

# **Long-term Sustainability of Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) on the Qualla Boundary Lands of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians**

**Jill Braly, North Carolina State University  
Dr. Fred Cabbage, North Carolina State University  
Seth Holling, Western Carolina University**

## Presentation Abstract

Members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) depend upon a local source of bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis* L.) to use as a dye in the creation of hand-woven baskets. In addition to its artistic uses, bloodroot is well known for its medicinal and anti-microbial properties. Currently, demand for bloodroot is being satisfied through harvests in natural stands, and as Greenfield and Davis (2004) report, increasing demand is putting pressure on naturally occurring populations.

There is limited information about the viability of increased bloodroot harvests. This research aims to assess the current situation in the forest and to facilitate the development of sustainable management plans. By examining bloodroot inventories, growth patterns, and harvest schedules, the long-term viability of bloodroot is estimated, and comparisons between unharvested and harvested stands are being used to guide future management decisions. We have inventories of bloodroot on three different ownerships, with varying levels of timber management and protection. We are still seeking cooperation with the Tribal Council, Cherokee harvesters and environmental planners, members of the arts community, and tribal extension experts to ensure that the research results can be useful to the needs of the EBCI. The assessment of long-term forest management and bloodroot harvesting methods will contribute knowledge to ensure a sustained source of bloodroot for local artisans and their crafts.

Greenfield, J. and Davis, J.M. 2004. Medicinal herb production Guide: Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis* L.). North Carolina Consortium on Natural Medicines and Public Health.