

NOOTKA ROSE



Gorge Waterway Action Society



Nootka Rose (*Rosa nutkana*)

OVERVIEW:

Edible Nature

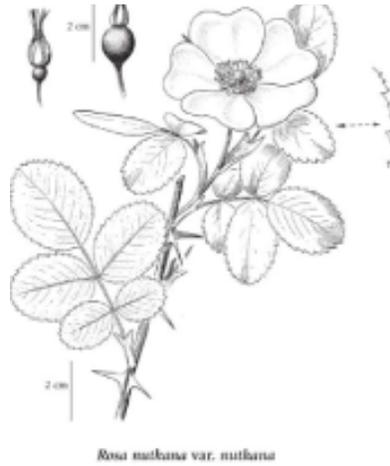
Nootka Rose is identified as a wild rose with spindly to shrubby deciduous stems that support sharp thorns. The stems have alternating leaves that are toothed at the edges. Flowers have five or more petals and are followed by seedy, round, reddish-orange fruit called a hip. These hips, along with the petals, are edible once the seeds are removed. Place the removed seeds on loose bare ground for future roses to sprout.



- General Information: Nootka Rose is a member of the Rose Family (*Rosaceae*) and is a long-lived shrub native to western Canada. It grows in spindly stalks reaching 3 metres with a pair of large prickles at the base of each leaf. The deciduous leaves alternate along the stalk with an odd number (5-7) of toothed leaflets. The flowers are large (4-8cm) and pink in colour.
- Habitat: Nootka Rose is often found in generally open habitats, shorelines, meadows, thickets, streamsides, roadsides, and clearings at low to middle elevations.
- Horticultural Uses: Nootka Rose is often used in ornamental gardens. The extensive rhizomes and rapid growth of the species makes this rose ideal for environmental restoration.

Indigenous Uses of Nootka Rose

The hips of the Nootka Rose were collected and made into jams, jellies, syrups, and teas. The hips are remarkably high in vitamin C. The hips are ripe to harvest in September and October. The ripe hips were steeped, mashed and fed to babies with diarrhea. The leaves of the Nootka Rose were often used as a flavouring in cedar-root cooking baskets for boiled foods. The stems were often used in steaming pits, cooking baskets, and root-storage pits. Additionally, in the Spring the tender young shoots were sometimes eaten raw. The bark was stripped from the branches and boiled to make a cooled tea used as an eyewash for cataracts or to enhance eyesight. The leaves were mashed or chewed and used as a poultice for sore eyes, any type of abscess and bee stings.



Species Uses of Nootka Rose

Nootka Roses produce small amounts of nectar, so their primary insect pollinators are pollen-gathering bees. Native bees are the primary pollinators of this species. Native roses are more attractive to native bees than non-native roses due to their double flowers. The native bees prefer the shape, smell, and colour of the native Nootka Rose. The hips of the rose are eaten by small mammals, birds, and insects. The hips remain on the stalks year round providing forage during winter months.



Nootka Rose Neature Question

Question:

What months are best to harvest the rose hips?

Answer:

The best time to harvest rose hips are in September and October.

For a full list of information & image sources, visit our website at: <http://gorge.ca/ycp-references/>