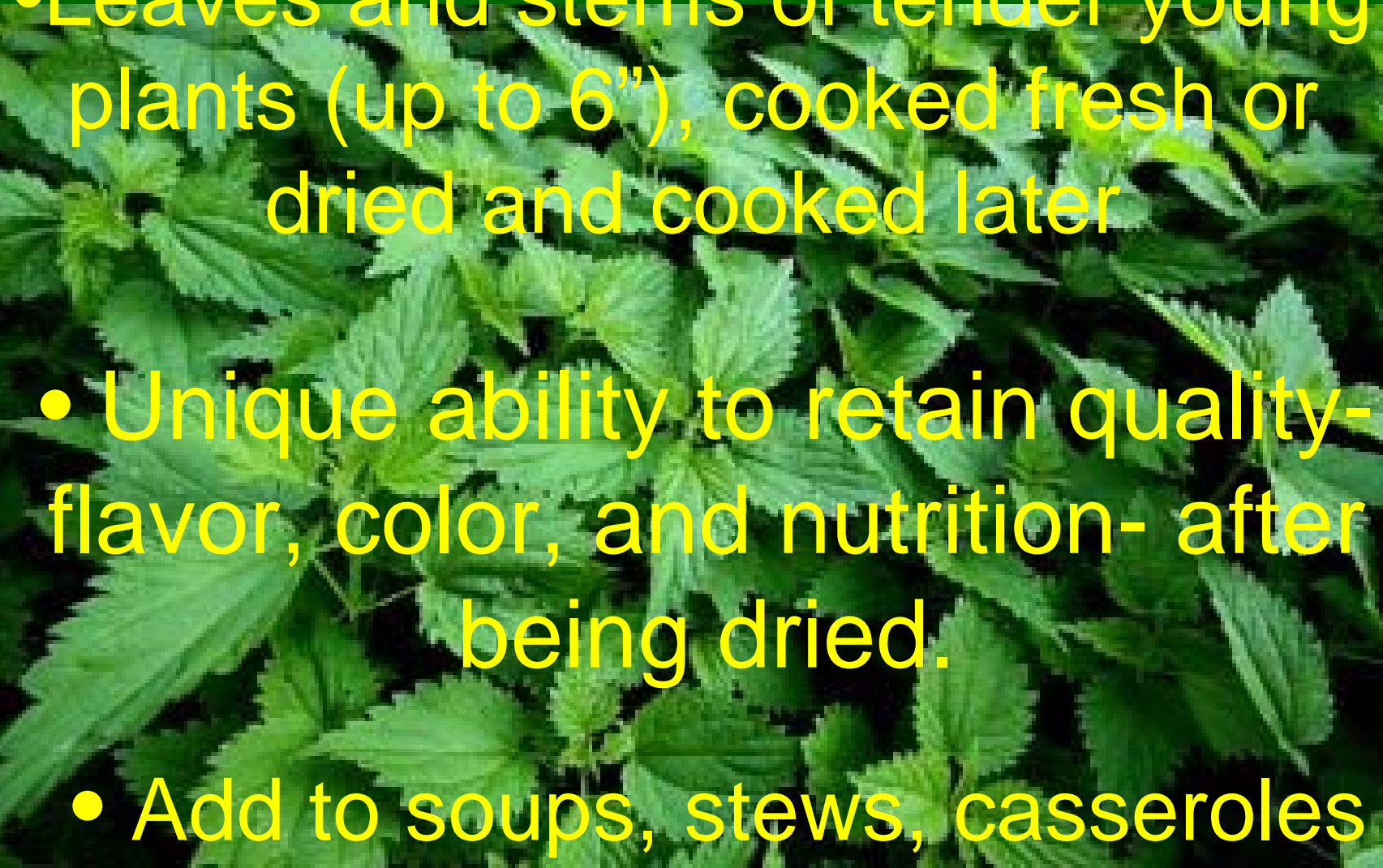
Dan Bussemeyer: Illinois Natural History Survey

# Stinging Nettles



“Fierce in the wild...tame on the table.”



- 
- Leaves and stems of tender young plants (up to 6"), cooked fresh or dried and cooked later
  - Unique ability to retain quality- flavor, color, and nutrition- after being dried.
  - Add to soups, stews, casseroles or powdered for "nettle noodles"

# Lamb's Quarters





- Cooked leaves and stems of young plants (up to 8" tall).
- Exceptional source of Vitamin A.
- Yummy cooked greens or used in soups, stew, scrambled eggs, quiche and omelet.
- Easy to harvest, can or freeze for later use.

# Common Milkweed





- The flowers can be dipped in fritter batter and fried. Dusted with powder sugar....yum!





# Purslane





- The thick leaves and stems can be cooked or eaten fresh.
- Good in sandwiches or tacos and they don't wilt like lettuce!
- The richest known source of omega-2 in leafy greens!
- The flavor is slightly sour with a texture that is both crunchy and slick.



# PRAIRIE TEAS



*Leadplant, Amorpha canescens*



- Called “buffalo bellow plant”
- Blooms when buffalo are in rut
  - Powdered leaves blown into wounds to promote scab formation
- powdered dried leaves mixed with buffalo fat for pipe tobacco

- Makes a delicious “prairie tea”

- One Tbs. dried leaves per cup of water; bring to boil and simmer for at least 4 minutes.













- Mountain Mint,  
*Pycnanthemum virginianum*







- blossoms used as an eye wash and as a remedy for fevers and colds; treating respiratory problems.

Wild Bergamot, *Monarda fistulosa*



- Var *menthifolia* called “Wahpe washtemna (Dakota), “fragrant leaves”.
- “This form is one of the plants connected with the Sun Dance, according to J. Owen Dorsey.”
- “The Pawnee recognized four forms, from “ill smelling” to “shot may times still fighting.”

# WILD ROSE

- Rose petals are used to make rose water used as a flavoring or potpourri.
- Rose petal syrup is easy to make and “is one of nature’s most delectable treats.”





*Wild Rose Hips*







# Goatsbeard Salsify







# Common Burdock







# Jerusalem Artichokes



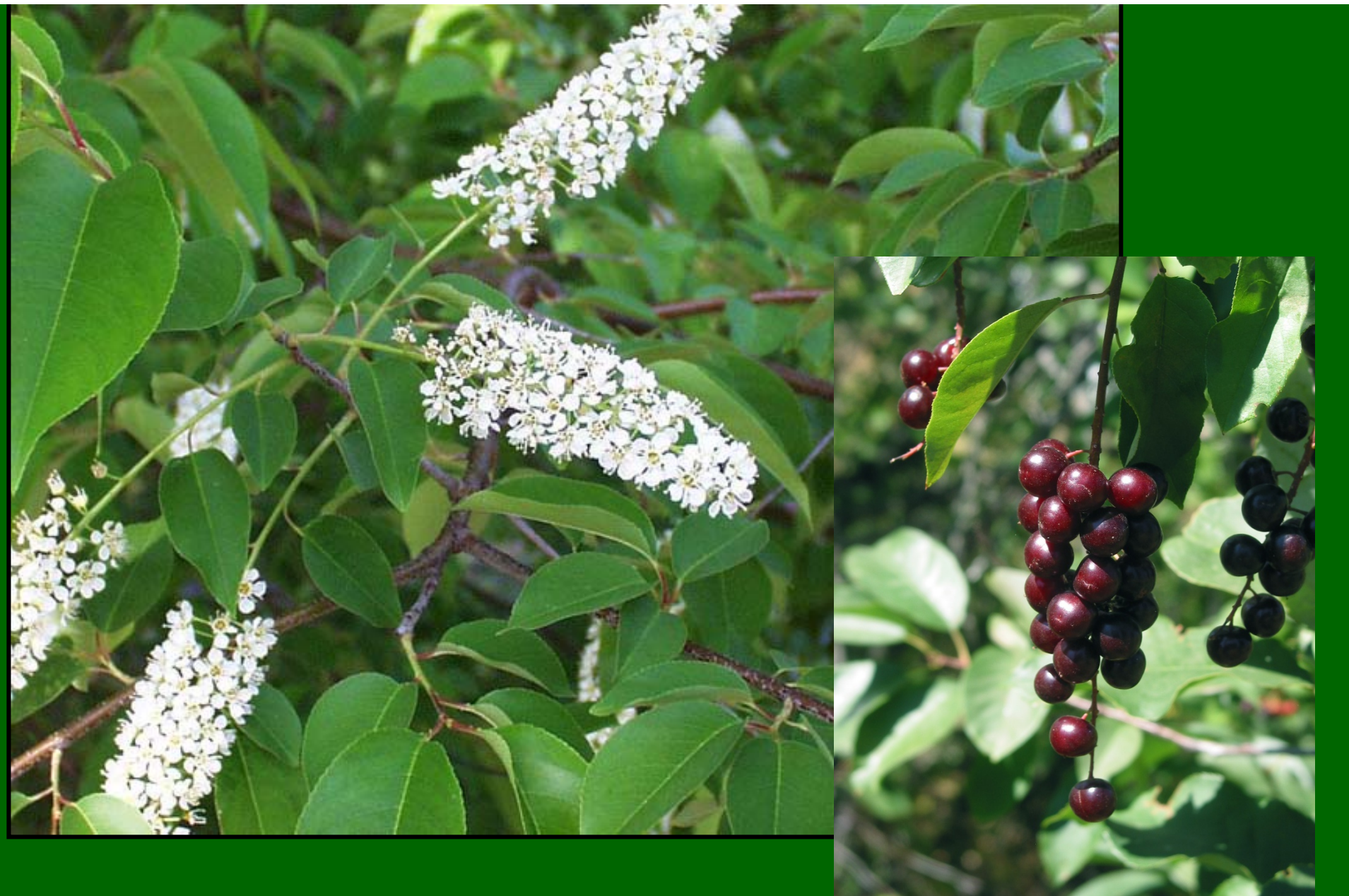


# WILD FRUITS

# Prickly Pear Cactus







Chokecherry, *Prunus virginiana*



- The Dakota named one of the months “black-cherry moon” in honor of this plant.
- Gathering and drying of the fruit made a busy time for the community.
- A favorite of the Dakota, called *wasna*, a sort of pemmican or mincemeat, the dried cherry forming the fruit for the compound.
  - The time of the Sun Dance began the first day of the full moon when cherries were ripe.
- Today we use them in jellies, sauces, wine, pie and syrup. A favorite is called “chokecherry fizz” combining syrup with ginger ale.







Clove Currant, *Ribes odoratum*



- Attracts a variety of early season bees



- Abundance of juicy black berries by summer



Buffalo Currant, *Ribes odoratum*





*Wild Grape, Vitis riparia*







*Common Elderberry,  
Sambucus canadensis*

- Branches were used to make the shaft of arrows.
- Flutes and whistles were constructed by boring holes into stems hollowed out with hot sticks. .
- The entire flower cluster can be dipped in batter and fried while petals can be eaten raw or made into a fragrant and tasty tea.
- Fruit was cooked into a rich sauce or dried for winter use
- Today we use them in jellies, sauces, wine, pie and even candies.





Wild Plum, *Prunus americana*







- The fruit was highly valued, fresh or cooked as a sauce.

- The plums were dried for winter use

- The Omaha planted their corn, beans and squashes when the wild plums came into bloom.

- August called “red plum moon”





- Saskatoon Serviceberry,  
*Amelanchier canadensis*









*Squirrels love Juneberries too!*



- The fruit was highly valued, fresh or cooked as a sauce.
- They were also dried for winter use; mixed with dried buffalo meat and fat to make pemmican.
- The fruit is delicious eaten fresh, used in pies, jams, muffins, chunky topping or wine

- Juneberries are the berry for the Northwest. No farmer ought to fail to plant a patch. I have just distributed, free, wagon-loads of plants from my early plantings, which were among my plums and in the way—Jules Sandoz, 1903 report to the Nebraska State Horticultural Society





- Juneberry-Rhubarb Pie....Yummy!!





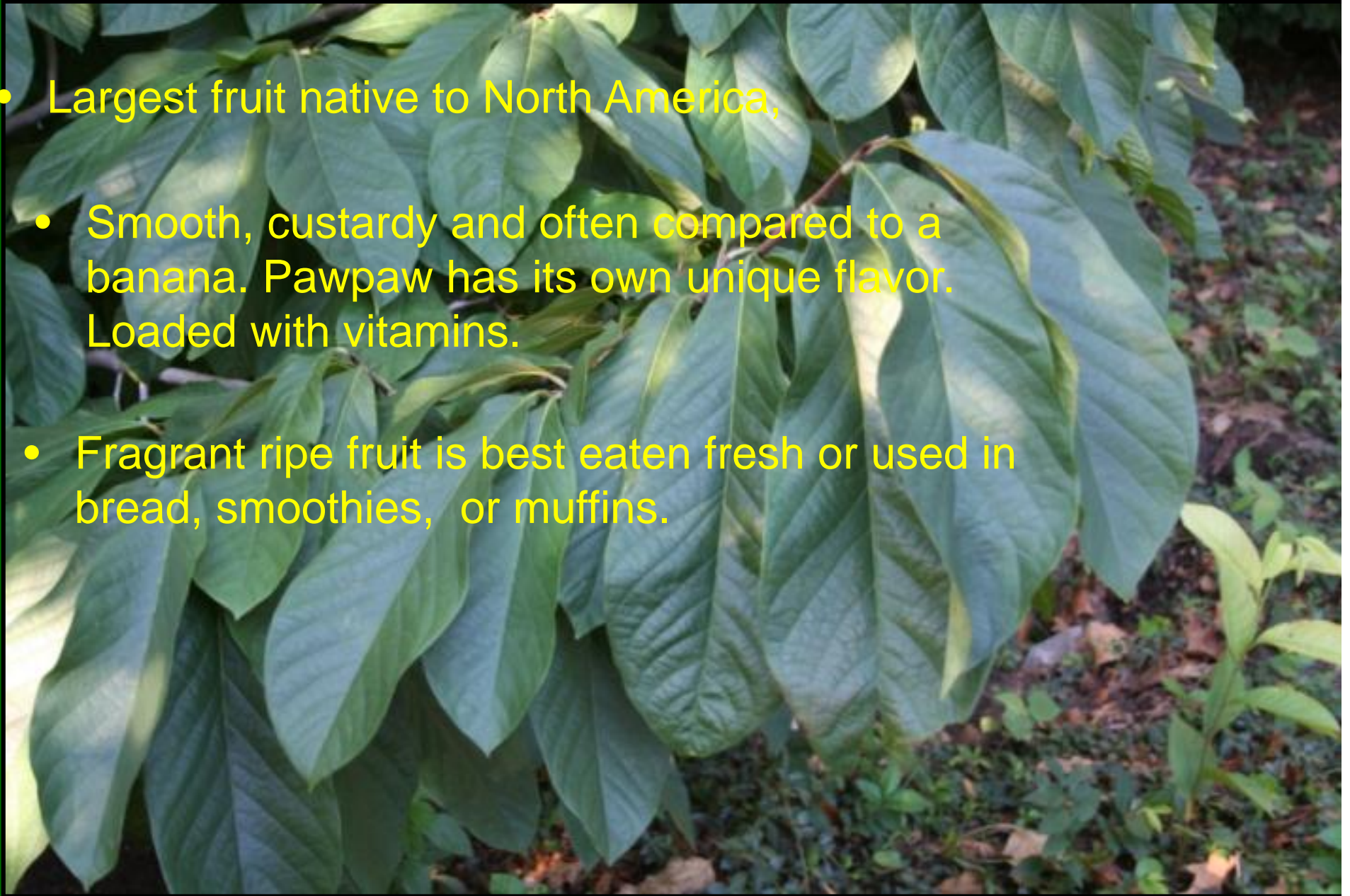
Pawpaw, *Asimina triloba*







- Largest fruit native to North America,
  - Smooth, custardy and often compared to a banana. Pawpaw has its own unique flavor. Loaded with vitamins.
  - Fragrant ripe fruit is best eaten fresh or used in bread, smoothies, or muffins.







Persimmon, *Diospyros virginiana*





- Diospyros means “fruit of the Gods.” Reportedly the sweetest fruit next to the date palm! Loaded with vitamins A, B, C.
- Avoid biting into one before its time—they have big time pucker power!.

Delicious baked







Delicious baked into a bread pudding, cookies, smoothies, ice cream and flan!!

# GO GET SOME NUTS

- HAZELNUT
- BLACK WALNUT
- SHELLBARK HICKORY
- NORTHERN PECAN





- Shagbark Hickory, *Carya ovata*









**Northern Pecan**  
*Carya illinoensis*

Ceril Bish Pecan Orchard, UNL East Campus









- Black Walnut, *Juglans nigra*

Walnuts and butternuts are important trees for local wildlife.

Their foliage hosts a myriad of Lepidoptera species and the large nuts help sustain squirrels and other rodents.

Walnuts produce juglone, a chemical that can stunt growth or even kill other plants.

Most natives that evolved within the range of walnuts are unfazed by juglone!







## How's It Growing?

Wednesdays 11:00am - Noon

- Hosted by
- Bob Henrickson, Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, Inc.
- Bertine Loop, Horticulture Instructor at Southeast Community College.
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“Dedicated to answering your growing questions”





...enriching lives through the beauty and wonder of plants.

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Bob Henrickson

402.472.7855

[rhenrickson2@unl.edu](mailto:rhenrickson2@unl.edu)

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