



Willamette Valley Gumweed

Grindelia integrifolia

Willamette Valley gumweed gets its name from the sticky resin that dots the leaves and oozes from new buds. The long, semi-thin leaves alternate their way up a short, woody stem, with either smooth or toothed edges. The stem and leaves both have a fuzzy appearance due to fine hairs growing on most of the plant. The gumweed plant is topped with several flower heads. From June all the way through November, the round, bulbous buds covered in spike-like bracts bloom with deep-yellow flowers with a flattened seed cluster in the center.

Grindelia integrifolia thrives in wet conditions --- usually in wetlands or marshes (fresh and saltwater). Indigenous peoples of the Willamette Valley utilized this plant as a medicinal food. The leaves were often steeped to make a bitter tea, which proved useful for asthma or bronchitis. The flowers and the leaves were also often eaten for their anti-inflammatory and sedative effects. While not an edible use of the plant, the extracts were occasionally made into a paste to treat skin irritations from conditions like poison oak. Other indigenous uses for gumweed included using the sticky resin as glue, making yellow and green dyes from the flowers and buds, and using dried stems as brooms.

Grindelia integrifolia can be a powerful component of native wetland restoration due to its late bloom. When many flowers have moved out of their flowering stage by late summer and early fall, the Willamette Valley gumweed provides a late season source of pollen for native butterflies and bees.

Sources:

<https://www.wnps.org/native-plant-directory/130:grindelia-integrifolia>

<https://bufordpark.org/products/grindelia-integrifolia>

<http://biology.burke.washington.edu/herbarium/imagecollection/taxon.php?Taxon=Grindelia%20integrifolia>

<https://mountpisgaharboretum.org/learn/plant-list/grindelia-integrifolia/>

<https://pfaf.org/user/Plant.aspx?LatinName=Grindelia>