

Huckleberry Picking at 49° North Mountain Resort

Please Respect Our Mountain and Staff

1. Vehicles are only allowed on the designated roadways and are not allowed past gates or other obvious barriers. Please park your vehicle where it is out of the way. Hiking is permitted off road and beyond gates.
2. Do not park in front of gates or block roadways. Ski area workers are working at the ski area seven (7) days a week from dawn to dark.
3. No ATV's are allowed on the ski area.
4. No commercial berry picking.
5. Leave no trace – pick up all garbage.
6. No fires – be very careful of cigarettes and other lighted material.
7. Be aware of your surroundings

Huckleberry picking can be enjoyed as a solitary experience or as a group activity for the entire family. The 49° North Mountain Resort area is known for its abundance of huckleberries.

Many factors such as elevations, ripening seasons and climate contribute to a good berry site. The best berry picking is usually found along ski trails and cat tracks located about the ski area. The berry bushes found in these areas have a lot of sunlight and little competition for nutrients.

Unfavorable weather conditions can completely wipe out a crop of huckleberries in unique locations and elevations. Weather conditions such as not enough rain, too much rain, a hail storm that occurs when berries are just forming on the bushes, and not enough sunshine may force you and your family to look in other areas of the resort.

When venturing into the forest for a day of berry picking, remember, bears like them too. If they think you are imposing on “their berry patch or territory” there may be problems. It is wise to retreat from any bears should the situation present itself. The huckleberry is one the primary foods for the grizzly and black bear. The berries are very high in carbohydrates, and an abundant crop assures the bear's survival through the winter months when they are hibernating.

About the Berry

Huckleberry:

(Vaccinium Membranaceum)

Common Names:

Blueberry, Big Whortleberry, Black Huckleberry, Bilberry

Description:

The huckleberry is a low erect shrub, ranging from 1-5 feet tall. The flowers are shaped like tiny pink or white urns, which blossom in June and July, depending on elevation. The leaves are short, elliptical and alternative on the stems. The bush turns brilliant red and sheds its leaves in the fall. The stem bark is reddish (often yellowish-green in shaded sites). The shape of the berry varies from round to oval and color varies from purplish black to wine-colored red. Some species have a dusky blue covering called bloom. The berries taste sweet and tart, in the same proportions.

Ripening Season: July-August

Early in the season, by mid-July, the berries on the sunny southern facing slopes and lower elevations are first to ripen. They are most succulent in mid-summer. However, good picking can generally be found as late as October on north-facing slopes.

Habitat:

Coniferous forests in open to shaded sites where there are acidic soils. They can be found at elevations ranging from 2,000 – 9,000 feet in the Rocky Mountains. The best sites are those that can support grand fir, alpine fir and lodge pole pine trees in abundant sunlight. The best picking is usually found in areas opened up from forest fire, on ski trails in fir stands and cat tracks.