

Cleopatra:

Where ancient histories meet

Teacher resource: year 7

Education @ Adelaide Botanic Garden

Photo Pedro Jimenez



Government of
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Cleopatra: Where ancient histories meet.



Cleopatra

Qlwprdt

The name Cleopatra is derived from the Greek name Κλεοπάτρα (Kleopatra) which meant "she who comes from glorious father" or "glory of the father"

Cleopatra is one of the most recognised names from ancient times. She was a remarkable woman. The last Pharaoh of Egypt she was in fact Greek by ethnicity and unlike others in her family actually spoke Egyptian. She lived at various times in what is now Lebanon, Syria, Rome, parts of Greece and Egypt. She spoke nine languages and wrote books including Cosmetics which was focussed on care of the skin in a medical manner. This is not surprising as Egypt was a centre for medical knowledge where many Greeks came to study.

When Alexander the Great invaded Egypt he developed the new city of Alexandria which became a gateway to Egypt. Positioned twenty miles to the west of the Nile delta it became a major Mediterranean port. When his general Ptolemy Soter assumed control of Alexandria and Egypt after Alexander died (becoming Ptolemy I) he built a lighthouse in Alexandria which was the tallest building in the world at that time except for the Great Pyramid. The lighthouse cost 800 talents (equivalent to approximately three million dollars in today's money.) All ships coming to Alexandria had to surrender all books on board. These were then copied by scribes and the copy was returned to the ships. The library of Alexandria became the most important centre of learning in the western world with an estimated up to one million books for more than 600 years.

The city of Alexandria became Cleopatra's main base in Egypt. Fifteen consecutive Egyptian rulers from the house of Ptolemy led Egypt, beginning in 306 BC. with Ptolemy I (died 284 BC) and ending with Cleopatra's death in 30 BC. The Ptolemaic rule was centred in the beautiful Egyptian city of Alexandria.

When Cleopatra assumed control of Egypt she realized that she needed Roman support, or, more specifically, Caesar's support, if she was to keep her throne. Each was determined to use the other. Caesar sought money for repayment of the debts incurred by Cleopatra's father, Auletes, as he struggled to retain his throne. Cleopatra was determined to keep her throne and, if possible, to restore the glories of the first Ptolemies by recovering as much as possible of their dominions, which had included southern Syria and Palestine. Caesar and Cleopatra became lovers and spent the winter besieged by her brother's army in Alexandria. Roman reinforcements arrived the following spring, and Ptolemy XIII fled and drowned in the Nile. Cleopatra, now married to her brother Ptolemy XIV, was restored to her throne. In June 47 BC she gave birth to Ptolemy Caesar (known to the people of Alexandria as Caesarion, or "little Caesar"). Whether Caesar was the father of Caesarion, as his name implies, cannot now be known.

Encyclopedia Britannica: date sighted 30.11.15 AD

<http://www.britannica.c+m/biography/Cleopatra-queen-of-Egypt>

Bookings

All visits to the Botanic Gardens should be booked as part of risk management.

Self-Managed Excursions

Booking online: <http://www.botanic.sa.edu.au/index.php/book-online>

Booking by email: dehbgschools@sa.gov.au booking form here

Booking by phone: 08 8222 9311

Education Manager discussions and bookings

ph: 08 8222 9344 or email: Michael.yeo2@sa.gov.au

Guidelines when in the Garden

Students must be supervised at all times while in the Garden.

Before starting your walk please remind your group that:

- Gardens are peaceful places for people to relax and enjoy.
- Walking slowly and talking quietly ensures everybody and everything will enjoy the gardens.
- Plants are fragile, touch them gently.
- Flowers, leaves, bark, seeds etc. growing on plants or lying on the ground are there for all to enjoy. When you have finished with plant material found on the ground always return it to the garden.
- Keeping to paths and not walking on beds or borders avoids damage to plants.

Risk Management

- Water: The garden has a number of open water bodies and requires close supervision by teachers and supervising adults.
- Student ratio: Adult to student ratio is recommended at 1:10, for Early years and Junior primary this should be lower.
- Weather: Excursions at the Adelaide Botanic Garden are outdoors so sun protection is required, insect repellent at certain times of the year is recommended. Light showers are not an issue in the gardens and at times enhances the experience. There are a number of sheltered areas throughout the garden and raincoats are preferred to umbrellas.
- Washing: After working in the wetland or handling plant material hands should be thoroughly washed particularly before eating.
- Toilets: There are 5 groups of public toilets across the Garden as indicated on the maps.

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Purpose and key idea of the trail

Target year levels: Year 7

Key ideas:

People of the ancient world travelled much more than we might expect leading to extensive sharing of ideas and interdependence through trade and control of resources.

Plants played an integral part in the lives of the ancients. The knowledge of plants and their uses was detailed and in many ways rivalled that of the people who followed them.

Students are encouraged to observe, analyse, inquire, record, hypothesize and connect knowledge they already have with new learnings.

TfEL: Provide an authentic context in which to engage learners and build their understanding whilst using a range of learning modes.

Time:

Allow about 1 hour for this session.

Australian Curriculum connections

General capabilities

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Critical and creative thinking
- Personal and social capability
- Intercultural understanding

Year 7

Geography: Interpretation of maps and other geographical data.

History: The ancient Mediterranean World where the histories of Greece, Rome and Egypt collide.

Before the excursion

Discussions:

Consider: How much do you think the knowledge and practices of the ancient world impact on us today?
Can we really learn much from the behaviour and stories of the ancient past?
How can we verify that what we are told about the past is true?

Activities:

Look at a map of the Mediterranean. Compare the map to another map representing the ancient Mediterranean. Consider the positions of Rome, Egypt and Greece. Now look at Syria, Lebanon and Israel (Judea). Think about how the positions of these countries impact on each other.

Vocab introduction:

Terms	Meaning
Sarcophagus	The outer covering of an Egyptian coffin. Often elaborately decorated.
Dynasty	A family of rulers through the generations.
Ethnicity	A person's origins – whether they currently live in that position or not.
Omniscient	All knowing.
Phoenician	Ancient people from the area of current day Syria and Lebanon who traded across the ancient world, travelling by sea. Expert sailors.
Reincarnation	The process of being born again after death.

After the excursion

Resources:

Check online for Historychannel.com, Discoverychannel.com, BBC.com, Britannica.com

Activities:

Visit SA Museum and see the Egypt room

Search libraries/art galleries for artworks from/about ancient Egypt

Acknowledgments

Text: John Thorpe & Michael Yeo

Cover: Photo Pedro Jimenez



This section provides teachers with background information on each plant or station. Some suggested student responses are included; they are by no means exhaustive. **The student activities (in brown)** are designed to encourage students to engage with the garden, observe, record, discuss and use the information they collect. Enrichment, **research** and discussion activities are suggested in various stations.

STATIONS

1. The Greek Sphinx

The Sphinx (commonly female in Greece and male in Egypt) was a representation of a terrifying force. Over time statues of sphinxes were used to protect temples and holy places. Egyptian sphinxes were typically male while the even more terrifying Greek sphinxes were typically female.

The winged sphinx of Boeotian Thebes, the most famous in legend, was said to have terrorized the people by demanding the answer to a riddle taught to her by the Muses—***What is it that has one voice and yet becomes four-footed and two-footed and three-footed?*** The sphinx devoured any person who failed to answer the question correctly. Eventually Oedipus gave the proper answer: **man**, who crawls on all fours in infancy, walks on two feet when grown, and leans on a staff in old age. The sphinx thereupon killed herself. From this tale apparently grew the legend that the sphinx was omniscient, and even today the wisdom of the sphinx is proverbial. (Google riddles of the sphinxes and try some).



Great Sphinx and the pyramid of Khafre© Ron Gatepain (A
Britannica Publishing Partner)

The earliest and most famous example in art is the colossal recumbent Great Sphinx at Giza, Egypt, dating from the reign of King Khafre (4th king of 4th dynasty, c. 2575–c. 2465 BC). This is known to be a portrait statue of the king, and the sphinx continued as a royal portrait type through most of Egyptian history. Arabs, however, know the Great Sphinx of Giza by the name of Abū al-Hawl, or “Father of Terror.”

Can you find answers to these Sphinx riddles?

- 1. Always wax, yet always wane: I melt, succumbed to the flame; Lighting darkness, with fate unblest, I soon devolve to shapeless mess.*
- 2. Welcome the day with a show of light; I stealthily came here in the night; I bathe the earthy stuff at dawn, But by the noon, alas! I'm gone.*
- 3. Here there is no north, west, nor east; And weather fit for not man nor beast.*
- 4. I have a mouth but do not speak, I have a bed but do not sleep, I run everywhere but go nowhere. What am I?*

Answers to Sphinx Riddles. A Candle Morning Dew The North Pole A River

2. Wheat: The Museum of Economic Botany



Wheat originally grew wild in the Middle East and southwestern Asia in ancient times, and records show people were gathering wheat for food as far back as 11,000 B.C. The beginnings of agriculture start with wheat, and make this food product an enormously significant part of human history. Wheat became especially important as more than one seed per stalk led to enough production that people could establish permanent settlements.

www.sxc.hu/photo/476186/

Student Activity: How many grains on a head of wheat? Find another grass. How many grains on that grass?

Significance

Wheat is very significant in history because it is one of the crops which transformed hunter-gatherers into farmers. People had long gathered wheat where it grew wild, but with agriculture, a more dependable food supply was created. This in turn made life easier with more free time, and people were able to turn more attention to other pursuits such as creating textiles and pottery, and doing woodworking and making tools.

Growing crops, along with herding of animals, allowed for the growth of large permanent communities, as well as a privileged elite class in cities. It also resulted in battles for productive areas, evidenced early in the Bible after Moses led the Israelites to the Promised Land, where they then had to fight to get it away from the people already living there. Egypt was the largest producer of wheat in ancient times, with enormous harvests unequalled even today. It became the basis of the nation's economy. Egyptians first created raised yeast breads as a contrast to the unleavened bread which had been the only type available before.

History/Geography

Wheat likely originated in the so-called Fertile Crescent of the Middle East, land which extended from Israel along the Mediterranean Sea north to southern Turkey and east to Iraq and the Persian Gulf. It was also probably native to southwestern Asia. Some of the earliest specimens have been discovered in Jordan, Syria, and Turkey. Early types of wheat have been excavated in Iraq, dating to over 11,000 B.C. Archaeological research indicates that wheat was being farmed in Egypt's Nile Valley since before 5,000 B.C., and also in China and India. Sumerians (in what is now south eastern Iraq) around 3100 B.C. wrote about both bread and beer made from wheat.

Some historians suggest that the Fertile Crescent became such an important area that people immigrated to the area. They suggest the original inhabitants may have then moved to Egypt.

Other ancient cultivated crops include barley, grapes, dates, and nuts. People in this region also were the first to herd goats, pigs, and sheep. It took only a few centuries for people to do away with hunting and gathering as their main source of food after many thousands of years obtaining food that way.

http://www.ehow.com/about_4585981_history-of-wheat.html

3. The Wheatfield

Cleopatra understood that Egypt's wealth depended on wheat production. Enough wheat needed to be produced to supply Egypt and export to Rome and other locations.

The fenced field was originally designed to show the area of land required to grow enough wheat to be able to produce bread for a family of four for 12 months. The total amount of grain harvested depended on the surface covered by the flooding Nile, which was between perhaps 20,000 and 34,000 square kilometres. Taking pre-green-revolution wheat yields of about 750 kg/ha as a base, the annual amount of grain produced was approximately between 1.5 and 2.5 million tons, supposing that most of the surface was used to produce grain. About 4 to 5 million people lived in Egypt during the New Kingdom and the gross annual grain yield would have been about 500 kg per person. In a bad year the annual yield was less than 200 kg per head, at times considerably less.

As taxes were calculated on land area it was very important for farmers to be as productive as possible. After the floods each year large tracts of land were remeasured. Geometry (meaning land measure) was **very** important.

Student Activity: Pace out the sides of the wheat field and estimate the number of square metres. If a standard Egyptian farming family could work about 5000 square metres use the information above to calculate how many people would they be able to feed?

4. Cedar of Lebanon *Cedrus libani*

The flag of Lebanon has a Cedar of Lebanon upon it as it is such an important tree in Lebanon's history. Recent reforestation efforts have tried to restore the huge forests which once existed. (Research: Find out what happened to the forests in the twentieth century).



<http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=flag+of+lebanon&id=2D3D6142DAF86F159F4CA09A885D004A79348F6A&FORM=IQFRBA>

Sarcophagi (coffins), boats, bowls and furniture were made from the Lebanon cedar. Only the wealthy could afford to have these items made from this timber because it had to be imported from great distances before being decorated in Egypt. The tomb of Tutankhamun contained some special pieces of Lebanon cedar, among them a throne and footstool with the Pharaoh's enemies' names engraved into it. This symbolised his victory

over them. Royal ships and funeral barges were made of cedar and had sails and ropes of papyrus rind and palm fibres. Cleopatra used cedar for her ships and best furniture.

Discussion: Medicinally, the Cedar of Lebanon also made its mark. The pitch of the cedar was utilized for easing the pain of toothaches. The sawdust of the cedar puts snakes to flight, and thus makes sleeping under the shade of a cedar a relatively safe siesta. Furthermore, based upon historical analyses, it is believed that the cedar was used in the preservation of the corpses in Egypt.

Naturally, both the religious and mythological recordings and the medicinal employment reflect the importance of the Cedar of Lebanon historically, and have contributed to making the cedar one of the most significant tree species in world history.

The Cedar of Lebanon aided society not only culturally but was the basis of numerous economies for ancient civilizations. The cedar had been used for the construction of temples, palaces, and boats. The export of cedar wood to Egypt was an important factor in the growth of Phoenician prosperity and provided capital to launch the more ambitious enterprises in international trading, navigation, and arts and crafts. The Phoenicians and the Egyptians were not alone in utilizing the cedar. The Assyrians, Nebuchadnezzar, the Romans, King David, King of Babylonia, Herod the Great, and the Turks in the Ottoman Empire all exploited the cedars.

Student Activities: Step back and look at the tree. What characteristics of the tree would have made this tree particularly useful to the Egyptians?
How tall is the tree? Hint (use Pythagoras).

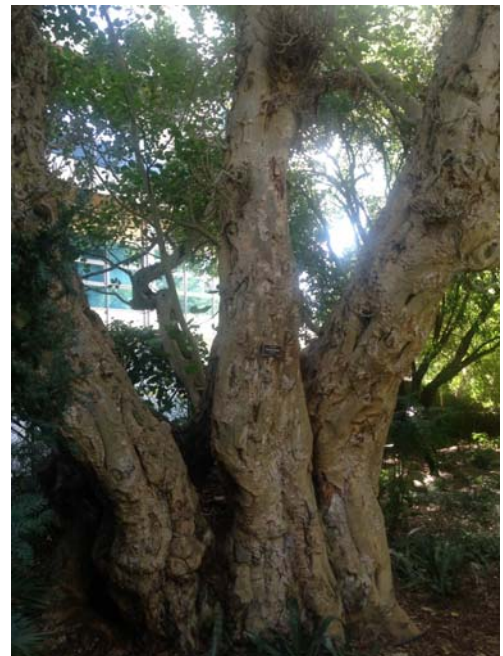
5. The Sycamore Fig *Ficus sycomorus*

Fruits from the sycamore fig were very popular in ancient Egypt. This tree was usually grown near the edge of the desert to provide both food and shade. The tree is large and long-lived. Its timber was highly prized for sarcophagi (coffins) and general woodwork. The sycamore fig was often planted near or in the necropolises (cemeteries) because it had special significance to life and death. Ancient tomb paintings also show sycamore figs growing in private gardens.

The Egyptians believed that the goddess of the sycamore fig tree, Hathor, the 'Lady of the Sycamore', provided the figs that they loved to eat. The trees had very deep roots.

Look for: A large multi-branched tree with fruit growing directly on the trunk and branches. The tree is located along a small path on the left hand side of the main walk just down from the North Terrace entrance. **(Be careful of bees)**

Student Activity: What is the value of having a fruiting tree that is capable of growing close to a harsh desert environment?



Research the relationship between Ra and Hathor. How did Ra stop Hathor from destroying all humans?

A pharaoh like Cleopatra had a very strong relationship to the gods. Find out more about the gods and what customs the pharaohs were expected to uphold.

6. Molossian Hounds

"There on the left as one entered...was a huge dog with a chain round its neck. It was painted on the wall and over it, in big capitals, was written: **BEWARE OF THE DOG** Petronius, *Satyricon* (XXIX)



As soldiers, sailors, merchants and scholars travelled the world they usually left their families behind. Many would be very concerned about robbers and threats to their families, especially if they lived on farms away from other people. It was common for farmers and gardeners to have big hounds stationed at the front of the house as a warning to those who might cause harm. The Greek and then Roman habit of keeping these dogs was adopted by people from other countries including some Romanised Egyptians.

Of the canine breeds mentioned by classical authors, the best known were the swift Laconian (Spartan) and the heavier **Molossian**, both of which were native to Greece and used by the Romans for hunting (*canis venaticus*) and to watch over the house and livestock (*canis pastoralis*). "Never, with them on guard," says Virgil, "need you fear for your stalls a midnight thief, or onslaught of wolves, or Iberian brigands at your back" (*Georgics*, III.404ff). It is the tawny Spartan and the Molossian, says Horace, who are "the shepherd's dangerous friends" (*Epodes*, VI).

Further Discussion: Cato is the first Roman to write about agriculture. He says simply that "Dogs should be chained up during the day, so that they may be keener and more watchful at night" (CXXIV). Varro agrees. In *De Re Rustica*, written when he was eighty-years old (c.37 BC) and addressed to his wife, who had just purchased a farm, he advises that a few active dogs of good traits should be kept, trained to sleep indoors during the day and keep watch at night (I.21). "They must be kept as a matter of course, for no farm is safe without them" (I.19.3). Two sorts of dogs are recognized: "the hunting-dog suited to chase the beasts of the forest, and the other which is procured as a watch-dog and is of importance to the shepherd" (II.9.2). Varro speaks only of the second type, "the guardian of the flock, which needs such a champion to defend it." It should have a large head, drooping ears, thick shoulders and neck, wide paws, thick tail, a deep bark, and be white in colour so as to be more easily recognized in the dark. Care should be taken that it is a good breed, a Spartan for example, and that the dog be purchased from a shepherd rather than a hunter to ensure that it has been trained to follow sheep rather than chase after a hare or stag (II.9.5). A nail-studded leather collar (*melium*) should be fitted to protect the neck. Once wounded, a wolf also will be less likely to attack another dog, even one not wearing a collar (II.9.15).

http://penelope.uchicago.edu/~grout/encyclopaedia_romana/miscellanea/canes/canes.html

Student Activity: Would Cleopatra need Molossian hounds? Explain your answer.

7. Memphis

According to a commonly accepted tradition, Memphis was founded about 2925 BC by Menes, who supposedly united the two prehistoric kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt. The original name of the city was the White Walls, and the term may have referred originally to the king's palace, which would have been built of whitewashed brick.

*The remains of several unfinished or badly ruined pyramids near Memphis have been attributed to other 3rd-dynasty kings. The first king of the 4th dynasty, **Snefru**, built two pyramid tombs at **Dahshūr**. The three great **pyramids of Giza** belong to **Khufu**, **Khafre**, and **Menkaure**, later 4th-dynasty monarchs. The Great Sphinx at Giza dates from the time of Khafre. The last known king of this dynasty, **Shepseskaf**, built his tomb at South Saqqārah. It was not a pyramid but a distinctive oblong structure with sloping sides, now called the Maṣṭabat Fir'awn.*

*The importance of Memphis was based to a considerable extent on its venerable religious role. Certain of the coronation ceremonies were traditionally enacted in Memphis, as was the **Heb-Sed** festival, a jubilee celebrated by the king after 30 years of rule and repeated every three years thereafter, perhaps a ritual re-enactment of the unification of Egypt.*

The collapse of Assyria (612 BC) led to brief Egyptian independence under the 26th dynasty (664–525 BC) but it was not long before new invaders appeared. The Persian Cambyses II took Memphis by siege in 525 BC. After years of Persian rule, Egypt was ready to welcome Alexander the Great in 332 BC. The conqueror used Memphis as his headquarters while making plans for his new city of Alexandria. After his death at Babylon, his body was brought to Egypt and was laid to rest temporarily in Memphis before being buried at Alexandria.

Under the Hellenistic Ptolemaic dynasty (332–30 BC), Memphis retained its cosmopolitan character and had a sizable Greek population. It was a very multicultural city. Many cities in the USA are named after famous cities from other countries. It is perhaps fitting that a Rock and Roll “royal” like Elvis Presley should be buried in Memphis.



Student Activity: Why are Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt named that way?

Research: Find out more about Mastaba. How are they similar to pyramids?

For a number of years Syria ruled Egypt. Later Syria was like a colony of Egypt. Cleopatra lived in Syria for some time. Why did she go to Syria?

8. Papyrus *Cyperus papyrus*

There are two main sites to look at the papyrus plant. The first is a natural setting growing on the lake's edge, the second is in the Economic Garden, (Pharaoh's Pharmacy - station 7), where students will have the opportunity to touch the plant.

Ancient Egyptians made a kind of paper from the papyrus plant that grew on the edge of the Nile more than 4000 years ago. They prepared the papyrus by first peeling away the tough green outer layers cutting the stems into approximately 15cm lengths. The soft fibrous inner layer was then sliced finely and the strips laid down just overlapping. A second layer of strips was then laid on top perpendicular to the first. The layers were pounded with a mallet or heavy rock then left to dry with a weight on top.

The sugar and sap of the papyrus acted as a glue, binding the strips together to form a sheet. For longer scrolls, papyrus pieces were glued together with resins. Papyrus paper could be cleaned and reused.

Papyrus stems are soft (so soft that papyrus means baby skin) spongy and contain air spaces making them an ideal material for boats and other watercraft. Papyrus boats were used for hunting and crossing short distances. They were lashed together into a banana shape that lifted the ends out of the water. These boats were made as wide as possible to keep them stable, but sometimes an extra bundle was put on top so that the sailors and cargo were kept dry.

The library of Alexandria used so much Papyrus that supplies became short and other materials had to be used for paper making.

Student Activity: Note where the papyrus is growing. Consider if the plant uses a lot or little amount of water. Consider what features the papyrus has that made it useful to the Egyptians.

Research: What other plants and materials might have been used to make other forms of paper.

See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCR8n7qS43w> which shows how to make papyrus paper.

See <http://www.greatscott.com/hiero/index.html> which has extensive material about how to read and write hieroglyphics.



9. The Nile Blue Lotus

Growing in the marshy swamps along the Nile and in the irrigation ditches is the beautiful Blue Lotus.



The Blue Lotus of Egypt is often represented in ancient Egyptian art as a border around hieroglyphics and at the top of columns in buildings. The blue lotus is a water lily and symbolises the union of Upper and Lower Egypt. The lily was found scattered over Tutankhamun's body when the Pharaoh's tomb was opened in 1922.

The Egyptian blue lotus represents the god Nefertem who is linked to the sun, beautification and healing. The Egyptians believed that in the beginning, the world was all darkness until a blue lily rose from the Abyss. When it opened its petals it revealed a young god sitting in its golden heart. A sweet perfume

drifted across the waters and 'light' streamed from the Divine Child to banish the darkness. The plant has chemical properties which make people feel happier and healthier after prolonged exposure.

It is said that the child was the sun god and the creator and source of all life.

Each day the Lotus rises from beneath the water and then each night the flower closes and submerges again. To the Egyptians each day the story of creation is thus retold.

Older teenagers and adults used to hunt for the waterlily flowers to put in their hair. Stories were told that the waterlilies are the flower of the sun god Re and that the waterlilies represent the dead moving into the underworld and being reborn into a new life.

Student Activity: Sketch the Lotus flower. Note the shape of the petals and how they fit together as the plant closes at night. This is the symbol of the sun god Ra. Why do you think the Egyptians selected this plant?

Because she was a pharaoh Cleopatra's court would have used an abundance of Blue Lotus plants for decoration and perfume. Try to find pictures of the pharaohs and see if you can find Blue Lotus.

10. Senegal Dates *Phoenix reclinata* and Prickly Juniper *Juniperus oxycedrus*

Senegal Date Palm,

This is a smaller version of the true date palm. It has very small date-like fruits growing for most of the year from the top of the palm. The date palm was mainly grown for its fruit, which could be eaten fresh or dry. Dates were often used as a sweetener. They could also be fermented and turned into an alcoholic beverage.

Date palms were grown around an oasis because they offered food and shelter from the blazing desert heat.

The branches and leaves of the date palm were depicted on the tops of pillars and columns in temples and pyramids. The column in the SA Museum provides a good example.

Student Activity: Dates were often planted by travellers at oasis. Why were dates a useful food for travellers?

Try eating some dates.



PRICKLY JUNIPER, (MUMMY'S OIL)

Juniper berries were often found mixed with dates, raisins, coriander and other seeds in tombs. The berries were imported because they did not grow in Egypt. Their use was restricted to wealthy people. Juniper berries were an important part of the mummification process. The oil from the juniper was used to anoint the dead body while berries were incorporated between layers of linen bandages and combined with a chemical mix known as 'natron' to preserve the flesh. They were also used as a diuretic and laxative.

Student Activity: Can you find a berry on the juniper tree? Pinch and smell one. Don't eat.

11. Cleopatra's Cosmetics (economic garden)

Egyptian priests developed a thorough knowledge of herbs and their medicinal uses. Remember Cleopatra wrote about how plants could be used for healing in her book Cosmetics. You can find a number of herbs growing in the Economic Garden. Students can enjoy finding the plants by looking for plant name labels. They can also enjoy the plant scents by smelling their hands after gently brushing them against plant leaves.

Wild Garlic-*Allium vineale*

Wild garlic was used widely. Builders of the pyramids ate garlic to increase stamina and endurance. Raw garlic was given to asthmatics and those suffering bronchial-pulmonary complaints. Garlic soothed sore throats and acted as a mouthwash. Garlic was much more than a food flavouring. Egyptians valued its ability to relieve pain, promote healing, stimulate digestion, and treat insomnia. It was also used to eliminate and prevent parasites when eaten or rubbed on the skin.

Onions-(*Urginea maritima*)

Egyptians took oaths on onions as today people take oaths on the bible. The considered the bulb to be a symbol of the universe while the layers were symbolic of the layers of the earth and then heaven. The onion was a favourite food source to aid endurance and to fill the tummy...these were not the same onions as we have today...they were sweet and easy to eat.

Henna-*Lawsonia inermis*

Henna was used to stain the nails and hair of mummies. The leaves were crushed to make the paste used for the dye. [Research to find how to make Henna and see some typical designs.](#)

Fennel-*Foeniculum vulgare*

Ancient Egyptians believed that they could prevent the plague by using a mixture of fennel seeds and barberry. Fennel had some use in the treatment of arthritis and rheumatism.



Rosemary-*Rosmarinus lavandulaceus*

Rosemary can be found in even the earliest tombs. It was sought after for its purifying and stimulant characteristics. Rosemary oils were used as a 'cleansing incense'.

Thyme-*Thymus nitidus*

Thyme is an antiseptic, antibacterial and antifungal agent when used externally as a wash and combined with vinegar. It is also useful for embalming and helpful for respiratory conditions such as colds, flu or asthma, when combined with honey to make a syrup.