

corncoobs, gourd shells, and foodstuffs, but artifacts are gone. Long ago rodents ate the contents of most structures, or looters took them away. Usually all we see in structures today are thick deposits of packrat droppings.

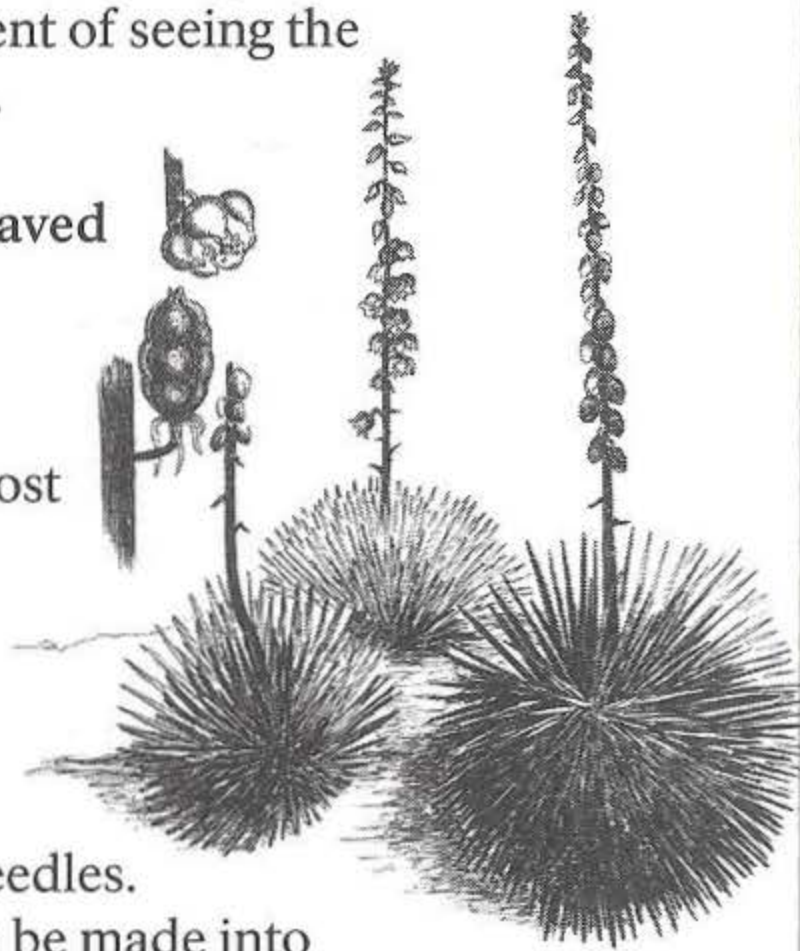
If you find any archeological or historical objects, leave them in place. **Removing, damaging, or even moving an artifact destroys a site's scientific value for future archeologists.** It also deprives other visitors of the enjoyment of seeing the objects on site.

**7** Narrow-leaved yucca

(*Yucca angustissima*)

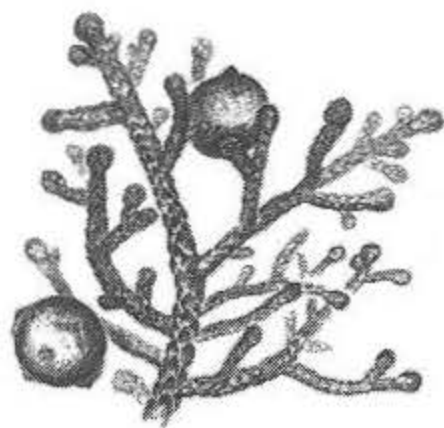
Tribes use almost every part of this common plant. The sharp spines on the leaf tips serve as needles.

Leaf fibers can be made into cord and rope and woven into sandals and mats. The flowers and fruits can be eaten. The roots yield saponin, a substance used as soap.



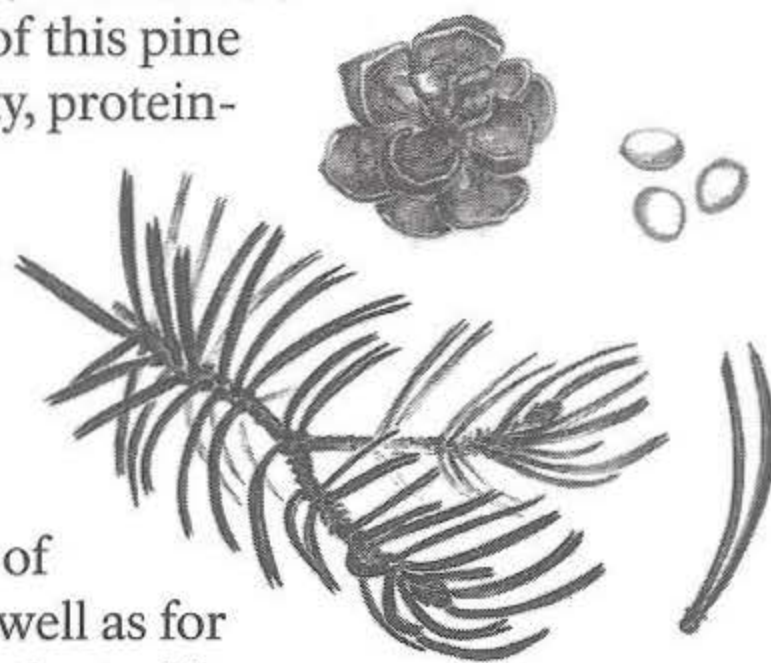
**8** Utah juniper (*Juniperus osteosperma*) The soft, fibrous bark of this tree provided diapers and cradleboard padding. The berries can

be made into tea for medicinal purposes, or pierced and strung as beads.



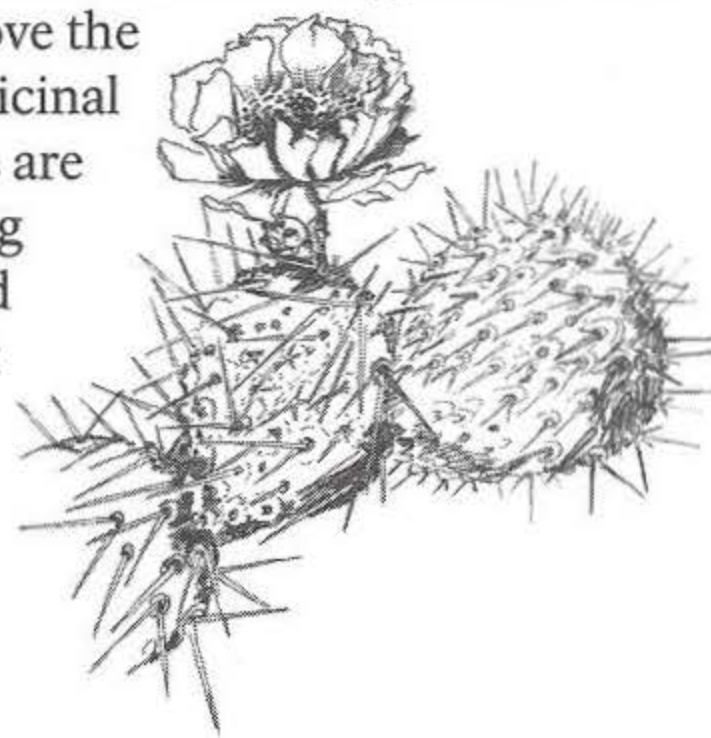
**9** Pinyon (*Pinus edulis*)

The cones of this pine contain tasty, protein-rich seeds which have been an important food for the human inhabitants of this area as well as for birds and rodents. They can be eaten raw or roasted.



**10** Pricklypear cactus (*Opuntia* sp.) This cactus bears a sweet, juicy, edible fruit.

The pads can be eaten after being roasted and scraped to remove the spines. For medicinal use, compresses are made by splitting a cactus pad and applying the cut surface to a wound.



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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

# Roadside Ruin

TRAIL GUIDE



0.3 mile (.5km)

THE NEEDLES DISTRICT  
CANYONLANDS NATIONAL PARK

# Who Lived Here?

Around 950 CE (Common Era), ancestral Puebloan populations around Mesa Verde and Fremont communities to the north were growing. Emigration into the Canyonlands area increased. Both groups were farmers, seeking locations that provided water, arable land, building sites, and a variety of wild plants. One of those productive locations was the nearby Salt Creek drainage.

The ancestral Puebloans practiced full-time farming, but the Fremont split their time between farming and foraging. They raised corn, beans, squash, and cotton and gathered seeds, roots, and fruits. They also hunted deer and bighorn sheep and trapped or snared small animals and birds.

Climate change and regional droughts in the late 1200s made farming difficult. By the end of the century most farmers had emigrated south to what is now New Mexico and Arizona. They joined other groups that would become the Hopi and Zuni tribes. Others stayed and adapted to the colder climate by relying on wild plant gathering. These groups would become local Ute and Paiute tribes.

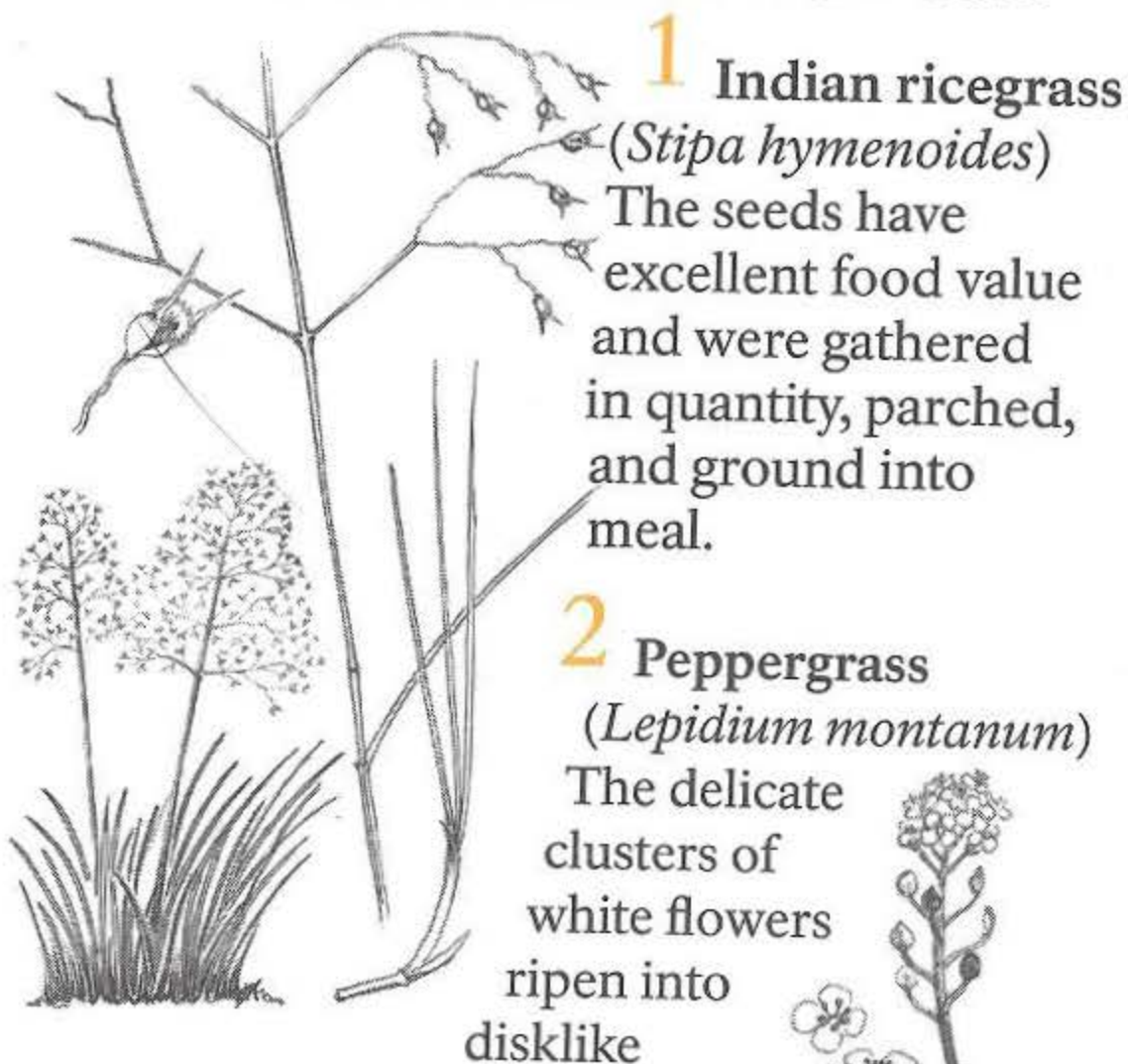
Though a later visitor named this place "Ruin," today's tribes would not use that word. They say their ancestors in the spiritual world continue to use this place.

This 1/3-mile (0.5 km) loop leads to a typical ancestral Puebloan-era structure. Few in the park are in as good condition as this one.

Along the way you will see native plants which people used to meet their daily needs. They will help acquaint you with the way of life of the early inhabitants of this area.

# Trail Guide

## Follow the Numbered Posts



### 1 Indian ricegrass

(*Stipa hymenoides*)

The seeds have excellent food value and were gathered in quantity, parched, and ground into meal.

### 2 Peppergrass

(*Lepidium montanum*)

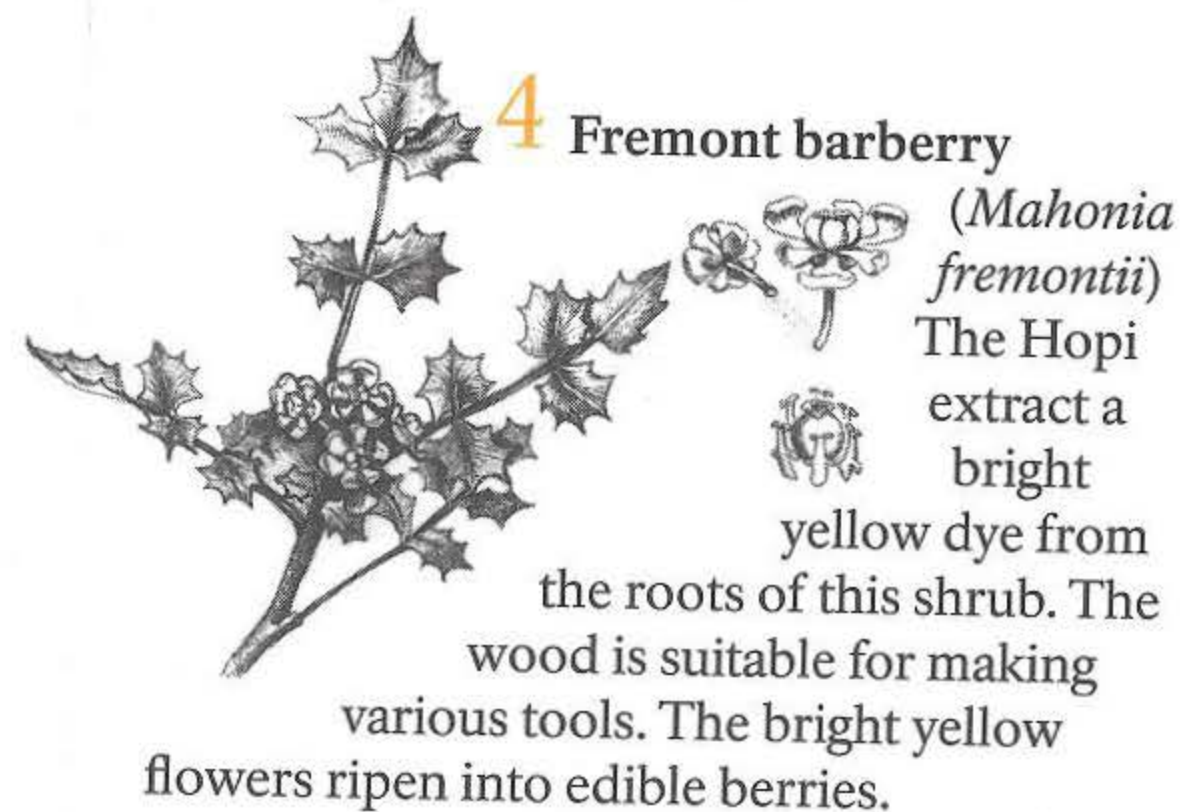
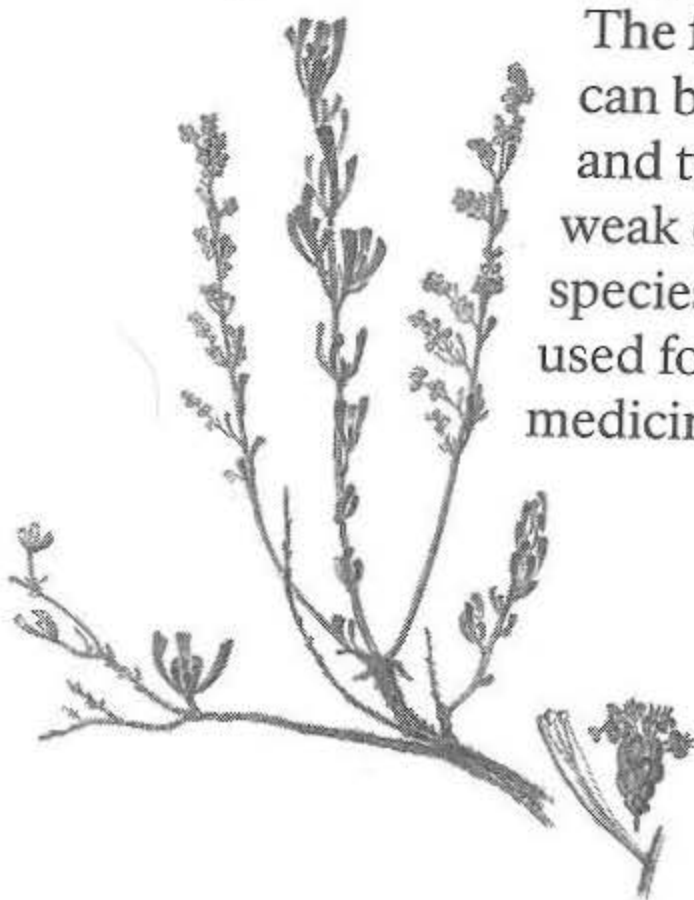
The delicate clusters of white flowers ripen into disklike

seeds with a hot, peppery taste. Tribes grind these seeds to use as a spice. The Navajo also use peppergrass for medicinal purposes.

### 3 Big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*)

This is one of several species of sage found in this area. The plant furnishes a light yellow dye.

The fibrous bark can be pounded and twisted into weak cordage. Other species of sage can be used for seasoning, medicine, and tea.



### 4 Fremont barberry

(*Mahonia fremontii*)

The Hopi extract a bright yellow dye from

the roots of this shrub. The wood is suitable for making various tools. The bright yellow flowers ripen into edible berries.

### 5 Four-wing saltbush

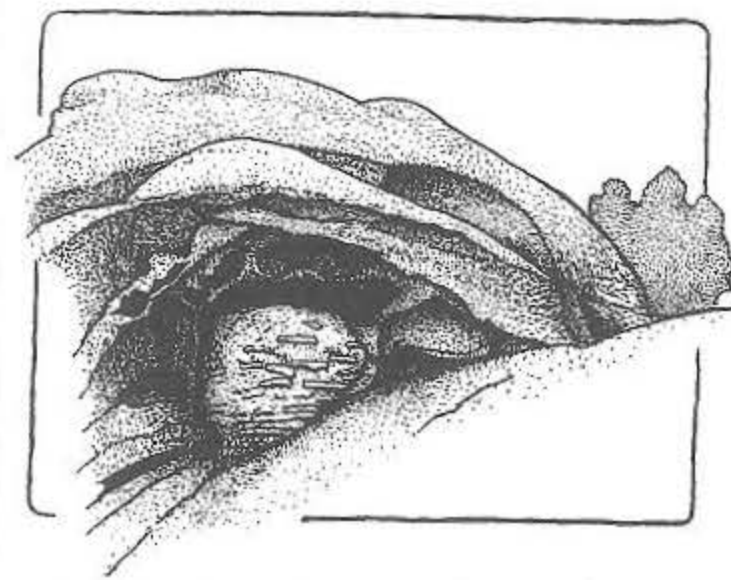
(*Atriplex canescens*)

The seeds of this shrub are used as food; the ashes are used as baking powder.

### 6

Structures

like this could have held corn, seeds, and nuts, or they could have been storage for ceremonial items used for religious practice. In these cases, they are often well hidden or located in almost inaccessible places.



Please do not climb on this structure or disturb it in any way. The mortar is very fragile and even touching it will hasten its collapse.

The small, rectangular doors were covered with slabs of rock. This structure's door is on the roof. Some structures still contain