

## ABSTRACT

### *MYAAMIA* ETHNOBOTANY

By Michael P. Gonella

The Miami people have a rich and long-standing relationship with the plants of their homelands. Much traditional *Myaamia* ethnobotanical knowledge has endured loss of homelands from governmental cessions, removal to Kansas and Oklahoma and societal and governmental pressures of assimilation. The purpose of this dissertation was to investigate the extent of existing Miami ethnobotanical knowledge and use that data to reconstruct the traditional Miami corn cultivation cycle and effects of harvesting and burning of two culturally important plants. Initiation of this ethnobotanical study was by the Miami people themselves, in their current efforts to revitalize traditional Miami culture, including educational programs and management of culturally significant plants on tribal lands.

*Myaamia* ethnobotanical knowledge: This dissertation gathered and organized extant Miami ethnobotanical data and assembled it into a database for analysis. Survival of Miami ethnobotanical knowledge was evident in the abundant ethnobotanical data gathered in this study, from published and unpublished sources from historic and contemporary times, and from interviews with living Miami elders. Data on over 160 plant species were gathered, including data regarding traditional uses and stewardship. Comparisons of historic and contemporary data revealed changes in types of plant used, from pre- to post-removal times, and a non-traditional ranking of importance of habitat types was conducted.

*Myaamia miincipi*: The most data was gathered on *myaamia miincipi*, Miami corn, and were used to reconstruct the Miami year as based on the corn cultivation cycle, and this cycle provided indirect information regarding the hunting cycle and Miami (lunar) calendar.

*Leninši* (*Asclepias syriaca* L.) harvesting and burning: This study examined the effects of simulated traditional Miami harvesting and burning on growth and

reproduction of *A. syriaca*. Harvesting and burning were generally found to sustain growth and reproduction although traditional harvest timing was critical to sustainability.

*Ahsapa (Apocynum cannabinum L.) harvesting and burning*: This study examined the effects of simulated, traditional Miami harvesting and burning on growth and reproduction of *A. cannabinum*. Harvesting was found to sustain growth and reproduction but mowing had a negative effect on growth. Burning was not found to increase growth or reproduction.

**MYAAMIA ETHNOBOTANY**

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