

Well, the Arapahoes gets it at Merriam (or Miriam) Lake--
towards Yellowstone. What's that swank country out there--
that rich mountainous country--the Tetons, southwest of Dubois.
The way they tell me, and I've seen it myself, you have to
wait to be sure it matures before the proper time to gather it
is--the bears come out, and they dig into that. So, whenever
you see those scratches and hole dug by bears, they know that
that root is ready. Yeah, the bears governs it. They eat it,
yeah.

(What does the top of the plant look like?)

It grows about that tall and has little wide leaves. It's
about eighteen inches tall. And it has kind of a large--almost
round--leaves, a little pointed. And when those leaves start
to wither, that means that the root's getting ripe. But when
the bears start digging--say, about the middle or last part of
August or early September--before the snow--you know, it snows
up there the latter part of August--and when the bears come
down and they find they've been digging some of that, that's
when the thing's ripe. The root's ripe.

(Does it have any kind of flower on it?)

I never noticed, when I was there. I think I was there the
latter part of July, and all the blooms were off of it. But
next time I go up there--I'm going to try to go about July--

(Does it grow real close to the water's edge?)

Not necessarily. It grows in the valleys and flat, bottom
lands. No--not too far from a pond or lake, or something like
that.

(Would it be growing around trees or bushes?)

No. Out there on the open prairie.

(About the time you're ready to go out and dig it, does it
still have the leaves on it?)

Yeah, but of course they're starting to wither then. They're
a perennial. They come right back (year after year), as long
as the root's there. But of course when you get the root out,
then they die.

(Is it hard to find?)

No, it's not hard to find. Once you find it--it's just like