

# Sensitive to Harvest

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Sensitive to Harve



Photo by Roger Jaegel

- COMMON NAMES:** Coltsfoot, butterbur, coughwort (*fig. 23*)
- BOTANICAL NAME:** *Petasites frigidus* L. Fries var. *palmatus* (Aiton) Cronq.
- FAMILY:** Asteraceae (Sunflower family, Compositae)
- DESCRIPTION:** Perennial herb; large leaves 3–15 inches wide on 1- to 2.5-ft stalks; leaves simple, palm-shaped with lobes, dark green on top, whitish and hairy below; flowers emerge long before leaves in flat-topped clusters, purplish white on 3- to 18-inch stalks emerging from partially exposed roots; flowers with strong vanilla scent; coltsfoot may be mistaken for a very common similar-looking plant, Indian rhubarb/umbrella plant (*Darmera peltata*) which has large round to funnel-shaped leaves attached at the base from the center of the leaf
- REPRODUCTION:** Rootstock
- DISTRIBUTION:** *Global:* Northwestern and northwest central California, Arkansas, northeastern United States  
*Local:* restricted to specified habitats; common in low-elevation drainages on South Fork Mountain and Willow Creek Area
- ELEVATION RANGE:** To 2,500 ft
- SLOPE AND ASPECT:** Most likely in north, northeast aspect
- SOIL TYPE:** Wet
- PLANT COMMUNITY:** Riparian forest
- ASSOCIATED SPECIES:** California spikenard, ferns, Douglas-fir, big leaf maple
- SERIAL STAGE:** Late seral
- SPECIAL HABITATS, ECOLOGICAL FEATURES AND MANAGEMENT CONCERNS:**  
Sensitivity Category V; Coltsfoot is found along moist, shaded streamsides and in canyons in late seral mixed conifer and Douglas-fir–dominated forest at low elevations. Riparian Reserve regulations must be followed when harvesting coltsfoot. It is not abundant in the higher and/or drier areas of the AMA (Hayfork, Platina, Weaverville) and should not be harvested in commercial quantities there.
- PARTS HARVESTED:** Leaves
- HARVEST TIMING:** Leaves in summer; roots in spring
- SUGGESTED HARVEST METHODS:**  
Cut leaves at the base of stalk; cut from edges of stands, avoid trampling roots. To harvest roots, dig carefully around root and cut with a knife to minimize disturbance to adjacent rootstock.
- SUITABILITY FOR CULTIVATION:**  
Unknown



Illustration by Jolie Lonner

**Figure 23** —WESTERN COLTSFOOT *Petasites frigidus* var. *palmatus* sunflower family Asteraceae

**SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:**

Native American medicinal

**ECONOMIC USES:**

Medicinal tea and tincture from leaves are said to slow spasms that cause coughing, and soothe sore throats, chest colds, and stomach cramps; poultices of roots and leaves applied topically reduce inflammation and pain from sprains, bumps.

- COMMON NAMES:** Oregon grape (*fig. 24*)
- BOTANICAL NAME:** *Berberis nervosa* Pursh.
- FAMILY:** Berberidaceae (Barberry family)
- DESCRIPTION:** Native evergreen low-growing shrub; leaves divided into 9–19 paired, shiny, holly-like leaflets with spiny margins; leaves often growing in pairs or as triplets from rootstock; yellow flowers in clusters; dark blue berries
- REPRODUCTION:** From rootstock
- DISTRIBUTION:** *Global:* Calif. South Coast Region to San Francisco Bay Area, north to British Columbia, Canada, Idaho  
*Local:* fairly abundant in key habitat areas in HAMA
- ELEVATION RANGE:** Below 6,000 ft
- SLOPE AND ASPECT:** More likely on moderate north-facing slopes
- SOIL TYPE:** Deep, well-drained
- PLANT COMMUNITY:** Coniferous forest
- SERIAL STAGE:** Mid-mature to mature closed canopy forest understory, shady north slopes, canyons
- ASSOCIATED SPECIES:** Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine, prince's pine, white-veined shinleaf
- SPECIAL HABITATS, ECOLOGICAL FEATURES, AND MANAGEMENT CONCERNS:**  
Sensitivity Category V; found primarily in late seral forest on South Fork Mountain or in Willow Creek area; slow-growing plant, larger stands not very common in drier Eastern areas of HAMA, should not be gathered in commercial quantities there because overharvesting is possible.
- PARTS HARVESTED:** Foliage, roots (the lower stem from the lowest leaves down considered "aboveground root" for medicinal purposes)
- HARVEST TIMING:** Roots: fall, winter, spring; foliage: summer, fall
- SUGGESTED HARVEST METHODS:**  
Harvest from moister areas of HAMA (e.g. South Fork Mountain; Willow Creek areas). Harvest from edges of stands to avoid compacting and trampling soil. Leave berries for wildlife (one of the last berries available before winter). Hold main stem and pull slowly upward. Rootstock will begin to emerge. Pull to about 1-ft length and clip off (this leaves secondary roots behind to grow into new plants). Washed roots should be chopped while still fresh; dry roots become very hard to process.
- SUITABILITY FOR CULTIVATION:**  
Difficult but possible from seed; rhizome can be transplanted, cuttings work well.



Illustration by Jolie Lonner

**Figure 24** —OREGON GRAPE *Berberis nervosa* barberry family Berberidaceae***SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:***

Native American medicinal

***ECONOMIC USE:***

Medicinal tea, tincture used for liver ailments and as a digestive tonic. Leaves are used topically in salves, oils and dusting powders as an antibacterial, antimicrobial; edible berries; yellow dye; floral green

- COMMON NAME:** Prince's pine, pipsissewa (*fig. 25*)
- BOTANICAL NAME:** *Chimaphila umbellata* L. (Bartram) var. *occidentalis* (Rydb.) S.F. Blake
- FAMILY:** Ericaceae (Heath family)
- DESCRIPTION:** Native evergreen, understory perennial, 4–12 inches tall; long, partially buried woody stems, leathery whorled 2- to 5-inch dark green leaves, several times longer than wide, toothed; 5–15 waxy pink flowers in a cluster on a 2- to 4-inch stalk at the end of stem or as a side branch; fruit is a small round capsule with many tiny seeds.
- REPRODUCTION:** Seed, rootstock
- DISTRIBUTION:** *Global:* Central America, Southern Calif. north to British Columbia, east to Michigan, Montana; Klamath Ranges, North Coast Ranges, High Cascade Range, High Sierra Nevada, South Coast Ranges, San Bernardino, San Gabriel Mts., Peninsular Ranges  
*Local:* not common in HAMA; but frequently found in patches in specified habitat types.
- ELEVATION RANGE:** 900–8,500 ft.
- SLOPE AND ASPECT:** North-facing slopes most likely
- SOIL TYPE:** Well-drained to sandy, acid, spongy soil
- PLANT COMMUNITY:** Medium moist to dry coniferous forest understory, often in drainages
- ASSOCIATED SPECIES:** Conifers, Oregon grape, white veined shinleaf
- SERIAL STAGE:** Mature closed canopy forest, old growth
- SPECIAL HABITATS, ECOLOGICAL FEATURES, AND MANAGEMENT CONCERNS:**  
Sensitivity Category V; occurs in forest with at least 50 percent shade, on undisturbed ground, with considerable duff, twigs, and leaf litter; grows slowly, especially in dry years; potential for overharvesting
- PARTS HARVESTED:** New growth on above-ground plant
- HARVEST WINDOW:** Early fall, after seeds have been produced
- SUGGESTED HARVEST METHOD:**  
Clip new shoots off above-ground with clippers; avoid lifting rhizomes out of soil. Harvest in dry weather from edge of healthy stands. Avoid trampling and compaction. Harvest conservatively and rotate harvest areas. Leave seeds to regenerate.
- SUITABILITY FOR CULTIVATION:**  
Difficult. Seeds are tiny; research trials underway



Illustration by Jolie Lerner

**Figure 25** —PRINCE'S PINE *Chimaphila umbellata* wintergreen family Pyrolaceae

***SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:***

Native American medicinal

***ECONOMIC USES:***

Medicinal tea and tincture are astringent, disinfectant, diuretic especially used for kidney ailments, arthritis and rheumatic pains; flavoring for root beer

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