



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Cowichan Elder Della Rice Sylvester to lead a medicine walk**

*Thursday, July 12, 2018, Duncan, BC:* Many plants on Vancouver Island have traditional and medicinal qualities that Indigenous peoples have used for millennia. As part of Vancouver Island Regional Library's (VIRL) Indigenous Voices initiative, Cowichan Elder Della (Rice) Sylvester is hosting a medicine walk on Saturday, July 28, starting at 10am at VIRL's Cowichan branch, to lead participants on a journey of discovery about some of the plants in their local environment.

On the walk, Sylvester will teach participants about traditional uses for many of the plants that grow naturally in the region and answer questions that arise, drawing on her education and life-long passion for studying medicinal qualities of plants. Participants will come away with a deeper understanding of the traditional uses and applications of plants that grow in the area and why the plants are important to local First Nations.

Participants will meet at the library at 10am, rain or shine, and leave for the walk as a group. The event is open to all ages, but minors need to be accompanied by a caregiver.



#### **About Della (Rice) Sylvester**

Della (Rice) Sylvester is First Nations from Cowichan Tribes on Vancouver Island. She has been studying plants as a medicine all her life. As a young girl, she learned from her grandmothers, Ellen Johnny and Sylvestra Modeste.

Della studied Medical Anthropology at UVic; while there, she studied with Nancy Turner. Through Nancy, Della worked with the Pacific Networking Association, a group of cultural and spiritual First Nations from around the Pacific Ocean.

#### **About Indigenous Voices**

As part of VIRL's efforts to facilitate reconciliation for Indigenous and non-Indigenous members of the community, we are working with Indigenous Elders across our system to share stories and skills related to Indigenous culture and experiences. The programming is based on the Elders' unique skills, interests, experiences, and

passions. Some examples include storytelling, talking circles, drumming, and discussions on Indigenous cultures.

More information is available at [virl.bc.ca/indigenous-voices](http://virl.bc.ca/indigenous-voices).

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**For more information**

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