



After the First Full Moon in April

A Sourcebook of Herbal Medicine from a California Indian Elder

Josephine Peters & Beverly Ortiz

After the First Full Moon in April





"Josephine Peters in Basketry Cap" by Deborah E. McConnell

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A Sourcebook of Herbal Medicine from a California Indian Elder



Josephine Grant Peters
and Beverly R. Ortiz

Including contributions from:

Cheryl Beck, Bryan Colegrove, Dwayne Ferris, Patricia Ferris, Zona Ferris,
Wendy Ferris George, LaVerne Glaze, Holly Hensher, Jennifer L. Kalt, Darlene Marshall,
Deborah E. McConnell, Kathleen McCovey, Quetta Peters, Tamara Peters, Ken Wilson

Karuk Plant Names by James A. Ferrara, © Karuk Tribe of California

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NOTICE: The information in this book is primarily for reference and education. It is not intended to be a substitute for advice of a physician. The authors and editors do not advocate self-diagnosis or self-medication; they urge anyone with continuing symptoms, however minor, to seek medical advice. The reader should be aware that any plant substance, whether used as food or medicine, externally or internally, may cause an allergic reaction in some people.



Josephine describes the uses of "tea" (yerba buena), which she had previously bundled into a ring, then dried, for storage. Photo by Beverly Ortiz.

For Bryan Colegrove (Hupa/Yurok/Karuk), Kathy McCovey (Karuk), Bradley Marshall (Karuk/Hupa), and Virgil McLaughlin (Karuk/Hupa, 1955–2009), with thanks for the assistance they provide by taking me out to gather plants, and by gathering plants for me.

JOSEPHINE PETERS

For Josephine, whose knowledge, generosity, and patient, good nature, made it all possible.

BEVERLY R. ORTIZ

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This book exists because of the strong conviction of herbalist Josephine Grant Peters (Karuk/Shasta/Abenaki) that in order for plants to heal, their medicinal uses must be shared. When Josephine and I first discussed this book, I asked her how much information she wanted to publish about the plants. When I asked that question, I was thinking about the innumerable ethnobotanies that have been published that do not include information about how medicinal plants are gathered and processed, or about the dosages that should be given to treat particular illnesses. When asked about this, Josephine was resolute that preparation details and dosages should indeed be included, with the exception of a handful of plants that she felt were so inherently dangerous to use that the details of their use should only be shared with local tribal people. The focus here is medicinal and food use. The spiritual purposes for which the Karuk use plants will remain with the Karuk community.

Although Josephine's collaboration with me and several other individuals in the creation of this book is certainly an act of tremendous generosity, Josephine herself would not see it in these terms. She wants to preserve plant knowledge for the benefit of future generations, but the level of detail in this book is motivated by something much more profound—Josephine's immutable conviction that unless she shares this information, the ability that she and other people have to heal others with these plants will spiritually die.

In making the decision to share her plant knowledge in a book, Josephine considered the fact that there are many people today who lack the type of restraint that was inherent in the way her people approached the gathering of plants for millennia; today there are people and companies who harvest these plants without any thought of giving back for what they take or of the overall sustainability of the plant populations. Josephine has witnessed the damage that unethical gatherers have done to particular patches of particular plants; but still, the plants will not heal if the knowledge is not shared. So a chapter on gathering ethics has been included in this book to guide people in sustainable plant gathering.

The plant knowledge in this book reflects the whole of Josephine's life. While some readers who seek to find in this book a frozen-in-time explication of ancient Karuk plant uses may be disappointed, the Karuk have never lived a frozen-in-time existence, separated from other people. A considerable portion of the plant uses in

this book are based on ancestral practices, as shared with Josephine by members of her extended family and several community elders, but much of it is also based on the type of plant uses that one might come across in any relatively isolated, late 1920s and early 1930s rural community, where doctors trained in modern medicine lived miles away and hospitals were not an option.

When Josephine was young, she heard the dynamite explosions that signaled the conversion of dirt roads suitable for pack trains into paved roads suitable for cars and trucks. Josephine knew a bit of the world that preceded the pack trains, when foot trails linked one distant, small community to another, and river crossings occurred in redwood dugouts, but she never lived in that world.

The larger world began to intrude into Karuk country some seventy years before Josephine was born, in the 1850s during the gold rush, and many of Josephine's plant uses reflect the knowledge and sensibilities about plant use that the newcomers brought with them. They also reflect the knowledge and sensibilities of people Josephine met as she moved throughout California before settling in the Hoopa Valley, and later as she traveled throughout the United States and beyond. For this reason, the plant knowledge shared by Josephine within these pages includes uses of plants she learned from the sons of a Chinese herbalist and American Indian and indigenous doctors she met at conferences and other events throughout the United States and internationally. It also includes Josephine's own sensibilities about how to use particular plants that are based on her own experience trying them herself and later prescribing them to others.

Because this is a very personal ethnobotany, rooted in the knowledge of a particular woman from a particular place with a particular history, the book begins with a detailed summary of Josephine's life, contextualized within the broader framework of Karuk culture and history, the history of Josephine's immediate ancestors, and Josephine's wide-ranging interactions with other tribal people both in the region of her Somes Bar birthplace and further afield. The plant listings that form the core of this book are further contextualized with information about how Josephine learned the uses of particular plants and about the several levels on which she thinks about and uses plants. There is information about the spiritual and practical contexts of that use, as well as information about how the plants were, and continue to be, managed with specialized burning, digging, and pruning techniques that enhance their growth.

From the perspective of outsiders who know nothing about the history of north-west California and nothing about the plants, Josephine Grant Peters will seem like the extraordinary human being that she is. But Josephine sees herself as a very ordinary human being. Josephine would be the first to tell you that what she has accomplished in her life is no more extraordinary than what innumerable individuals of her generation and life experience have accomplished, so she would not wish to be singled for out what she has done. To ensure that people understand this, the life history chapter of this book includes the cultural involvements of Josephine's peers and the mutual support and inspiration they have provided to each other. Family, community, and place have always been important in Josephine's world, and they remain as fundamental today as they were thousands of years ago.

Josephine's own words have been incorporated into the text in *italic typeface*. Her voice is intended to remind you that this is a very personal ethnobotany, one which represents a lifetime of learning and thinking about plants and of taking and



Beverly Ortiz and Josephine Peters at Following the Smoke, Camp Creek, west of Orleans, California, discussing a draft of this book, and reviewing photographs for inclusion. Photo by Nancy Cussary, July 14, 2005.

prescribing plant remedies by a particular woman with a particular history. Hopefully, Josephine's words will help you access the utter joy I have had in traveling with her through the landscape she knows so intimately, learning about the plants firsthand. I hope that a small measure of Josephine's inestimable good humor, practicality, forthrightness, and generosity will also shine through.

My role in this book has been to document and write down Josephine's life history and plant knowledge. Josephine shared this knowledge with me in much the same way that she learned—through experience, conversation, stories, and the serendipity of the moment. While I conducted several formal, audio-taped interviews with Josephine about the plants, much of what I learned was revealed as we sat around the kitchen table and chatted, visited at cultural events, and traveled together to find particular plants, or simply traveled to the market or a wedding. We did not discuss a given plant and all its uses in a fill-in-the-blank chronology. Instead, uses, preparation details, and dosages unfolded across several years in the ebb and flow of conversation, and in an ebb and flow of questions that I asked to clarify and amplify the details. The list of plants that Josephine uses grew in the manner of those plants, gradually and steadily, nurtured by previous generations, and supported by the present one. Like the plants, the entire project was nurtured and supported throughout by numerous people who helped with research and plant identifications, took photographs, and otherwise assisted with the myriad tasks necessary to grow a book. The story of how the book came into being, and the many people who helped with it, is told in the remaining pages of this forward and in the acknowledgments that follow.

I first met Josephine Peters in 1998, when she spoke about medicinal uses of plants at "Following the Smoke," a collaborative volunteer project sponsored by Karuk Indigenous Basketweavers, Six Rivers National Forest, the Bureau of Land

Management, The Karuk Tribe of California, and CalTrans. My presence that day resulted from an invitation from *News from Native California* to cover the first-ever Following the Smoke in 1997. Ken Wilson, Following the Smoke project coordinator and Six Rivers National Forest Heritage Resources program manager, extended the invitation. At the time, I was skills and technology columnist for *News*, and the editor, Jeannine Gendar, asked me if I would like to go and write about the project. I looked forward to the opportunity to learn more about the use of plants by Native peoples in California, an area of particular interest for me since the summer of 1976, when I worked as an oral historian in the Plumas National Forest. Most especially, I anticipated the pleasant camaraderie of time spent talking with weavers and gathering basketry materials.

Following the Smoke was named after a strategy once used by weavers in the Klamath-Trinity River area to track the Forest Service's autumn slash burning program in the hope of finding suitably burned basketry materials (Heffner 1984). In the old days, Native peoples managed the landscape by setting fires in seasonal rounds. These fires kept woodlands and forests open and filled with mature trees; ensured that seed harvests would be plentiful; killed disease organisms that thrive in the duff and decaying debris that accumulate in unburned areas; and readily returned nutrients to the soil. Where fires burned, new sprouts proliferated, which in turn provided food for elk, antelope, and deer. Fire also served as an important tool for basketmakers. In northern California, for instance, fires ensured the growth of straight, supple hazel shoots and robust, pliable beargrass blades.

In short, the fires set by Native peoples helped renew the land, ensuring the health and productivity of the plants and wildlife upon which the people depended for sustenance. After non-Indians outlawed these aeons-old prescribed burning practices, basketmakers had to hope that slash burns had inadvertently done the job or make do with inferior materials.

Today basketmakers in the Klamath-Trinity forests no longer need to rely on the chance of slash burning. Instead, they've worked long and hard to successfully advocate for the prescribed burning of basketry plants on Forest Service lands. Due to staff turnover, however, they must continually educate the general public, land management agency personnel, and in particular, policy makers in those agencies, about these and other issues of concern, such as herbicide spraying of basketry plants, medicines, and food.

The Karuk Indigenous Basketweavers, a group of basketweavers of Karuk heritage, hosted Following the Smoke as part of these wide-ranging educational efforts. This award-winning project, which occurred from 1997–2007, was part of Passport in Time (PIT), a nationwide USDA Forest Service program intended to involve individuals and families in archaeological and historic preservation projects in national forests. Following the Smoke, one of more than a hundred PIT projects offered annually throughout the United States, was the first PIT project to include cultural exchange and policy change as its goal. In addition to learning about local plant use and weaving techniques, volunteers helped gather basketry materials for distribution to elder weavers. They also prepared sites with beargrass and/or hazel for controlled burning in collaboration with the Forest Service and a private landholder, clearing and stacking brush and creating a fire line.*

*For more about Following the Smoke see Ortiz (1998:21-29 and 1999:13-16).

At the 1998 PIT, Josephine expanded participants' awareness of Karuk plant use beyond the realm of baskets by explaining the medicinal properties of innumerable plants growing near the camp. Her repertoire ranged from plant-based cures for burns, sores, blisters, rashes, indigestion, and coughs, to those for kidney stones, stroke, and cancer. She described wormwood's use as a tick repellent when rubbed on one's arms and legs; a decoction of yerba buena for fevers; how trillium (motherwort) bulbs ease labor pains; and the manner in which Oregon grape root steeped in hot water becomes a blood purifier. Throughout, she interlaced cautionary stories about the destruction of herbal gathering locales through logging activities, herbicide spraying along roadsides, and thoughtless greed:

When I go out, I just gather what I think I need. . . . We don't have any ginseng in the area any more. . . . We used to go up the creek where I live, but they've gathered it all out. They don't leave anything for seed.

If the plants are properly cared for, Josephine emphasized, *There's enough herbs on the earth to cure everything.*

Following the Smoke has been a dynamic, poignant, and joy-filled experience; the weavers' generosity and warmth a great gift. I was blessed to return every year of the project's eleven years, to renew the friendships made, continue documenting the contemporary cultural involvements and policy needs of its indigenous participants, and assist with activities.

In 2001 Ken Wilson phoned me at the request of Wendy Ferris George, Vice Chair of the California Indian Basketweavers Association, to ask if I would take a lead role in an effort to preserve Josephine's cultural knowledge, especially that pertaining to medicinal plant uses. The need to preserve Josephine's knowledge had been on many people's minds, including my own, and Ken successfully applied to the USDA-Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, for a grant to do just that. The grant resulted in a Challenge Cost-Share Agreement between the Six Rivers National Forest and the California Indian Basketweavers Association Northwestern Field Office. The Cost-Share Agreement provided an invaluable opportunity to produce an overview of Josephine's life history, identify the plants she uses for medicinal purposes, and describe the illnesses she treats with them.

The current book greatly expands on the information generated by the Challenge Cost-Share Agreement, providing additional information about Josephine's life, as well as detailed instructions about how she processes herbs for medicinal and edible purposes.



Josephine explains the uses of false Solomon's seal. Photo by Beverly Ortiz.

Our forest is like a drugstore.

JOSEPHINE PETERS

March 10, 2004



That this book could be written at all is due to Josephine's abiding commitment to share her knowledge with a wide audience. Her inestimable generosity, good humor, forthrightness, and practicality have graced the entire undertaking. Her warm hospitality and indefatigable patience carried it forward to completion. Her extensive archive of documents pertaining to local and family history gave a context to the work.

Josephine's daughters were extremely helpful. Cheryl Beck reviewed drafts of the manuscript and provided important guidance. She sent me a copy of a *Siskiyou Pioneer* article written by Frank A. Grant III about the family's history, and a copy of C. Hart Merriam's field notes, edited by Robert Heizer and based on Merriam's interviews with Cheryl's great-grandmother, Ellen Brazille Grant. She also sent me photographs of her great-grandparents, a lovely photograph of her grandparents' ranch, where Josephine was raised, and arranged for her granddaughter Samantha McDonald to write a tribute to Josephine, which Cheryl edited.

Tamara Peters provided much appreciated encouragement and loaned me several family photographs. The stories and reminiscences she shared helped provide a context for and humanity to her mother's life history.

Quetta Peters (Cree) and Jene McCovey (Yurok) provided support and warmhearted hospitality during my many trips to Hoopa. Some years prior to the project's beginning, Quetta compiled a list of plants used by her mom, and what they were used for. This list, along with one made by students at The University of California at Riverside, provided the base upon which the project's plant use information was compiled.

Many thanks, as well, to Josephine's niece Cindy Sylvia (Hoopa/Yurok/Karuk) for her hospitality, good cheer and encouragement.

Darlene Marshall's stunning poetry and prose provides an important context for understanding the spiritual significance of the plants. Darlene (Hupa/Yurok/Karuk) graciously hosted me at her Hoopa Valley home on several occasions, where she regaled me with many compelling stories about the cultural contributions of Josephine, her aunt Vivien Hailstone, and other community elders. These stories provided invaluable perspective for the life history chapter of this work, about which Darlene provided vital feedback. Darlene introduced me to her sister Andrea Kelsey, who also provided important insights about community history and cultural involvements. Darlene's cousin Lyn Risling (Karuk, Yurok, and Member of the Hoopa Tribe) created the beautiful painting, *The Peppernut Story*, which graces the cover of the book, and helps bring that sacred narrative to life.

Quetta Peters, Josephine Peters and Jene McCovey outside their Hoopa Valley home. Photo by Beverly Ortiz, 2001.



The work was guided throughout by Bryan Colegrove (Hupa/Yurok/Karuk), Dwayne Ferris (Karuk), Patricia Ferris (Hupa/Yurok/Chimariko), Zona Ferris (Karuk), Wendy Ferris George (Hupa/Yurok/Karuk/Chimariko), LaVerne Glaze (Karuk/Yurok), Holly Hensher (Karuk), Jennifer L. Kalt, Deborah E. McConnell (Hupa/Yurok), Kathleen McCovey (Karuk), and Ken Wilson. In addition to the input they provided at several meetings held with Josephine, they helped implement the research and nurtured the project throughout. Their generous efforts have greatly enriched the results.

Bryan Colegrove and Kathy McCovey took Josephine to gather plants, interviewed her about their use, and took notes. When Josephine's health would not permit her to join them, they gathered plants under her direction. In addition, Kathy suggested the title *After the First Full Moon in April* during a brainstorming session with Jo, myself, and several of the other people involved. Kathy gave me a draft of a report she wrote about the history and culture of the Karuk. This formed the basis of the introduction to Karuk history and culture provided in the life history section of this work. Kathy also collaborated with Erin Rentz (Karuk), Frank K. Lake (Karuk), and Luna Latimer Lake on the identification of plants. Frank and Luna took photographs of some plants, as did botanist Sydney Carothers. Stephen W. Edwards, director of the East Bay Regional Park District Botanic Garden at Tilden Regional Park, and Susan Agnew, located several plant photographs in the garden archives. I would also like to thank Steve Edwards and Bert Johnson for reviewing and providing Latin binomials for pressed samples of some of Josephine's herbs.

Patricia and Dwayne Ferris interviewed Josephine about plant uses, especially those with spiritual significance, and also took photographs of plants.

Holly Hensher conducted a cassette-taped interview with Josephine about plant uses, and videotaped her in the field.

Jennifer Kalt, the California Indian Basketweavers Association's (CIBA) resource protection associate in the Northwestern Field Office and a botanist, confirmed the Latin binomials, which follow *The Jepson Manual*. She created a herbarium from



Front row, left to right: Zona Ferris, LaVerne Glaze, Josephine Peters, and Ken Wilson. Back row, left to right: Kathy McCovey, Deborah McConnell, Beverly Ortiz, Bryan Colegrove, Dwayne Ferris, Pat Ferris, and Jennifer Kalt. Taken at Camp Creek, near Panámnik (Orleans), California during Following the Smoke. Photo by Sally Jones, July 13, 2005.

plant specimens gathered by herself, Bryan Colegrove, Kathy McCovey, and myself. Jennifer took notes about plant uses and created a computerized, comparative database of Quetta's plant list and that of Riverside. This database revealed a number of plants for which use information had not yet been obtained or confirmed, and inconsistencies in scientific names identified by the Riverside students. It was also used as the basis for a flow chart listing those plants for which photographs and/or specimens had been obtained.

Jennifer wrote Chapter 2, *Gathering Ethics*, with guidance from Bryan Colegrove and Kathy McCovey. She photographed plants growing in the field, and accompanied Jo, myself, and an interested college student on an excursion from Hoopa, nearly to Redding, to document some of the plants. Jennifer later made her laptop available to me for compiling additional information during another visit with Jo. Jennifer made that same laptop available in 2005, when we made editorial changes to the manuscript at the 2005 *Following the Smoke*, first by daylight, then by candlelight and Coleman Lantern light while seated at a picnic table. Additionally, Jennifer scanned the project's slide collection and videotaped Bryan Colegrove talking about Josephine's importance in his life. Deborah McConnell, Director of CIBA's Northwestern Field Office, administered the Cost-Share Agreement between CIBA and Six Rivers National Forest that funded initial research about Josephine's use of plants growing within the forest area. She interviewed Josephine about plant uses and took meticulous notes and photographs of Josephine and certain plants. She also drew the elegant illustration of Josephine in her basket cap.

The following people participated in and documented Josephine's salve making process at Deborah's Hoopa Valley home on March 10, 2004: Bryan Colegrove, Kathy McCovey, and Virgil McLaughlin gathered the herbs; Zona Ferris and Jennifer Kalt made written notes; Jennifer Kalt and Bryan Colegrove made videotapes; and LaVerne Glaze and Deborah McConnell took still photographs. Pat Ferris, Holly Hensher, and Quetta Peters joined them in learning about salve making.

Beverly Ortiz, Ken Wilson, and Jennifer Kalt working on the book by lantern light at Following the Smoke, Camp Creek, California, July 13, 2005. Photo courtesy unknown Following the Smoke participant.



Language specialist James A. Ferrara compiled and edited the Karuk names listed in the text in consultation with Karuk elder Violet Super and linguist William Bright. He also consulted the writings of linguist J. P. Harrington. Those found here are excerpted from draft four of a manuscript in Jim's possession, "Scientific (Latin) Designations for Plants, with Corresponding Karuk Names," completed March 8, 2004, and a second manuscript, "Plant and Animal Names Composite List with English Glosses of Karuk Terms." The Karuk Tribe of California holds the copyright to this material.

In addition to Cheryl Beck and Tamara Peters, Holly Hensher, Jennifer Kalt, Deborah McConnell, Kathy McCovey, and Ken Wilson reviewed and commented on drafts of the manuscript.

Jeannine Gendar, Heyday Books editorial director, provided valuable advice about scanning images for publication. Many thanks to Annamarie Guerrero and Jennifer Kalt for their assistance with scanning numerous prints and slides, respectively; as well as to Cecilia Perez, who helped select images from Josephine's photo albums.

Most of the projects' archives will be deposited with Humboldt State University's Indian Natural Resources Science and Engineering Program. The plant specimens will be deposited in HSU's Herbarium.

It has been my honor and utter joy to work with Josephine and everyone else involved in bringing the project to completion. I had the great fortune to share oral history techniques with project members, compile the data contributed by them, and conduct extensive cassette-taped and written interviews with Jo about her life and plant use. Along the way, I took still photographs of Jo with her children, giving presentations and gathering plants, of the plants themselves, the processing of the herbs, historic family photographs, and baskets and other objects made by Jo. We traveled to look at plants and document their uses on several occasions. Once, we spent the day traveling with Jene McCovey to look at, photograph, and discuss places along the Trinity and Klamath Rivers that were important to Jo in her childhood and later life.

I used Quetta's list and that of Riverside as the basis for asking Jo detailed questions about every plant, including preparation and dosage information. As the list of plants steadily expanded beyond these initial, vital compilations, the awe I felt when I first heard Jo discuss plant uses in 1998 continued to increase. That sense of awe grew as I reviewed notes, transcribed tapes and compiled the plant information,



Left to right: Kathy McCovey, Violet Super and Susan Gehr, language director, Karuk Tribe of California, discussing the Karuk name for wild grape at Following the Smoke. Photograph by Beverly Ortiz, ca. July 2006.

leading me to ask additional questions to fill in the details. It occurred anew as I reviewed and copied documents in Josephine's extensive archives. The process of writing it all down renewed my awe, and my gratitude, again and again.

During numerous visits and telephone calls to refine and expand upon the information shared within the growing compendium, the clarity and consistency with which Josephine recalled the details was both gratifying and astonishing. Although in the final years of the project Josephine's health precluded her from traveling into the field to view the plants, she was able to review color photographs downloaded by me from CalPhotos to ensure the accuracy of the plant identifications, as well as review plant specimens brought to her by Kathy McCovey and Bryan Colegrove.

During the course of this project, Zona Ferris and LaVerne Glaze shared their own knowledge of plant use with me. This very important information, along with that shared by Frank Scott, will be published at a later date in another venue.

Much appreciation goes to Joe and Carol J. Ellick, whom I met at the 2007 Following the Smoke, where a draft of the manuscript was shared with participants. Joe and Carol introduced me to Mitch Allen, publisher of Left Coast Press, who immediately recognized the value of the information contained within this book, and agreed to publish it. Since then, Jennifer Collier, Senior Editor of Left Coast Press, has ably overseen the myriad tasks necessary to bring this work into publication. I very much appreciate Jennifer's keen eye for detail, nuance and context. Her editorial suggestions have greatly enriched the results, as has the skillful copy editing of Nathalie Arnold, whose sensitivity to the material, and expertise in the finer details of grammar, phrasing, and format, brought consistency to the content, while maintaining its overall tone. I would like to extend many thanks to proofreader Sally Gregg, whose passion for the English language, and sensitivity to the written word, resulted in a superbly-polished book. Finally, I would like to recognize the talented work of Lisa Devenish of Devenish Design. Lisa brought immense heart and beauty to the overall appearance of the book, reflecting in her design the heart and beauty of Josephine herself.

On behalf of myself, Josephine, and the project contributors, I would like to thank Mitch, Jennifer, and the entire Left Coast Press team for helping Josephine fulfill her dream of sharing the healing qualities of plants with the broader world.

Beverly Ortiz

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In the beginning, before there was anything, there was God.

Later, there were the Spirit People, and animals could talk.

One day, God said, "It is time for people. We must make the world ready for them. First they will need things to eat so that they can live.

The animals will be food and we will fill the water with fish.

Plants, trees, and almost everything made can be used by the people.

We will not make it easy. To some animals we will give the gift of speed, some will have great strength, and some keen eyesight. We will be a part of every living thing and each will have the gift of survival."

So it was done. The Spirit People became part of every living thing. Some spirits became birds, some lived in rocks to keep the memory of everything that happens, and some lived in the plants. There was much discussion about which spirit would become which plant. Some spirit people knew that useful objects such as baskets would also be very beautiful. Others wanted to be acorn trees because people would depend on them. The greatest care was given in choosing who would have the honor of being medicinal plants. "This was important," God said, "because when the people get sick they will need this, our greatest gift. But all plants are important and must be shown respect."

The people came and learned the importance of all God's gifts. They learned that all living things are to be respected. Some learned to use plants to make life easier and some were gifted with the knowledge of plant use for healing. When the people were sick, they thanked Creator God for this, the greatest gift.

We burn root and pray.
We think good thoughts and weave.
We grind our acorns to feed our family.
We sing as we rock the baby in the basket.

It is good that we live here in this place
that the Creator made for us.

Thank you, Spirit People.
Thank you Creator God.