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Abstract

Inventory of non-timber forest product plant and fungal species in the Robson Valley

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Increasing interest in non-timber forest products (NTFPs) has led to their greater recognition in sustainable forest management planning. This is evident in local resource management plans for the Robson Valley in east-central British Columbia, where public input shows strong support for the sustainable development of NTFPs harvesting. However, information needed to develop sustainable management guidelines for NTFPss is currently lacking. We, therefore, undertook an inventory of non-timber forest product plant and fungal species in the Robson Valley.

The distribution and abundance of NTFPs plant species was determined by ecosystem types as described by the Biogeoclimatic Ecosystem Classification system used in British Columbia. Species with a relatively high abundance and commercial potential included the valuable medicinal plant Devil担 club (*Oplopanax horridus*), berry-producing species such as black huckleberry (*Vaccinium membranaceum*), and the edible ostrich fern (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*). Plants used for floral greenery that are relatively abundant in certain ecosystem types included falsebox (*Paxistima myrsinites*), tall Oregon-grape (*Mahonia aquifolium*), pearly everlasting (*Anaphalis margaritacea), and conifer boughs, especially from western redcedar (Thuja plicata). We identified a number of fungal species noted for their food, medicinal, wildcrafting, industrial, or traditional uses. Among the important food mushrooms we recorded in the Robson Valley were pine mushroom (Tricholoma magnivelare), hedgehog mushroom (Hydnum repandum), and black morel (Morchella elata).*

Several information gaps were identified. We recommend that future research focus on gathering detailed information about selected NTFPs species. Information describing habitats, growth requirements, production levels, and response to harvesting is needed to develop sustainable management strategies.

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