

# Literacy This Week



Yukon Literacy  
Coalition

*We are a society of people dedicated to improving the quality of life of all Yukoners. We do this by building the foundational skills required for lifelong learning; acknowledging that we are all adapting to an everchanging world.*

## *It's Berry Picking Season!*

Berry season has begun in the Yukon. You can tell by the freshly stained fingers of avid berry pickers and the boastful patches of haskaps and strawberries. I sometimes pick wild strawberries as I walk along trails - it takes a committed picker to fill a bowl of those tiny gems. Once upon a time I lived in northern BC on a property called "the strawberry farm". It was a cabin in the middle of a field of wild strawberries. I was in absolute heaven.



Haskap

Yukon berries ripen hard and fast and then they are done for the season. Seasoned berry pickers know intuitively when the berry they love to pick is ripe. Berries ripen at different times in different locations. Some years it seems like there are cranberries everywhere you look and other years there seem to be none. Wild northern berries are mysterious. My berry picking starts first with soapberries - they ripen in early to mid-July then come the haskaps which are relatively new to the north and around the same time as wild strawberries. Then I



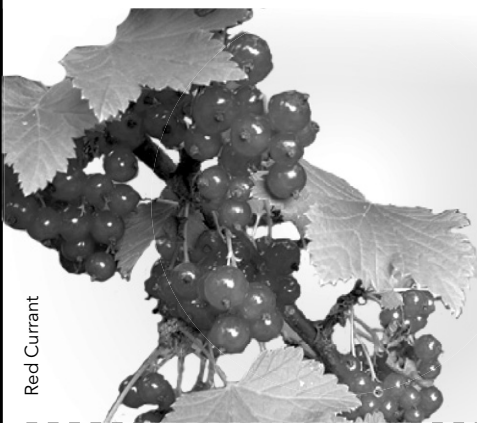
Lowbush Cranberry

notice the raspberries early to mid-August and in September I start to smell the highbush cranberries.

By mid to late September, I am out picking lowbush cranberries. Sometimes in the fall, I can climb up high and

find mossberries (crowberries). Then things start to freeze and the snow falls, and the picking frenzy is done for another year. There is one last treat waiting for us under the melting snow in the spring - lowbush cranberries that have frozen melted and fermented slightly. They taste like sour cherries.

If you are new to Yukon berry picking, the best thing you can do is to make friends with an experienced (and generous) berry picker!



Red Currant

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