

Pronunciation Guide for Plant Species in Indigenous Languages

This pronunciation guide is from: Turner, N.J. (2014, *Ancient Pathways, Ancestral Knowledge: Ethnobotany and Ecological Wisdom of Indigenous Peoples of Northwestern North America*. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press). The writing system and orthography used by Nancy Turner to represent Indigenous plant names is based on an adapted version of the American Phonetic Alphabet, with the goal of representing the sounds of words. The following websites provide more information on Indigenous languages in Canada and detailed orthographies:

- <http://www.languagegeek.com> (©2002-2011 Chris Harvey/Languagegeek; cf. Harvey 2011)
- <http://www.firstvoices.com> (© 2000-2011 First Voices)

Nancy Turner’s (2014) Guide to Orthography

- Glottal constriction is marked in two ways: with a full glottal stop /ʔ/ and with an apostrophe /’/. A full glottal stop /ʔ/ usually sounds like a catch in the throat, such as in the English expression “uh-oh”. The apostrophe /’/ usually sounds like a sharp ‘popping’ sound before or after the consonant.
- The superscript /^w/ is used to represent rounding of the lips when the sound is produced. For example, *k^w* sounds like the beginning of English *quick*. Other superscript symbols used are /^ɥ/ to indicate palatalization, and /^h/ for the secondary articulation. For example, *n^ɥ* sounds like the *gn* of *lasagna*, and *t^h* sounds like the *-t th-* of English “*at the*”, spoken quickly.
- Retracted consonants and vowels are marked with an underline (e.g. a), which refers to a retracted tongue root when the sound is being pronounced, causing the letter to sound farther back in the throat. This is not common in English.
- Syllabic consonants are marked with a dot underneath the letter, such as in *ṇ*. This sounds similar to the *-n* of English *button* [“but-*n*”], spoken quickly.
- Vowels are doubled to indicate length (duration), as in: *aa*, *ee*, *oo*, etc.
- All Salish languages, except for Upriver Halkomelem and Nuxalk, mark the primary stress of a word, often using placement of stress to distinguish between two words. All of the writing systems use accent marks (accent ague /á/ for stress, and accent ague /á/ and grave /à/ for tone).

VOWELS	
Symbol	Sound Description
<i>a</i>	Similar to the vowel sounds of English <i>ball</i> or <i>bat</i>
<i>e</i>	Similar to the vowel sounds of English <i>baít</i> or <i>bet</i>
<i>i</i>	Similar to the vowel sounds of English <i>beet</i> or <i>bit</i>
<i>o</i>	Similar to the vowel sounds of English <i>boat</i> or <i>bond</i>
<i>u</i>	Similar to the vowel sounds of English <i>boot</i> or <i>would</i>
<i>ə</i>	Similar to the vowel sounds of English <i>but</i> or <i>about</i>
<i>ɛ</i>	Similar to the vowel sounds of English <i>bet</i>
<i>i</i>	Pronounced farther back in the mouth than regular <i>i</i>
<i>q e i q u</i>	Similar to the corresponding plain vowels, but with a nasal quality (such as in English <i>enemy</i> , <i>kneel</i> , <i>Rome</i> , <i>room</i>). Some nasal vowels may also have high or low tone. This is marked as <i>ã</i> or <i>ä</i> .
<i>í, ɛ, a, ə, o, u</i>	Similar to regular vowels, but pronounced with a retracted tongue root

CONSONANTS	
Note that <i>b, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, v, w, y,</i> and <i>z</i> are the same as in English.	
Symbol	Sound Description
<i>ch</i>	Sounds like the <i>ch</i> in English <i>church</i>
<i>dh</i>	Sounds like the <i>th</i> of English <i>the</i> or <i>that</i> , (but not of <i>think</i> or <i>thin</i>)
<i>dl</i>	Sounds like the <i>dl</i> in English <i>maudlin</i> (but not like English <i>middle</i>)
<i>dz</i>	Sounds like the <i>ds</i> in English <i>kids</i>
<u><i>dz</i></u>	Sounds like <i>dz</i> , but pronounced with a retracted tongue root
<i>gh</i>	Sounds like English <i>g</i> , but with friction; written as <i>gg</i> in some practical systems
<i>gʸ</i>	Sounds like the <i>-g y-</i> of English <i>egg yolk</i>
<u><i>g</i></u>	Sounds like <i>g</i> , but farther back in the throat
<u><i>gh</i></u>	Sounds like <i>gh</i> , but farther back in the throat
<u><i>h</i></u>	Similar to English <i>h</i> , but with more friction
<i>l</i>	Sounds similar to the <i>thl</i> of English <i>athlete</i> ; written as <i>lh, hl,</i> or <i>ll</i> in some practical systems
<i>l, m, n</i>	These letters function like vowels in a syllable; they sound like <i>-əl, -əm,</i> or <i>-ən</i>
<i>ng</i>	Sounds like the <i>ng</i> of English <i>going</i>
<i>nʸ</i>	Sounds like the <i>gn</i> of <i>lasagna</i>
<i>q</i>	Sounds like English <i>k</i> , but farther back in the throat; written as <i>k</i> in some practical systems
<u><i>s</i></u>	Similar to English <i>s</i> , but pronounced with a retracted tongue root
<i>sh</i>	Sounds like the <i>sh</i> of English <i>shy</i>
<i>th</i>	Sounds like the <i>th</i> of English <i>think</i> or <i>thin</i> (but not of <i>this</i> or <i>that</i>)
<i>tl</i>	Similar to the <i>tl</i> of English <i>rightly</i> ; written as <i>tl</i> in many practical systems
<i>tlʰ</i>	As above, but with an exploded quality; similar to the sound some English speakers use to call horses
<i>tʰ, tʰʰ</i>	<i>tʰ</i> sounds like the <i>-t th-</i> of English “at <i>the</i> ” spoken quickly; <i>tʰʰ</i> is similar but slightly exploded; written as <i>tth</i> and <i>tthʰ</i> in many practical systems
<i>ts</i>	Sounds like the <i>ts</i> of English <i>cats</i>
<u><i>ts</i></u>	Similar to <i>ts</i> , but pronounced with a retracted tongue root
<i>x</i>	Similar to the <i>ch</i> of German <i>Bach</i> ; written as <i>c</i> or <i>kh</i> in some practical systems
<u><i>x</i></u>	Like the <i>ch</i> of German <i>Bach</i> , but farther back in the throat
<u><i>z</i></u>	Similar to English <i>z</i> , but pronounced with a retracted tongue root
<i>ʔ</i>	Sounds like the catch in the throat in the middle of English “uh-oh”; written as <i>ʔ</i> or <i>ʻ</i> in some practical systems
<i>ʕ</i>	Pronounced like <i>g</i> but very far back in the throat

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