

Caution

Baneberry—Deadly Temptations

Glacier Bay has a myriad of tasty berries that ripen over the summer. But there is one berry you do not want to eat.

Baneberry, *Actaea rubra*, a member of the buttercup family, is aptly named. “Bane” is derived from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning “murderous.” All parts of the plant are toxic. It is common around Bartlett Cove on the edges of forests, along stream banks, and roadsides.

The stalk grows from two to four feet high. Its thin, heavily veined leaves have deeply toothed edges. In the spring, it produces a cluster of small white flowers above the leaves. In July and August, hard shiny berries appear. These can be either candy-apple red (most common) or white.

Mature berries have a dark spot, which has earned them the nickname of “doll’s eyes.” But there is nothing playful about this plant. Ingesting one berry can cause numbness in the mouth and tongue. The poison in three berries is enough to kill a child. Six berries will effectively shut down the respiratory system in adults.

The best rule to follow if you are sampling wild plants: if you aren’t sure what it is it, don’t eat it.



No matter where you walk, always let someone know where you are going and what time you expect to be back.

A Slip of the Foot

Due to the amount of moisture here in Glacier Bay, walking can be tricky. Wet decks, wooden walkways, logs, rocks, and tree roots can be very slippery and create tripping hazards. Muddy pathways can be slick. To minimize risk, wear sturdy shoes with good traction and use handrails wherever available. Watch where you are stepping and take your time!

Moose Musts

If you encounter a moose, use caution:

- Increase the distance between you and the moose.
- Get behind a tree.
- Change your route.

To avoid close encounters, make noise while you hike.