



Gardens & Meadows

J. G. Porter



As raindrops meniscusly adhered to this small leaf in our front garden, the leaf's surface was magically transformed into a miniature mirror reflecting the leaves of adjacent plants.



Cicada shell



Five delicacies for a spider's supper



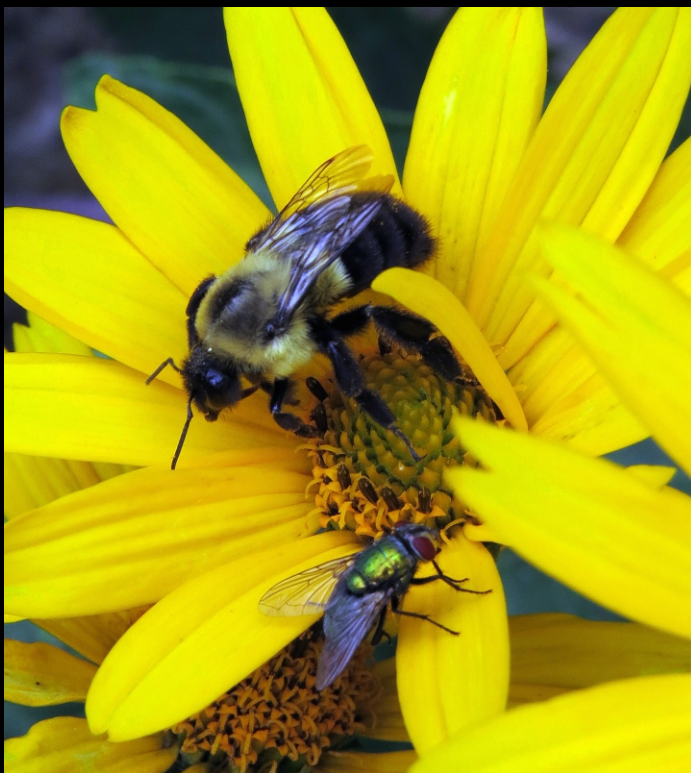




An Enlightened One?



The Bumble Bee was supping from the blossom when the fly flew in. The Bee abruptly shied away from its lunch as if the fly were a threat.





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Polypore shelf fungi



Gnarled Tree Stump







Staghorn Sumac

Identified initially by niece, Patti Macdonald Mikula, and supplemented by niece, Janice Huntley Fryer, who added *Drupe* to the story.

My curiosity piqued, I dug around and found this essay on brewing Sumac Tea. -JGP

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Making Sumac Tea

Harvest the red cones in August when they are bright and full and before heavy rains that can wash out their color and flavor. Taste one drupe before picking to make sure that it is ripe, with a tangy, lemony flavor. A table-spoon or two of the drupes steeped in hot water, or left to sit in water outdoors on a sunny day, should yield one to two flavorful cups of "Indian lemonade."

Be sure to filter the pink liquid through a tea strainer, cheesecloth or paper coffee filter before drinking to remove any fibers that naturally occur with the drupes. The cones store well in a paper shopping bag in a cool place for months and should yield good tea until springtime when mints can be harvested from the herb garden for a different tea. Many herbal teas are considered diuretics, improving kidney function and ridding the body of toxins. Sumac tea falls into that category. In any event there are definitely micro-nutrients in sumac, vitamins and minerals, that are good for health. Plus there is the added healthful psychological boost of knowing that this local tree that provides a tasty, seasonal drink, as well as a spice, has been used by millions of people for thousands of years. And you gathered it from living nature in your backyard.

<https://www.edibleeastend.com/2012/08/09/harvest-sumac/>

Also:

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/making_sumac_tea

BTW, I photographed this Staghorn Sumac several years ago in the Britannia Meadow in Ottawa's west end.



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