

APPENDIX C

Notes on bear foods found in the Stratton Mountain Study Area.

Common Names	Scientific Names	Notes on Feeding and Abundance
Aspen, quaking	<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	Leaves and buds eaten in spring months.
Ants	Various	Adults and larvae important sources of protein in late summer and early fall.
Beech, American	<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>	Nuts eaten as available; may be most important as early spring food, sprouts eaten throughout spring and early summer.
Blackberries	<i>Rubus</i> spp.	Important as late summer and fall food; probably most important berry species in Vermont.
Cattails	<i>Typha</i> spp.	Occurs in wetlands; young shoots and roots eaten.
Currants	<i>Ribes</i> spp.	Fruits eaten but not very important diet item as seldom occurs in large patches.
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	Eaten spring and summer where available; grows in openings which most bears avoid.
Clovers	<i>Trifolium</i> spp.	Eaten spring and summer where available; sometimes grows on skid roads, log landings and ski trails.
Dogwoods	<i>Cornus</i> spp.	Fruits eaten when available; probably not a very important diet item.
Cherries	<i>Prunus</i> spp.	Fruits eaten in late summer and fall in the years when they are abundant; black cherry may be primary fall food in years when other mast species fail.
Cranberries	<i>Vaccinium</i> spp.	Fruits eaten in late summer and fall but generally not abundant.

Appendix C. (continued)

Common Names	Scientific Names	Notes on Feeding and Abundance
Elder, European red	<i>Sambucus racemosa</i>	Fruit eaten in late summer and fall but generally not abundant.
Fern, cinnamon	<i>Osmunda cinnamomae</i>	Reported as bear food in some areas but no observed feeding in Vermont.
Grapes, wild	<i>Vitis</i> spp.	Late summer and fall food but occurs primarily around low elevation openings outside of most bear range such as around corn fields.
Jack-in-the-pulpit	<i>Arisaema triphyllum</i>	Corm (and sometimes leaves and fruit) eaten in summer; may be the most important summer food source for Vermont bears, about 14% protein; found throughout Vermont at elevations below 2000' in mature hardwoods with moist, deep soils and occasionally in wetlands.
Deer and moose	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i> and <i>Alces alces</i> , respectively	Droppings eaten by bears as found; the microflora and fauna contained in the feces is perhaps used by bears to aid in digesting plant fiber.
Horsetails	<i>Equisetum</i> spp.	Reported as an important food item in some areas of N. America but not documented in Vermont .
Oaks	<i>Quercus</i> spp.	Acorns are an important fall food when available; unfortunately oak is found infrequently in Vermont bear range as it is more common at lower elevations of southern part of state; northern Vermont has few oak.
Bunchberry and partridgeberry	<i>Cornus canadensis</i> and <i>Mitchella repens</i> , respectively	Eaten but not plentiful enough to be an important diet item.
Pine and Spruce	<i>Pinus</i> spp. and <i>Picea</i> spp., respectively	Buds eaten for a very short time period after leaving dens; new growth high in sugars.

Appendix C. (continued)

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Sphagnum mosses	<i>Sphagnum</i> spp.	Bears have been observed digging it up but for unknown reasons; it has been suggested that they eat the moss or are looking for invertebrates.
Raspberries	<i>Rubus</i> spp.	Important in some areas; grows profusely in some powerline R.O.W.s in bear range.
Shadbushes	<i>Amalanchier</i> spp.	Early ripening berries eaten by bears when found, but not usually in large quantities.
Amphibians	Various	No documented feeding on amphibians in New England; habituated bears in New Hampshire refused toads and frogs.
Strawberry, wild	<i>Fragaria ovalis</i>	Too small and of limited availability in forests to be very important.
Sarsaparilla	<i>Aralia nudicaulis</i>	Ripe berries readily eaten in years when in good supply (one year in last six years).
Leaves	Various	Leaves of many shrub and tree species eaten in spring especially from fallen trees which supply readily accessible leaves; early budding species such as aspen and red maple are the most important.
Cow parsnip	<i>Heracleum lanotum</i>	Flowers most important in some states, however, not documented in Vermont.
Skunk cabbage	<i>Symplocarpus foetidus</i>	Most important spring food in Massachusetts and part of New Hampshire but almost nonexistent in Vermont bear range.

Appendix C. (continued)

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Tall nodding sedge	<i>Carex gynandra</i>	Only sedge observed to be fed on by Vermont bears; heavily fed on in April and early May as it is sometimes the only food available if overwintering beech nuts and acorns are absent; this species is found in disturbed forested areas such as skid roads and log landings.
Hazelnut, beaked	<i>Corylus cornuta</i>	Nuts eaten but not plentiful in southern Vermont bear range.
Squawroot, American	<i>Conopholis americana</i>	Most important food in many southeastern states but not found in much of Vermont bear range.
Hickories	<i>Carya</i> spp.	Nuts eaten where available but not plentiful in Vermont bear range.
Snowberries	<i>Symphoricarpos</i> spp.	Fruits eaten but not plentiful in Vermont bear range.
Lettuce	<i>Lactuca</i> spp.	Roots and leaves eaten.
Apples, wild	<i>Malus</i> spp.	Fruits readily eaten especially after first snowfall; often damages tree during feeding.
Corn	Cultivated	Important food resource in some areas of the state; in years of natural food shortage, bears may travel large distances to feed in corn fields adjacent to forest cover.
Mountain-ash, American	<i>Sorbus americana</i>	Berries ripen late in year but seldom in large quantities; in 1994 they were plentiful and were observed to be an important diet item.
Jewelweed	<i>Impatiens capensis</i>	Major summer and early fall food item especially in years of drought; grows well on wet, disturbed forested sites.

Appendix C. (continued)

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Deer	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>	The hair and hooves of fawns is frequently found in June bear droppings.
Beaver	<i>Castor canadensis</i>	Some bears, primarily large males, seek out and tear apart beaver lodges in spring and early summer.
Marshmarigold	<i>Caltha palustris</i>	Stalk, leaves and flowers eaten in spring.
Maple, red	<i>Acer rubrum</i>	Seeds eaten during summer in years that they are plentiful.
Leek	<i>Allium schoenoprasum</i>	Presumed to be a late summer food but not documented in Vermont.
Sweetcicely	<i>Osmorhiza claytonii</i>	Eaten in some areas of the country but not documented in Vermont.
Grasses	Various	Eaten when young and succulent in areas available to bears.
Winterberry	<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	Reported as a diet item of bears in Virginia and the Carolinas.
Woodsorrels	<i>Oxalis</i> spp.	Leaves eaten sporadically in summer.
Hobblebush	<i>Viburnum alnifolium</i>	Berries seldom plentiful but eaten when found.