The Foraging Companion Home Guide

Judith Pilawa

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www.judyofthewoods.net

Staying Safe

General Safety Notes

Words in orange type refer to substances which are described in the "Toxins" subsection.

Keep some samples of plants consumed. In case of adverse reaction seek medical attention immediately, taking along the samples.

The information is given in good faith, but is by no means complete, and is of known hazards only. Absence of information on toxicity or danger is not indicative of a plant's safety. Consumption is at the reader's own risk and discretion.

Some guidance may reduce the risk of starvation in a survival situation, but it is best to err on the safe side when other food is available.

Take care identifying plants for consumption. In addition to visual characteristics, pay attention to habitat (including last year's dead stalks), season, smell (possibly crush a leaf) and feel. Always use a reputable field guide to identify wild plants. Plants may only be edible in part or after special treatment. Follow guidance.

Do not consume wild plants during pregnancy or with a medical condition, without consulting a health practitioner.

Only feed to minors if you are absolutely sure of the plant's safety. Where potential liver damage is indicated this is particularly pronounced in children.

Never follow any generalization about what is supposed to be safe, only follow rules of avoidance.

Some individuals may react to some plants, which cause no ill-effect in others. Mis-identification can also happen, and when in a survival situation there may be no choice but to try unfamiliar plants. Always test a small amount first. Crush the part and first place on a sensitive part of the skin. Wait a moment to see if there is any reaction. If not, proceed to test on lips, then in the mouth, before finally swallowing a small amount. Wait for an hour or more to see if there is any reaction before consuming more.

Avoid touching unfamiliar plants if possible. Never touch food after touching unfamiliar plants.

Avoid plants which may have been sprayed with chemicals, which grow near heavy traffic and in public places with heavy foot traffic where dogs (even people) may soil them. When gathering plants from pasture with livestock, or in watercourses, wash and cook the plant well to avoid disease or parasites. Always wash plants well if eaten raw, wherever they come from.

Only pick good specimen. The breakdown products of dying or dead plant tissue may be toxic.

Eat a small amount of a wide variety of wild plants to get the best health benefit, and for greatest safety.

Avoid eating too many plants from the same family or with the same potentially harmful substance on the same day.

Potential Warning Features

Yellow-flowered plants: leaves may give stomach upsets if eaten in quantity.

Red: this color in a plant may signal danger. Follow caution notes.

Black, enlarged seeds on grasses: deadly ergot fungus.

Berries surrounded by 5 sepals: may be of the nightshade family (Solanaceae) and may be lethal, especially black, round berries.

Bulbs of some plants are toxic. Never eat a bulb from a dormant plant, unless you are absolutely sure of it's identity.

Pungent, unpleasant smell: often signals a poisonous plant.

Smell of almonds: may contain hydrogen cyanide.

Smell of fresh mown hay: may indicate coumarin.

Tastes extremely bitter: may contain hydrogen cyanide or other toxins.

Tastes extremely acrid: may be toxic.

Milky sap: may indicate toxicity. The latex of dandelions is mildly toxic, and can be consumed in moderation, but it would be advisable to remove the mid-rib of leaves, and not to consume the flower stems. Milky sap is often a skin irritant.

A stinging sensation in the mouth: if it is not a Stinging Nettle *Urtica dioica* this indicates protoanemonin, a substance found in all members of the buttercup family, or calcium oxalate. The irritating substance of the Stinging Nettle can be safely destroyed by drying or cooking, and is not protoanemonin or calcium oxalate.

Moldy nuts: may contain the highly toxic aflatoxin.

Botanical Families

Characteristics and Caution

Plant families often share similar characteristics and may contain the same or related substances, sometimes in different parts of the plant. They may also have other harmful characteristics like thorns or cause irritation on contact. When trying to judge the edibility of a plant which is not listed as edible it is best to assume common traits with close family members, especially genus. **Only assume harmful traits.** Individual species of families with no details given may still be harmful. See plant list for details on individual species.

This information should also be used to judge the quantity in which a plant may be consumed or what precautions may need to be taken if there is a likelihood that the plant contains a potentially harmful substance.

- **Arum** (Araceae): most or all are toxic, containing calcium oxalate in all parts. May also contain oxalic acid. The roots of some species may contain carcinogens.
- **Balsam** (Balsaminacea): some or all contain calcium oxalate in some parts. Seeds may be safe.
- **Barberrry** (Berberidaceae): the bark (especially of the root) of at least one species is toxic
- **Bedstraw** (Rubiaceae): contact with the sap of some species may cause irritation in sensitive people. The

barbs of Cleavers can irritate the gastric tract if not softened by cooking. Sweet-scented Bedstraw contains coumarin

- **Beech** (Fagaceae): some species contain tannin
- **Bellflower** (Campanulaceae): no information on hazards
- **Bindweed** (Convolvulaceae): some or all are toxic, probably mildly.
- **Birch** (Betulaceae): no information on hazards
- **Bogbean** (Menyanthaceae): at least one species can cause gastric upset.
- **Bog Myrtle** (Myriaceae): Sweet Gale *Myrica gale* may cause abortion.
- **Borage** (Boraginaceae): some or all contain pyrrolizidine alkaloids. Some may cause contact dermatitis in sensitive individuals.
- **Bur-reed** (Sparganiaceae): no information on hazards
- **Buttercup** (Ranunculaceae): all are toxic, some can be eaten after special preparation, some are lethal, all produce protoanemonin in varying amounts.
- **Cabbage** (Brassicaceae): generally safe, though avoid moldy leaves. Often spicy flavor. May depress the thyroid if eaten in quantity unless cooked or fermented (see lactofermentation on the Storage, Preparation and Poop page)

  Known hazards of individual species or genera:

  - Charlock Mustard *Sinapis arvensis* (may be mildly toxic when seed pods form.
  - Whitetop *Lepidium draba* may be toxic.
  - Horseradish *Armoracia rusticana* can cause gastric upset and prolonged contact with the root can cause blisters.
  - Hedge Mustard *Sisymbrium officinale* may be toxic if consumed in quantity - may affect the heart.
  - The seeds of White Mustard *Sinapis alba* may be toxic (as pods form), and contact with them may cause dermatitis in sensitive people.
  - The oil of Rape *Brassica napus* seed is toxic unless from certain cultivars.
  - Bittercress Barbarea vulgaris may be toxic for kidneys. This plant can concentrate soil toxins. Only pick from uncontaminated land.
- **Carrot** (Apiaceae): there are a number of deadly poisonous plants in this family, with great superficial resemblance to edible plants. It is therefore advisable to be very careful when identifying plants in this family, and only consume them if you are completely sure of correct identification.

  Many contain furanocoumarin, found in higher concentrations especially in parsnip and celery, and may also be present in higher concentrations in their wild cousins. Only gather good specimens and consume as fresh as possible. Eat in moderation. Leaves, stems and flowers are often aromatic or pungent tasting. At least one member of this family will also cause severe blistering of the skin when coming into contact with the sap of the plant, and subsequent exposure to sunlight. Even the fine mist from cutting the stems may irritate the respiratory system. The introduced Giant Hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum* is very distinct when mature at 3.5m, but a young plant looks very similar to Cow Parsnip *H. maximum*.

  Coriander *Coriandrum sativum* contains oxalic acid and may be narcotic if consumed in quantity.
- **Cashew** (Anacardiaceae): some members are toxic
- **Cranesbill** (Geraniaceae): no information on hazards
- **Crowberry** (Empetraceae): leaves of some or all may be toxic. The fruit of Black Crowberry *Empetrum nigrum* may cause nausea if eaten in quantity.
- **Currant** (Grossulariaceae): The leaves of Gooseberries *Ribes uva-crispa* and Currants - genus *Ribes*, contain or produce hydrogen cyanide
- **Cypress** (Cupressaceae): Common Juniper *Juniperus communis* may be toxic to kidneys if consumed in large quantities. May contain thujone
- **Daisy** (Asteraceae): most are safe, but there are some toxic members. In the absence of information to the contrary, it is best to avoid any members of this family with a pungent smell.

  Known hazards of individual species or genera:

  - Members of the genus *Senecio* (e.g. Ragwort *S. jacobaea* and Groundsel *S. vulgaris*) and *Tussilago* (e.g. Coltsfoot *T. farfara*) contain pyrrolizidine alkaloids. Please note that *Senecio jacobaea* is the synonym of Ragwort. The appropriate botanical name is *Jacobaea vulgaris*, therefore the information may also apply to the genus *Jacobaea*.
  - Most thistles have sharp prickles which should be removed.
  - Burdock has irritating seed hairs.
  - Roman Chamomile *Chamaemelum nobile*, Disc Mayweed *Matricaria discoidea* and Corn Daisy *Glebionis segetum* contain coumarin.
  - Stinking Chamomile *Anthemis cotula* can cause allergies in sensitive individuals.
  - Chicory *Cichorium intybus* may cause damage to the retina if consumed in quantity.
  - The latex of Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* stems is a skin irritant.
  - The sap of Bitter Lettuce *Lactuca virosa* may be toxic and narcotic if consumed in quantity. Contains oxalic acid
  - Common Wormwood *Artemisia vulgaris* contains thujone. Contact with the plant may cause dermatitis in sensitive individuals.
  - (Blessed) Milk Thistle *Silybum marianum* may concentrate nitrates
  - Prolonged consumption of Yarrow *Achillea millefolium* may cause allergies. Leaves and flowers may also cause photosensitivity on contact. Contains thujone.
- **Dock** (Polygonaceae): most or all contain oxalic acid, some may cause photo sensitivity in sensitive individuals.
- **Dogwood** (Cornaceae): leaves and roots of Common Dogwood *Cornus sanguinea* are mildly toxic.

- **Duckweed** (Lemnaceae): no information on hazards
- **Ferns and Bracken:** some or most may contain carcinogens, and may also contain thiaminase.
- **Figwort** (Scrophulariaceae): at least one member is toxic (Foxglove *Digitalis purpurea*). Others may be mildly toxic, especially to the heart.
- **Flowering Rush** (Butomaceae): no information on hazards
- **Fumitory** (Fumariaceae): some or all may contain fumaric acid which is non-toxic and has a fruit-like taste.
- **Gentian** (Gentinaceae): no information on hazards
- **Goosefoot** (Chenopodiaceae): may contain saponins, and can accumulate nitrates and other toxins in the leaves. Only pick from uncontaminated land. Some also contain oxalic acid or produce hydrogen cyanide
- **Grass** (Graminae): some grasses contain coumarin. Any enlarged, black seeds are the highly toxic ergot fungus. Grass leaves often have sharp edges. The sap of Quackgrass *Elytrigia repens* may irritate skin of sensitive individuals. Edibility of rushes and sedges unknown.
- **Hazel** (Corylaceae): no information on hazards
- **Heath** (Ericaceae): some species have mildly toxic parts.
- **Hemp** (Cannabaceae): some are narcotic. Common Hop *Humulus lupulus* has irritating hairs and contains estrogenic substances which may interfere with hormonal therapy.
- **Honeysuckle** (Caprifoliaceae): some or all are toxic, at least in parts. Some contain saponins, some produce hydrogen cyanide
- **Horse Chestnut** (Hippocastanaceae): some or all contain saponins.
- **Horsetail** (Equisetaceae): some or all may be toxic, some mildly. May contain thiaminase. May contain equisetic acid, a potent heart and nerve sedative.
- **Iris** (Iridaceae): some or all are toxic, some in parts only, some are lethal.
- **Lily** (Liliaceae): some are toxic. Often sharp, pungent. Some contain saponins. Contact with the bulbs of some species may cause dermatitis in sensitive individuals. Onions are generally safe.
- **Lime** (Tiliaceae): older flowers of Lime may be narcotic.
- **Loosestrife** (Lythraceae): no information on hazards
- **Mallow** (Malvaceae): most are safe, some may accumulate nitrates. Some are rare.
- **Maple** (Aceraceae): no information on hazards
- **Mesembryanthemum** (Aizoaceae): no information on hazards
- **Mignonette** (Resedaceae): no information on hazards
- **Mint** (Lamiaceae): some are toxic. Many look very similar - take care in identifying plants. Often aromatic. The essential oil of many is toxic and can cause abortions. Common Bugle *Ajuga reptans* has caused fatalities. Wild Clary *Salvia verbenaca* contains thujone.
- **Mosses**: edibility unknown, but doubtful.
- **Mulberry** (Moraceae): no information on hazards
- **Nettle** (Urticaceae): can accumulate nitrates and other toxins in the leaves. Only pick from uncontaminated land. Contact with plant causes irritation. Older leaves contain cystoliths, gritty particles - a kidney irritant. Irritating hairs contain formic acid and other irritants which are destroyed by cooking or drying.
- **Nightshade** (Solanaceae): most or all are toxic, some mildly, some in parts, some are lethal.
- **Oleaster** (Eleagnaceae): no information on hazards
- **Olive** (Oleaceae): contact with some plants may cause dermatitis in sensitive individuals.
- **Orchid** (Orchidaceae): safety for humans not known, but there is a danger to Orchids from harvesting, as many are rare. Many are protected by law.
- **Pea** (Leguminosae): some are toxic, especially the seeds. Some or all contain trypsin inhibitors.

  Known hazards of individual species or genera:
  - The seeds of members of the *Vicia* genus are toxic in quantity. Toxins may be removed by prolonged boiling and discarding the water.
  - White Clover *Trifolium repens* and Bird's-foot Trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* produce hydrogen cyanide when damaged.
  - Common Gorse *Ulex europaeus* has dense thorns.
  - Yellow Sweet Clover *Melilotus officinalis* and Tall Melilot *Melilotus altissimus* contain coumarin.
- **Pine** (Pinaceae): bark, and possibly other parts may contain terpenes, volatile organic compounds, which are toxic in quantity.
- **Pink** (Caryophyllaceae): some or all contain saponins
- **Plantain** (Plantaginaceae): no information on hazards
- **Poppy** (Papaveraceae): most or all are toxic; probably all seeds are safe.
- **Primrose** (Primulaceae): the stamens of Cowslip Primrose *Primula veris* may cause alergic reactions. Some species, like the Scarlet and Yellow Pimpernel (*Anagallis arvensis, Lysimachia nemorum*) are toxic. Contact may also cause dermatitis in sensitive individuals.
- **Purslane** (Portulacaceae): no information on hazards
- **Reed-mace** (Typhaceae): no known hazards, but may be mistaken for poisonous plants.
- **Rose** (Rosaceae): very large and diverse family. Many have thorns. Most or all members of the genus *Prunus* (e.g. Plums) produce hydrogen cyanide, mainly in the leaves and seeds. Queen of the Meadow *Filipendula ulmaria* contains methyl salicylate, related to the drug Aspirin, and traces of coumarin
- **Saxifrage** (Saxifragaceae): no information on hazards
- **Sea Lavender** (Plumbaginaceae): no information on hazards
- **Sedge** (Cyperaceae): no information on hazards

- **Spurge** (Euphorbiaceae): some or all are toxic. Stems usually contain a milky juice.
- **St. John's Wort** (Clusiaceae): some or all may cause photosensitivity in sensitive individuals.
- **Stonecrop** (Crassulaceae):

  Known hazards of individual species or genera:

  - Orpine *Hylotelephium telephium* may be mildly toxic if eaten in quantity.
  - Contact with sap of Goldmoss Stonecrop *Sedum acre* may cause irritation. Can cause gastric upset if eaten in quantity. May be toxic.
  - Jenny's Stonecrop *Sedum reflexum* can cause gastric upset if eaten in quantity. May be toxic.
- **Teasel** (Dipsacaceae): no information on hazards
- **Valerian** (Valerianacea): some or all are mildly narcotic and should not be consumed for more than three months at a time.
- **Violet** (Violaceae): no information on hazards
- **Walnut** (Juglandaceae): Cracked seeds are susceptible to dangerous moulds. They should be carefully stored.
- **Water-lily** (Nymphaeceae): some or all may be mildly toxic. Some are rare and protected by law.
- **Water-plantain** (Alismataceae): has toxic member(s)
- **Willowherb** (Onagraceae): some may be mildly toxic or irritant in part.
- **Wintergreen** (Pyrolaceae): no information on hazards
- **Wood-sorrel** (Oxalidaceae): most or all contain some oxalic acid. Common Woodsorrel *Oxalis acetosella* also contains traces of calcium oxalates
- **Yam** (Dioscoreaceae): some or all are toxic. They contain saponins and calcium oxalates.

Toxins

Calcium oxalate crystals cause severe irritation to mucous membranes and organs. These crystals, called raphides, are needle-shaped and cause a burning sensation in the mouth, sometimes after a brief delay, and may last for hours. They are also coated with a substance which causes swelling of the mucous membranes, which can cause suffocation. The substance may be destroyed by thorough cooking, but the raphides remain a severe irritant. It aggravates rheumatic conditions, kidney stones or hyper acidity. Severe poisoning can result in kidney damage and even death. May be destroyed by thoroughly cooking and steeping in several changes of water, however, any processing which removes the raphides will also remove most of the starch. Not worth the risk and best avoided.

Coumarin is a moderate kidney and liver toxin. It is present in greater quantities in dried plants. It can cause headaches and suppress appetite. Coumarin is transformed by certain fungi into an anti-coagulant, which may cause uncontrolled bleeding. **Avoid if on drugs for circulatory conditions. Consume in moderation**.
Coumarin smells of fresh cut hay and is present in Sweetscented Bedstraw *Galium odoratum*, Sweet Vernal Grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, Yellow Sweet Clover *Melilotus officinalis*, Queen of the Meadow *Filipendula ulmaria* and some other sweet smelling greens, especially in the pea, grass and orchid families.

Furanocoumarin is produced by plants as a defense, especially when damaged or attacked by mould. May cause photodermatitis in contact with sap and exposure to sunlight or other ultra violet light. Only gather good specimen and consume as fresh as possible. Boiling can reduce it by half (discard water). Eat sparingly.

Hydrogen cyanide, also known as Prussic acid, may be safe in very small quantities. May be driven off by heat. Very bitter with smell of almonds.

Nitrates are linked with stomach cancer. Plants grown in nitrogen rich soil, especially grown with artificial fertilizer, can concentrate nitrates in the leaves. Avoid gathering plants where artificial fertilizers are used, or near farm yards, dung heaps and other nitrogen rich places.

Oxalic acid can bind up other minerals, especially calcium. May aggravate rheumatic conditions, kidney stones, hyper acidity or osteoporosis. May be reduced by cooking, possibly also if eaten with a source of salts derived from methyl salicylate (salicylic acid etc.) from sources such as dried Queen of the Meadow *Filipendula ulmaria*. May also be bound by calcium eaten at the same time to form large molecules which can not be absorbed but will be excreted. Eat in moderation.

Protoanemonin is a toxin produced by all species of the buttercup family (Ranunculaceae) family in varying quantities when damaged. Contact may causes itching or blistering. In the mouth it causes a burning sensation, and ingested causes gastric upset, headache, dizziness, spasms, paralysis or circulatory failure. Protoanemonis is non-cumulative and may be destroyed by heat and drying.
Some species of buttercups are highly toxic.
Take extra care identifying, handling and preparing plants in this family

Pyrrolizidine alkaloids can cause liver damage and cancer and are cumulative. Best avoided.

Saponins may be beneficial in small doses, but are toxic in large. Toxicity varies amongst the different types of saponins. May be removed by leaching, rinsing or heat. Eat in moderation. May affect mucous membranes. Some saponins are highly toxic.

Tannin binds with protein, can interfere with iron absorption and can cause gastric pain, irritation to organs and liver damage. It is bitter and astringent and colors water dark. It may be reduced or removed by leaching in several changes of water, until it runs clear (not brown). Baking soda added to the water may speed up the process. Tannin breaks down with time. It may also be reduced or destroyed by lactic fermentation.

Thiaminase is a heat-resistant enzyme which destroys Vitamin B1. It is safe in small quantities, and when the diet contains plenty of Vitamin B1. It is destroyed by cooking at 80 degrees Centigrade or above for at least 5 minutes.

Thujone is toxic to brain and liver cells and may cause abortion if consumed in quantity. Avoid if pregnant.

Trypsin inhibitors interfere with protein digestion and are reduced or destroyed by sprouting.

Botanical Name to Common Name

Important! Inclusion in this list does not imply safety. Read the full description of the plant in the plant list, as well as information on the safety page.

The purpose of this list is to cross-reference plants referred to in other sources, including non-English ones, or where the botanical name of a plant is known.

Common names can vary, and the only safe way to identify a plant is through its botanical name, which is largely standardized across borders.

Example: if you identified a plant as Allium triquetrum, you will see from the list below that it will appear in the main plant list of this guide as "Leek, Three-cornered". On this current page you can also see that there are several close relatives of the Allium genus (onions), e.g. Allium ursinum - Bear Garlic. This may be helpful in finding similar plants which may be more common than the one you were hoping to find for a given purpose. Maybe you've read that Chenopodium album, Lambsquarters, makes a good pot herb, but you can't find any. However, next to Chenopodium album on the list you find Chenopodium bonus-henricus, Good King Henry, which is similar to Lambsquarters, and you know it grows in your area.

The Botanical Family Translator at the end of this page will help to locate the family on the safety page where families are listed with their English name. In that list you will find information (where available) which should be considered for making a safe choice.

Species List

A

Acer pseudoplatanus - **Mapel, Sycamore**
Acer spp. - **Maple**
Achillea millefolium - **Yarrow**
Acorus calamus - **Calamus**
Adiantum capillus-veneris - **Maidenhair, Common**
Aegopodium podagraria - **Bishop's Goutweed**
Aesculus hippocastanum - **Chestnut, Horse**
Aethusa cynapium - **Parsley, Fool's**
Agrimonia eupatoria - **Agrimony, Common**
Ajuga reptans - **Bugle, Common**
Alaria esculenta - **Dabberlocks**
Alcea rosea - **Hollyhock**
Alchemilla vulgaris - **Lady's Mantle, Hairy**
Alisma plantago-aquatica - **Plantain, European Water**
Alliaria petiolata - **Mustard, Garlic**
Allium ampeloprasum - **Leek, Broadleaf Wild**
Allium macropetalum - **Onion, Largeflower**
Allium schoenoprasum - **Chives, Wild**
Allium scorodoprasum - **Leek, Sand**
Allium triquetrum - **Leek, Three-cornered**
Allium ursinum - **Bear Garlic**
Althaea officinalis - **Mallow, Common Marsh**
Anagallis arvensis - **Pimpernel, Scarlet**
Angelica archangelica - **Angelica**
Angelica sylvestris - **Angelica, Woodland**
Anthemis arvensis - **Chamomile, Corn**
Anthemis cotula - **Chamomile, Stinking**
Anthriscus sylvestris - **Chervil, Wild**
Anthyllis vulneraria - **Kidneyvetch, Common**
Aphanes arvensis - **Parsley Piert, Field**
Apium graveolens - **Celery, Wild**
Arbutus unedo - **Strawberry Tree**
Arctium lappa - **Burdock, Greater**
Arctium minus - **Burdock, Lesser**
Argentina anserina - **Cinquefoil, Silverweed**
Armeria maritima - **Thrift**
Armoracia rusticana - **Horseradish**
Artemisia vulgaris - **Wormwood, Common**
Arum maculatum - **Cuckoo Pint**
Asparagus officinalis - **Asparagus**
Aster tripolium (syn.) - **Aster, Sea**
Astragalus glycyphyllos - **Milkvetch, Licorice**
Atriplex patula - **Spear Saltbush**
Atriplex portulacoides - **Purslane, Sea**
Atriplex prostrata - **Orache, Spear-leaved**

B

Barbarea vulgaris - **Bittercress**
Bellis perennis - **Daisy, Lawn**
Berberis vulgaris - **Barberry, Common**
Beta vulgaris maritima - **Beet, Sea**
Betula pendula - **Birch, European White**
Betula pubescens - **Birch, Downy**
Borago officinalis - **Borage, Common**
Brassica napus - **Rape**
Brassica nigra - **Mustard, Black**
Brassica oleracea - **Cabbage, Wild**
Brassica rapa - **Mustard, Field**
Butomus umbellatus - **Rush, Flowering**

C

Calamintha ascendens (syn.) - **Basil, Ascending Wild**
Calla palustris - **Arum, Water**
Calluna vulgaris - **Heather**
Caltha palustris - **Marigold, Yellow Marsh**
Calystegia sepium - **Bindweed, Hedge**
Campanula latifolia - **Bellflower, Giant**
Campanula rapunculoides - **Bellflower, Rampion**
Campanula rapunculus - **Rampion**
Campanula rotundifolia - **Bellflower, Bluebell**
Capsella bursa-pastoris - **Shepherd's Purse**
Cardamine hirsuta - **Bittercress, Hairy**
Cardamine pratensis - **Cuckoo Flower**
Cardaria draba (syn) - **Whitetop**
Carex pendula - **Sedge, Hanging**
Carpobrotus edulis - **Fig, Hottentot**
Castanea sativa - **Chestnut, European**
Centaurea nigra - **Knapweed, Lesser**
Centaurium erythraea - **Centaury, European**
Centranthus ruber - **Valerian, Red**
Cerastium fontanum - **Chickweed, Common Mouse-ear**
Cerastium glomeratum - **Chickweed, Sticky**
Cerastium viscosum (syn.) - **Chickweed, Sticky**
Cetraria islandica - **Iceland Moss**
Chaerophyllum bulbosum - **Chervil, Turnip-rooted**
Chamaemelum nobile - **Chamomile, Roman**
Chamerion angustifolium - **Fireweed**
Chelidonium majus - **Celandine**
Chenopodium album - **Lambsquarters**
Chenopodium bonus-henricus - **Good King Henry**
Chenopodium rubrum - **Goosefoot, Red**
Chondrus crispus - **Carraghen**
Chrysanthemum leucanthemum - **Daisy, Ox-eye**
Chrysanthemum segetum (syn.) - **Daisy, Corn**

Chrysosplenium oppositifolium - **Saxifrage, Golden**
Cichorium intybus - **Chicory**
Cirsium arvense - **Thistle, Canada**
Cirsium palustre - **Thistle, Marsh**
Cirsium vulgare - **Thistle, Bull**
Claytonia perfoliata - **Lettuce, Miner's**
Clematis vitalba - **Clematis, Evergreen**
Clinopodium ascendens (syn.) **Ascending Wild Basil**
Clinopodium vulgare - **Basil, Wild**
Cochlearia officinalis - **Spoonwort**
Convulvulus arvensis - **Bindweed, Field**
Coriandrum sativum - **Coriander**
Cornus mas - **Cherry, Cornelian**
Cornus sanguinea - **Dogwood, Common**
Cornus suecica - **Cornel, Lapland**
Coronopus squamatus - **Swinecress, Greater**
Corylus avellana - **Filbert, Common**
Crambe maritima - **Sea Kale**
Crataegus monogyna - **Hawthorn, Oneseed**
Crepsis tectorum - **Hawk's Beard**
Crithmum maritimum - **Samphire, Rock**
Cymbalaria muralis - **Kenilworth Ivy**
Cyperus longus - **Galingale**
Cytisus scoparius - **Broom, Scotch**

D

Daucus carota - **Queen Anne's Lace**
Descurainia sophia - **Herb Sophia**
Draba muralis - **Whitlow Grass, Wall**

E

Echium vulgare - **Bugloss, Common Viper's**
Elytrigia repens - **Quackgrass**
Empetrum nigrum - **Crowberry**
Epilobium hirsutum - **Codlins-and-cream**
Equisetum arvense - **Horsetail, Field**
Erodium cicutarium - **Stork's-bill, Redstem**
Eryngium maritimum - **Eryngo, Seaside**

F

Fagopyrum esculentum - **Buckwheat**
Fagus sylvatica - **Beech**
Fallopia japonica - **Knotweed, Japanese**
Filipendula ulmaria - **Queen of the meadow**
Filipendula vulgaris - **Dropwort**
Foeniculum vulgare - **Fennel, Sweet**
Fragaria vesca - **Strawberry, Woodland**
Fucus vesiculosus - **Bladder Wrack**
Fumaria officinalis - **Fumitory, Drug**

G

Galinsoga parviflora - **Gallant Soldier**
Galium aparine - **Cleavers**
Galium mollugo - **False Baby's Breath**
Galium odoratum - **Bedstraw, Sweetscented**
Galium verum - **Bedstraw, Yellow Spring**
Geranium dissectum - **Geranium, Cut-leaved**
Geum rivale - **Avens, Yellow Spring**
Geum urbanum - **Herb Bennet**
Glaucium flavum - **Hornpoppy, Yellow**
Glebionis segetum - **Daisy, Corn**
Glechoma hederacea - **Ground Ivy**
Graminae spp. - **Grass**

H

Halimione portulacoides (syn.) - **Purslane, Sea**
Heracleum maximum - **Parsnip, Cow**
Hibiscus syriacus - **Rose of Sharon**
Hippophae rhamnoides - **Buckthorn, Sea**
Hordeum murinum - **Barley, Mouse**
Humulus lupulus - **Hop, Common**
Hylotelephium telephium - **Orpine**
Hypericum perforatum - **St. John's Wort, Common**
Hypochoeris radicata - **Catsear, Common**

I

Impatiens glandulifera - **Jewelweed, Ornamental**
Iris pseudacorus - **Flag, Yellow**

J

Juglans regia - **Walnut, English**
Juncus spp. - **Rushes**
Juniperus communis - **Juniper, Common**

L

Lactuca virosa - **Lettuce, Bitter**
Lamiastrum galeobdolon - **Archangel, Yellow**
Laminaria digitata - **Kelp**
Laminaria saccharina - **Sweet Oar Weed**
Lamium album - **Deadnettle, White**
Lamium amplexicaule - **Deadnettle, Henbit**
Lamium purpureum - **Deadnettle, Purple**
Lapsana communis - **Nipplewort**
Lathyrus japonicus - **Pea, Beach**
Laurencia pinnatifida - **Pepper Dulse**
Lemna minor - **Duckweed, Common**
Leontodon hispidus - **Hawkbit, Bristly**
Lepidium draba - **Whitetop**
Lepidium latifolium - **Pepperweed, Broadleaved**
Ligusticum scoticum - **Licorice Root, Scottish**
Linaria vulgaris - **Butter and egg**
Lolium perenne - **Ryegrass, Perennial**
Lotus corniculatus - **Trefoil, Bird's-foot**
Lycopus europaeus - **Gypsywort**
Lysimachia nummularia - **Creeping Jenny**
Lysimachia vulgaris - **Loosestrife, Garden Yellow**
Lythrum portula - **Loosestrife, Spatulaleaf**
Lythrum salicaria - **Loosestrife, Purple**

M

Mahonia aquifolium - **Oregon Grape**
Malus sylvestris - **Crabapple**
Malva moschata - **Mallow, Musk**
Malva sylvestris - **Mallow, High**
Matricaria discoidea - **Mayweed, Disc**
Matricaria matricarioides (syn.) - **Mayweed, Disc**
Matricaria recutita - **Chamomile, German**
Medicago lupulina - **Clover, Yellow**
Melilotus altissimus - **Melilot, Tall**
Melilotus officinalis - **Sweet Clover, Yellow**
Mentha aquatica - **Mint, Water**
Mentha arvensis - **Mint, Wild**
Mentha citrata - **Mint, Eau-de-Cologne**
Mentha x piperita L. - **Peppermint**
Mentha pulegium - **Pennyroyal**
Mentha requienii - **Mint, Corsican**
Mentha rotundifolia - **Mint, Apple**
Mentha spicata - **Spearmint**
Menyanthes trifoliata - **Bogbean**
Mertensia maritima - **Oyster Plant**
Mespilus germanica - **Medlar**
Mimulus guttatus - **Monkey Flower, Common**
Morus spp. - **Mulberry**

Mycelis muralis - **Lettuce, Wall**
Myrica gale - **Gale, Sweet**
Myrrhis odorata - **Cicely, Sweet**

N

Nasturtium officinale - **Watercress**
Nuphar advena - **Pond-lily, Yellow**
Nuphar lutea - **Water-lily, Yellow**
Nymphaea alba - **Water-lily, White**

O

Oenothera biennis - **Evening Primrose, Common**
Oenothera glazioviana - **Evening Primrose, Redsepal**
Ononis repens - **Restharrow, Common**
Origanum vulgare - **Oregano**
Ornithogalum pyrenaicum - **Pyrenese Star of Bethlehem**
Ornithogalum umbellatum - **Sleepydick**
Oxalis acetosella - **Woodsorrel, Common**
Oxalis corniculata - **Oxalis, Yellow**

P

Palmaria palmata - **Dulse**
Papaver rhoeas - **Poppy, Corn**
Pastinaca sativa - **Parsnip, Wild**
Persicaria lapathifolia - **Knotweed, Curlytop**
Phragmites australis - **Reed, Common**
Picea spp. - **Spruce**
Picris echioides - **Ox-tongue, Bristly**
Pinus spp. - **Pine**
Plantago coronopus - **Plantain, Buck's Horn**
Plantago lanceolata - **Plantain, Narrowleaf**
Plantago major - **Plantain, Common**
Polygala vulgaris - **Milkwort, Common**
Polygonum aviculare - **Knotgrass, Common**
Polygonum bistorta - **Bistort, Meadow**
Polygonum japonicum (syn.) - **Knotweed, Japanese**
Polygonum japonicum (syn.) **Knotweed, Japanese**
Polygonum lapathifolium (syn.) - **Knotweed, Curlytop**
Polygonum persicaria - **Redshank**
Porphyra umbiliculis - **Laver**
Potentilla anserina (syn.) - **Cinquefoil, Silverweed**
Potentilla erecta - **Cinquefoil, Erect**
Potentilla reptans - **Cinquefoil, Creeping**
Primula L. - **Primrose**
Primula veris - **Primrose, Cowslip**
Prunella vulgaris - **Selfheal, Common**
Prunus avium - **Cherry, Sweet**
Prunus cerasifera - **Plum, Cherry**
Prunus cerasus - **Cherry, Sour**
Prunus domestica ssp. - **Plum, European**
Prunus padus - **Cherry, European Bird**
Prunus spinosa - **Blackthorn**
Pteridium aquilium - **Bracken**
Pulmonaria offinialis - **Lungwort, Common**
Pyrola minor - **Wintergreen, Snowline**
Pyrus communis - **Pear, Common**

Q

Quercus spp. - **Oak**

R

Ranunculus acris - **Buttercup, Tall**
Ranunculus bulbosus - **Turnip, St. Anthony's**
Ranunculus ficaria - **Buttercup, Fig**
Ranunculus repens - **Buttercup, Creeping**
Ranunculus sceleratus - **Buttercup, Cursed**
Raphanus raphanistrum - **Radish, Wild**
Reseda lutea - **Mignonette, Yellow**
Ribes nigrum - **Blackcurrant, European**
Ribes rubrum - **Currant, Cultivated**
Ribes uva-crispa - **Gooseberry, European**
Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum (syn.) - **Watercress**
Rosa arvensis - **Rose, Field**
Rosa canina - **Rose, Dog**
Rubus caesius - **Dewberry, European**
Rubus chamaemorus - **Cloudberry**
Rubus fruticosus - **Blackberry, Shrubby**
Rubus idaeus - **Raspberry, American Red**
Rumex acetosa - **Sorrel, Garden**
Rumex acetosella - **Sorrel, Common Sheep's**
Rumex alpinus - **Rhubarb, Monk's**
Rumex crispus - **Dock, Curly**
Rumex obtusifolius - **Dock, Bitter**
Rumex patientia - **Dock, Patience**

S

Sagittaria sagittifolia - **Arrowhead, Hawaii**
Salicornia europaea (syn.) - **Glasswort, Slender**
Salicornia maritima - **Glasswort, Slender**
Salsola pestifer - **Thistle, Prickly Russian**
Salvia verbenaca - **Clary, Wild**
Sambucus nigra - **Elderberry, Black**
Sambucus racemosa - **Elderberry, Red**
Sanguisorba minor - **Burnet, Small**
Sanguisorba officinalis - **Burnet, Official**
Scirpus maritimus - **Bulrush, Cosmopolitan**
Scrophularia nodosa - **Figwort, Woodland**
Sedum acre - **Stonecrop, Goldmoss**
Sedum reflexum - **Stonecrop, Jenny's**
Sedum telephium (syn.) - **Orpine**
Senecio vulgaris - **Groundsel, Common**
Silene vulgaris - **Campion, Bladder**
Silybum marianum - **Thistle, (Blessed) Milk**
Sinapis alba - **Mustard, White**
Sinapis arvensis - **Mustard, Charlock**
Sisymbrium officinale - **Mustard, Hedge**
Smyrnium olusatrum - **Alexanders**
Solidago virgaurea - **Goldenrod**
Sonchus arvensis - **Sowthistle, Field**
Sonchus asper - **Sow Thistle, Spiny**
Sonchus oleraceus - **Sowthistle, Common**
Sorbus aria - **Chess-Apple**
Sorbus aucuparia - **Mountain Ash, European**
Sorbus torminalis - **Checkertree**
Sparganium erectum - **Bur-reed, Simplestem**
Stachys officinalis - **Hedgenettle, Common**
Stachys palustris - **Hedgenettle, Marsh**
Stellaria media - **Chickweed, Common**
Succisa pratensis - **Devilsbit**
Symphoricarpos albus - **Snowberry, Common**
Symphytum officinale - **Comfrey, Common**

T

Tanacetum parthenium - **Feverfew**
Tanacetum vulgare - **Tansy, Common**
Taraxacum officinale - **Dandelion**
Thlaspi arvense - **Pennycress, Field**
Tragopogon porrifolius - **Salsify**
Tragopogon pratensis - **Jack-go-to-bed-at-noon**
Trifolium pratense - **Clover, Red**
Trifolium repens - **Clover, White**
Trigonella ornithopodioides - **Clover, Bird**

Tripolium pannonicum - **Aster, Sea**
Tussilago farfara - **Coltsfoot**
Typha angustifolia - **Cattail, Narrowleaf**
Typha latifolia - **Cattail, Broadleaf**

U

Ulex europaeus - **Gorse, Common**
Ulva lactuca - **Sea Lettuce**
Urtica dioica - **Nettle, Stinging**
Urtica urens - **Nettle, Dwarf**

V

Vaccinium myrtillus - **Whortleberry**
Vaccinium oxycoccus - **Cranberry**
Vaccinium uliginosum - **Blueberry, Bog**
Vaccinium vitis-idaea - **Lingonberry**
Valeriana officinalis - **Valerian, Garden**
Valerianella locusta - **Cornsalad, Lewiston**
Veronica beccabunga - **Speedwell, European**
Veronica chamaedrys - **Speedwell, Germander**
Viburnum opulus - **Cranberrybush, European**
Vicia cracca - **Vetch, Bird**
Vicia hirsuta - **Tare, Tiny**
Vicia sativa - **Vetch, Garden**
Vicia sepium - **Vetch, Bush**
Viola odorata - **Violet, Sweet**

Botanical Family Translator

For details about characteristics of the families see the safety page.

Aceraceae - Maple
Aizoaceae - Mesembryanthemum
Alismataceae - Water-plantain
Apiaceae - Carrot
Anacardiaceae - Cashew
Araceae - Arum
Asteraceae - Daisy
Balsaminacea - Balsam
Berberidaceae - Barberrry
Betulaceae - Birch
Boraginaceae - Borage
Brassicacea - Cabbage
Butomaceae - Flowering Rush
Campanulaceae - Bellflower
Cannabaceae - Hemp
Caprifoliaceae - Honeysuckle
Caryophyllaceae - Pink
Chenopodiaceae - Goosefoot
Clusiaceae - St. John's Wort
Compositae - former name of the Daisy family, now Asteraceae
Convolvulaceae - Bindweed or Morning-glory
Cornaceae - Dogwood
Corylaceae - Hazel
Crassulaceae - Stonecrop
Cruciferae - former name of the Cabbage family, now Brassicacea
Cupressaceae - Cypress
Cyperaceae - Sedge
Dioscoreaceae - Yam
Dipsacaceae - Teasel
Eleagnaceae - Oleaster
Empetraceae - Crowberry
Equisetaceae - Horsetail
Ericaceae - Heath
Euphorbiaceae - Spurge
Fagaceae - Beech
Fumariaceae - Fumitory
Gentinaceae - Gentian
Geraniaceae - Cranesbill
Graminae - Grass
Grossulariaceae - Currant
Hippocastanaceae - Horse Chestnut
Iridaceae - Iris
Juglandaceae - Walnut
Labiatae - former name of the Mint family, now Lamiaceae
Lamiaceae - Mint
Leguminosae - Pea
Lemnaceae - Duckweed
Liliaceae - Lily
Lythraceae - Loosestrife
Malvaceae - Mallow
Menyanthaceae - Bogbean
Moraceae - Mulberry
Myriaceae - Bog Myrtle
Nymphaeceae - Water-lily
Oleaceae - Olive
Onagraceae - Willowherb
Orchidaceae - Orchid
Oxalidaceae - Wood-sorrel
Papaveraceae - Poppy
Pinaceae - Pine
Plantaginaceae - Plantain
Plumbaginaceae - Sea Lavender
Polygonaceae - Dock
Portulacaceae - Purslane
Primulaceae - Primrose
Pyrolaceae - Wintergreen
Ranunculaceae - Buttercup
Resedaceae - Mignonette
Rosaceae - Rose
Rubiaceae - Bedstraw
Saxifragaceae - Saxifrage
Scrophulariaceae - Figwort
Solanaceae - Nightshade
Sparganiaceae - Bur-reed
Tiliaceae - Lime
Typhaceae - Reed-mace
Umbelliferae - former name of the Carrot family, now Apiaceae
Urticaceae - Nettle
Valerianacea - Valerian
Violaceae - Violet

Remedies and Nutritive Support

Plants which are featured in the main plant list with a detailed profile are listed here as the common name appears in the profile. For details see the plant profile. Other plants will also include the botanical name and state which part is used. Names of the most important plants are in bold type.

For an explanation of medicinal terms see the glossary below.

Important! Read the full description of the plant in the plant list. Also read the general safety notes.

These remedies are for minor ailments or injuries, or may help in a survival situation. Always consult a trained medical professional for medical advice.

Keep samples of plants consumed. In case of adverse reaction seek medical attention immediately, taking along the samples.

The information is given in good faith, but is by no means complete. Absence of information on toxicity or danger is not indicative of a plant's safety. Consumption is at the reader's own risk and discretion.

Some guidance may reduce the risk in a survival situation, but it is best to err on the safe side when medical help is available.

Glossary

- **analgesic**: relieves pain
- **anodyne**: eases pain (milder than an analgesic)
- **anthocyanin**: antioxidant, mostly in skin of dark blue fruit or red leaves; improves night vision, circulation, memory
- **anthocyanosides**: antioxidant; strengthens capillaries/ connective tissue; may improve night vision
- **antiaphonic**: for loss of voice
- **anti-asthmatic**: treats asthma
- **antibacterial**: kills bacteria
- **anticancer**: used in the treatment of cancer
- **anticholesterolemic**: prevents build up of cholesterol
- **anticoagulant**: retards or prevents blood clotting
- **anti-diarrhoea**: treats diarrhoea - see also astringent
- **antidote**: counters poisoning
- **antiemetic**: prevents nausea and vomiting
- **anti-fertility**: may help prevent pregnancy
- **anti-fungal**: inhibits or destroys fungi
- **antihistamine**: inhibits the effects of histamine; reduces itching and swelling
- **anti-inflammatory**: reduces inflammation of joints, injuries etc. (see also demulcent, emollient)
- **anti-lithic**: see lithontripic
- **antimicrobial**: helps the body destroy or resist pathogens (see also antibacterial and antiseptic)
- **anti-periodic**: prevents the return of or recurring illnesses (e.g. Malaria)
- **antiphlogistic**: see anti-inflammatory
- **antipyretic**: see febrifuge
- **anti-rheumatic**: treats rheumatism
- **antiscorbutic**: prevents scurvy, contains Vitamin C
- **antiseptic**: prevents putrefaction (applied to wounds)
- **antispasmodic**: prevents or eases spasms or cramps
- **antitumor**: see anticancer
- **antitussive**: prevents or relieves coughing
- **antivirus, antiviral**: treats viral infections
- **aperient**: mild laxative
- **astringent**: causes localized contraction of blood vessels and tissue, reducing flow of blood, mucus, diarrhoea etc.
- **bitter**: bitter-tasting; stimulates appetite, increases bile flow (essential for aiding the digestion of fat and neutralizing stomach acid), regulates insulin and glycogen
- **cardiac**: has effect on the heart
- **carminative**: prevents or eases effects of flatulence
- **cathartic**: strong laxative (less violent than purgative)
- **cholagogue**: increases flow of bile
- **decongestant**: relieves congestion (see also expectorant and antitussive)
- **demulcent**: rich in mucilage, soothes or protects irritated or inflamed tissue (especially mucosa)
- **deobstruent**: clears obstructions, opens natural passages of body
- **depurative**: eliminates toxins and purifies the system, especially the blood
- **detergent**: cleans wounds etc.; removes dead and diseased matter
- **diaphoretic**: promotes perspiration, aids the skin in elimination of toxins
- **digestive**: aids digestion
- **diuretic**: increases secretion and elimination of urine
- **emetic**: causes vomiting (mostly when taken in high doses)
- **emmenagogue**: stimulates or normalizes menstrual flow, in early pregnancy may induce an abortion
- **emollient**: applied to the skin softens, soothes, protects (externally, as demulcents do internally)
- **expectorant**: removes excess amount of mucus from respiratory system (see also decongestant)
- **febrifuge**: reduces fever; use only for dangerously high temperature; a raised temperature is the body's way of burning up the pathogen
- **fumaric acid**: - the ionized form is used by cells to produce energy from food. Used to treat psoriasis. Excess may cause kidney or gastrointestinal disorders, and skin flushing. Prolonged use may cause decreased count of white blood cells. Produced in human skin by exposure to sunlight. Used as mordant for dye.
- **galactagogue**: stimulates the production of breast milk or increases milk flow
- **glucoquinones**: reduce blood sugar levels
- **glucose-modulatory**: the ability to help maintain normal blood glucose levels
- **haemostatic**: controls bleeding (see astringent)
- **hepatic**: acts upon the liver
- **hypnotic**: induces sleep
- **hypolipidemic**: decreases circulating fats in the bloodstream
- **hypotensive**: reduces blood pressure
- **lactobacilli**: beneficial microorganism present in the gut and vagina. May be anti-inflammatory and anticancer, especially for liver, colon, bladder, and breast cancer. May boost immune system.
- **laxative**: evacuates the bowels or softens stools
- **lithontripic**: helps prevent and removes stones from kidneys, bladder etc.
- **nervine**: restores nerves to their natural state
- **nutritive**: nourishing to the body
- **odontalgic**: treats toothache (temporarily) and other problems of the teeth and gums
- **ophthalmic**: treats eye complaints
- **oxytoxic/oxytocic**: stimulates the contraction of the uterus aiding childbirth
- **pectoral**: treats chest and lung complaints
- **purgative**: produces evacuation of the bowels (more severe than aperients or laxatives)
- **quercetin**: antioxidant; anti-inflammatory (inhibits the production and release of histamine); may protect against cancer and cardiovascular disease

- **refrigerant**: produces a feeling of coolness
- **resveratrol**: an anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antiviral; may protect against cancer and cardiovascular disease
- **rubefacient**: applied to the skin to stimulate local irritation and dilate capillaries to increase circulation in the skin and relieve internal pains, e.g. rheumatic joints
- **rutin**: antioxidant; strengthens capillaries; may protect against cancer and heart disease
- **sedative**: calms the nervous system and reduces stress
- **sialagogue**: stimulates secretion of saliva
- **soporific**: see hypnotic
- **stimulant**: enlivens physiological functions of the body, without giving a false sense of well-being
- **stomachic**: treats stomach disorders
- **styptic**: see astringent
- **sudorific**: see diaphoretic
- **suppurative**: forms or discharges pus
- **tonic**: improves general health, bringing steady improvement
- **vasoconstrictor**: narrows blood vessels, increasing blood pressure
- **vasodilator**: widens blood vessels, reducing blood pressure
- **vermifuge**: expels worms from the body (see also anthelmintic)
- **vulnerary**: promotes healing of wounds (applied externally)

General Health and Wellbeing

Tonic - Bear Garlic; Bedstraw, Sweetscented; Blackberry, Shrubby; Cattail, Broadleaf; Chestnut, European; Cinquefoil, Silverweed; Cleavers; Daisy, Lawn; Dandelion; Dock; Filbert; Fireweed; Hop, Common; Nettle, Stinging; Oak; Quackgrass; Queen of the Meadow; Raspberry; Rose, Dog; Strawberry; Whortleberry
Stimulant - Angelica *Angelica archangelica*; Bear Garlic; Dandelion; Ground Ivy *Glechoma hederacea* (aerial parts); Horseradish *Armoracia rusticana* (tap root); Peppermint *Mentha piperita* (aerial parts); Raspberry; Shepherd's Purse; Spoonwort; Yarrow

Detox

see also: Kidney, Bladder; Liver, Gallbladder, Spleen
Depurative - Bear Garlic; Blackberry, Shrubby; Blackthorn; **Burdock**; Chickweed; **Cleavers**; **Clover, Red**; Daisy, Lawn; **Dandelion**; **Dock**; **Figwort, Woodland** *Scrophularia nodosa* (aerial parts); Knotweed, Japanese; **Nettle, Stinging**; Plantain; Quackgrass; Queen of the Meadow; Reed, Common; Rose, Dog; Shepherd's Purse; Sorrel; Strawberry
Diaphoretic - Bear Garlic; Bedstraw, Sweetscented; Birch; Blackthorn; Burdock; Cleavers; Deadnettle, Purple; **Elderberry, Black**; Filbert; Mustard, Garlic; Queen of the Meadow; **Yarrow**

Blockages

Decongestant - Oak; Raspberry
Deobstruent - Plantain
Antispasmodic - see Cramps

Blood

see also: Cardiovascular System; Wounds, Burns, Ulcers
General - Dock; Nettle, Stinging

Cholesterol

Anticholesterolemic - Bear Garlic
also - plants containing saponins (see saponins in Toxins sub-section of Safety section) - Campion, Bladder *Silene vulgaris* (leaves, shoots); Chestnut, Horse *Aesculus hippocastanum* (seeds [conkers] - ripe, cooked); Chickweed, Common; leaves from plants of the Goosefoot Family (see caution notes about the Goosefoot family [Chenopodiaceae]): Good King Henry *Chenopodium bonus-henricus*; Goosefoot, Red *Chenopodium rubrum;* Lambsquarters *Chenopodium album*

Cleansing

see General Health and Wellbeing – Detox

Reduce Bleeding

Astringent - Bear Garlic; Birch; Blackberry, Shrubby; Blackthorn; Cattail, Broadleaf; Chestnut, European; Chickweed, Common; Cinquefoil, Silverweed; Cleavers; Deadnettle, Purple; Dock; Filbert; Fireweed; Horsetail, Field; Maple, Sycamore; **Nettle, Stinging**; **Oak**; Plantain; **Queen of the Meadow**; Raspberry; Reed, Common; Rose, Dog; Shepherd's Purse; Sorrel; Strawberry; Whortleberry; Woodsorrel, Common; **Yarrow**
Haemostatic - Cattail, Broadleaf; Cinquefoil, Silverweed; Horsetail, Field; Nettle, Stinging; Oak; Plantain; Shepherd's Purse; Yarrow

Sugar Level

Bitter - Birch; Yarrow
Glucoquinones - Nettle, Stinging; Whortleberry
glucose-modulatory - Burdock; Dandelion

Thinning

Anticoagulant - Bedstraw, Sweetscented; Cattail, Broadleaf

Cancer

see also: Gut, Bowel - Gut Flora
Anticancer - Cattail, Broadleaf; Cleavers; Clover, Red; Daisy, Lawn; Dandelion; Knotweed, Japanese.; Shepherd's Purse
Resveratrol - Knotweed, Japanese
Rutin - Elderberry, Black; Hawthorn; Hop, Common

Cardiovascular System

see also: Blood
General - Nettle, Stinging; Queen of the Meadow; Yarrow
Anthocyanin - Blackberry, Shrubby; Blackcurrant, European; Elderberry, Black; Whortleberry
Anthocyanosides - Blackberry, Shrubby; Blackcurrant, European; Cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccus* (berries); Raspberry; Whortleberry;
Cardiac - Bedstraw, Sweetscented; Hawthorn; Raspberry
Resveratrol - Knotweed, Japanese
Rutin - Elderberry, Black; Hawthorn; Hop, Common
Vasodilator - Bear Garlic; Burdock; Hawthorn; Shepherd's Purse; Whortleberry; Yarrow
Vasoconstrictor - Shepherd's purse

Arteriosclerosis
Dandelion; Hawthorn; Queen of the Meadow; Shepherd's Purse

High Blood Pressure
Hypotensive - Bear Garlic; Nettle, Stinging; Shepherd's purse
Vasodilator - Bear Garlic; Burdock; Hawthorn; Shepherd's Purse; Whortleberry; Yarrow

Varicose Veins
Bedstraw, Sweetscented; Shepherd's Purse; Whortleberry;

Chilblains
Strawberry

Cramps
Antispasmodic - Bear Garlic; Bedstraw, Sweetscented; Cinquefoil, Silverweed; Daisy, Lawn; Fireweed; Hawthorn; Hop, Common; Mustard, Hedge; **Valerian, Garden** *Valeriana officinalis* (root); Yarrow

Digestive Tract
see also: Gut, Bowel; Liver, Gallbladder; Spleen
General - Plantain

Appetite, Digestion
Bitter - Birch; Yarrow
Sialagogue - Currant, Cultivated
Stomachic - Blackthorn; Burdock; Dandelion; Filbert; Hop, Common; Knotweed, Japanese; Mustard, Hedge; Queen of the Meadow
Digestive - Nettle, Stinging; Yarrow
Indigestion - Bear Garlic; Cinquefoil, Silverweed

Gastritis
Rose, Dog

Nausea
Antiemetic - **Queen of the Meadow;** Reed, Common

Eyes
Ophthalmic - Chickweed, Common; Daisy, Lawn; Plantain; Raspberry; Rose
also - Elderberry, Black; Maple, Sycamore; Plantain; Raspberry

Night Vision
Anthocyanin - Blackberry, Shrubby; Blackcurrant, European; Elderberry, Black (berries); Whortleberry
Anthocyanosides - Blackberry, Shrubby; Blackcurrant, European; Cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccus;* Whortleberry;

Fever, Heat
Febrifuge - Bear Garlic; Beech; Bindweed, Hedge; Blackthorn; Cleavers; **Elderberry, Black**; Filbert; Hop, Common; Knotweed, Japanese; Reed, Common; Sorrel; Woodsorrel, Common
Refrigerant - Cattail, Broadleaf; Chickweed, Common; Currants; Plantain; Raspberry; Reed, Common

Fungal Infections
Anti-fungal - Burdock; Nettle, Stinging

Gut, Bowel
see also: Digestive Tract

Cleanse (scour)
Plantain

Constipation
Aperient - Blackthorn; Burdock; Cleavers; Currant, Cultivated; Quackgrass; Spoonwort
Laxative - Birch; Blackthorn; Chickweed, Common; Daisy, Lawn; **Dandelion**; **Dock**; Fireweed; Knotweed, Japanese; Mustard, Hedge; Plantain; Rose, Dog; Sorrel; Strawberry; Whortleberry
Purgative - Bindweed, Hedge; Daisy, Lawn; Deadnettle, Purple; Elderberry, Black

Diarrhoea
Anti-diarrhoea - Hop, Common; Nettle, Stinging
Astringent - Bear Garlic; Birch; Blackberry, Shrubby; Blackthorn; Cattail, Broadleaf; Chestnut, European; Chickweed, Common; Cinquefoil, Silverweed; Cleavers; Deadnettle, Purple; Dock; Filbert; Fireweed; Horsetail, Field; Maple, Sycamore; **Nettle, Stinging**; **Oak**; Plantain; **Queen of the Meadow**; Raspberry; Reed, Common; Rose, Dog; Shepherd's Purse; Sorrel; Strawberry; Whortleberry; Woodsorrel, Common; **Yarrow**

Flatulence
Carminative - Bear Garlic; Burdock; Chickweed; Horsetail, Field; Rose, Dog; Yarrow

Gut Flora
Lactobacilli – in roots like Burdock, Dandelion, and probably others

Haemorrhoids
Cinquefoil, Silverweed; Dock; Nettle, Stinging; Oak; Shepherd's Purse; Whortleberry;

Irritable Bowel Syndrome
Fireweed

Worms and other Parasites
Anthelmintic - Bear Garlic; Filbert; Sorrel; Tansy *Tanacetum vulgare* (aerial parts); Wormwood, Common *Artemisia vulgaris*
Vermifuge - Bear Garlic; Hop, Common; Mustard, Garlic; Plantain; Quackgrass; Rose, Dog

Gynaecological
Aid Childbirth
Oxytoxic - Raspberry; Shepherd's Purse

Candida
Blackberry, Shrubby; Chickweed; Dandelion; Fireweed; Horsetail, Field

Milk Flow
Galactagogue - Cattail, Broadleaf; Chickweed; Elderberry, Black; Horsetail, Field; Nettle, Stinging

Prevent Pregnancy
anti-fertility - Shepherd's Purse

Menopause
Clover, Red

Menstruation
Emmenagogue - Cattail, Broadleaf; Chickweed; Cinquefoil, Silverweed; Daisy, Lawn; Nettle, Stinging; Raspberry; Shepherd's Purse; Woodsorrel, Common; Yarrow

Vaginitis
Cattail, Broadleaf; Oak

Headache, Stress

see also: Pain
General - Bedstraw, Sweetscented; Nettle, Stinging
Nervine - Hop, Common
Sedative - Bedstraw, Sweetscented; Bishop's Goutweed; Cattail, Broadleaf; Cinquefoil, Silverweed; Clover, Red; Hawthorn; **Hop, Common**; Primrose, Cowslip *Primula veris* (root, petals); Reed, Common; Spruce; St. John's Wort *Hypericum perforatum* (aerial parts); **Valerian, Garden** *Valeriana officinalis* (root)

Infections

General - Burdock; Rose, Dog
Antibacterial - Burdock; Dandelions; Whortleberry
Anti-fungal - Burdock; Nettle, Stinging
Antimicrobial - Quackgrass
Antiseptic - Bear Garlic; Beech; Hop, Common; Horsetail, Field; Mustard, Garlic; Oak; Plantain; Queen of the Meadow; Spruce; Whortleberry; Yarrow
Detergent - Clover, Red

Colds, Influenza
Rose, Dog; Yarrow

Inflammation

see also: Infections; Rheumatic Conditions; Wounds
Anti-inflammatory - Bedstraw, Sweetscented; Blackberry, Shrubby; Burdock; Cattail, Broadleaf; Chestnut, European; Cinquefoil, Silverweed; Cleavers; Fireweed; Hop, Common; Mustard, Garlic; Nettle, Stinging; Quackgrass; Queen of the Meadow; Raspberry; **St. John's Wort** *Hypericum perforatum* (aerial parts); Yarrow
Demulcent - Bindweed, Hedge; Chickweed; Daisy, Lawn; Fireweed; Mallow, Common Marsh *Althaea officinalis* (leaves, flowers); Plantain; Quackgrass
Emollient - **Chickweed, Common**; **Comfrey** *Symphytum officinale* (leaves, root); Daisy, Lawn; Fireweed; Knotweed, Japanese; **Mallow, Common Marsh** *Althaea officinalis* (leaves, flowers); Quackgrass; Quercetin - Hawthorn
Resveratrol - Knotweed, Japanese

Insomnia

see also: Headache, Stress
General - Bedstraw, Sweetscented; Cleavers; Hawthorn; Hop, Common; Queen of the Meadow
Hypnotic - Hop, Common; Valerian, Garden *Valeriana officinalis* (root)

Joints, Muscles, Bones

see also: Rheumatic Conditions; Inflammations
Bishop's Goutweed; Chestnut, European; Currant, Cultivated; Daisy, Lawn; Elderberry, Black

Kidney, Bladder

General - Daisy, Lawn; Plantain; Quackgrass; Shepherd's Purse; Yarrow
Diuretic - Bear Garlic; Bindweed, Hedge; Birch; Bishop's Goutweed; Blackberry, Shrubby; Blackthorn; Burdock; Cattail, Broadleaf; Chickweed, Common; Cinquefoil, Silverweed; **Cleavers**; **Dandelion**; Deadnettle, Purple; Elderberry, Black; Hawthorn; Hop, Common; Horsetail, Field; Knotweed, Japanese; Mustard, Hedge; Nettle, Stinging; Plantain; **Quackgrass**; Queen of the Meadow; Raspberry; Reed, Common; Rose, Dog; Shepherd's Purse; Sorrel; Spoonwort; Strawberry; Whortleberry; Woodsorrel, Common; **Yarrow**
Lithontripic - Birch; Cattail, Broadleaf; Nettle, Stinging; **Parsley Piert** *Aphanes arvensis* (aerial parts); Quackgrass; Queen of the Meadow; Reed, Common

Cystitis
Birch; Blackberry, Shrubby; Blackthorn; Cattail, Broadleaf; Cleavers; Cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccus* (fruit); Hop, Common; Horsetail, Field; Nettle, Stinging; Quackgrass; Queen of the Meadow

Bedwetting
Horsetail, Field; Nettle, Stinging

Liver, Gall bladder, Spleen

General - Daisy, Lawn; Quackgrass; Strawberry
Bitter - Birch; Yarrow
Cholagogue - Bear Garlic; Burdock; **Dandelion**; Dock; Yarrow
Hepatic - Bedstraw, Sweetscented; Cleavers; **Dandelion**; Dock; Hop, Common; Sorrel, Garden; **Yarrow**

Lymphatic System

Chickweed, Common

Memory, Concentration

see also: Cardiovascular System - vasodilator
Anthocyanin - Blackberry, Shrubby; Blackcurrant, European; Elderberry, Black (berries); Whortleberry;

Mouth

Toothache
see also: Pain
Odontalgic - Beech; Cinquefoil, Silverweed; Goldenrod *Solidago virgaurea* (root); Reed, Common; Yarrow

Ulcers
Daisy, Lawn; Fireweed; Whortleberry;

Pain

Analgesic - Cinquefoil, Silverweed; Queen of the Meadow; St. John's Wort *Hypericum perforatum* (aerial parts)
Anodyne - Daisy, Lawn; Horsetail, Field; Hop, Common; Woodsorrel, Common

Poisoning

Antidote - Reed, Common
Emetic - Elderberry, Black

Prostate Gland

Fireweed; Horsetail, Field; Nettle, Stinging

Respiratory System and Voice

see also: Infections – Colds, Influenza
Pectoral - Catsear; **Elderberry, Black**

Asthma

Anti-asthmatic - Bear Garlic; Mustard, Garlic; Nettle, Stinging; Reed, Common

Bronchitis

Bear Garlic; Mustard, Garlic; Reed, Common

Cough

see also: Blockages
General - Blackberry, Shrubby; Burdock; Chestnut, European; Clover, Red; Hop, Common; Horsetail, Field
Antitussive - Beech; Coltsfoot *Tussilago farfara* (leaves); Daisy, Lawn; Reed, Common
Demulcent - Bindweed, Hedge; Chickweed, Common; Daisy, Lawn; Fireweed; **Mallow, Common Marsh** *Althaea officinalis* (leaves, flowers); Plantain; Quackgrass;
Expectorant - Bear Garlic; Beech; Chestnut, European; Chickweed, Common; Cinquefoil, Silverweed; Daisy, Lawn; **Elderberry, Black**; Mustard, Hedge; Spruce; Woodsorrel, Common; **Yarrow**

Throat Infections

Cinquefoil, Silverweed; Cleavers

Voice

Antiaphonic - Blackberry, Shrubby; Horsetail, Field; Mustard, Hedge

Rheumatic Conditions

see also: Inflammation; Kidney, Bladder; Joints, Muscles, Bones
Anti-rheumatic - Birch; Bishop's Goutweed; Blackthorn; Chestnut, European; Currant, Cultivated; Daisy, Lawn; Dandelion; Elderberry, Black; Hawthorn; Hop, Common; Horsetail, Field; Nettle, Stinging; Queen of the Meadow; Strawberry
Rubefacient - Bear Garlic; **Horseradish** *Armoracia rusticana*; Nettle, Stinging; Peppermint *Mentha piperita* (aerial parts)

Skin

see also: Inflammation; Wounds, Burns; Warts
General - Beech; Birch; Cleavers; Clover, Red; Dandelion; Dock; Hawthorn; Horsetail, Field; Maple, Sycamore; Mustard, Garlic; Nettle, Stinging; Oak; Sorrel, Common; Yarrow

Bites, Stings, Rashes

General - Bishop's Goutweed; Dock; Plantain
Antihistamine - Plantain
Emollient - Chickweed; Comfrey *Symphytum officinale* (leaves, root); Daisy, Lawn; Fireweed; Knotweed, Japanese; **Mallow, Common Marsh** *Althaea officinalis* (leaves, flowers); Quackgrass;

Boils, Splinters

Bindweed, Hedge; Burdock; Cattail, Broadleaf; Daisy, Lawn; Hawthorn; Quackgrass; Sorrel, Common; Spruce; Whortleberry; Woodsorrel, Common

Psoriasis

General - sunshine; Cleavers; Dock
Fumaric acid - Fumitory, Drug Fumaria officinalis; Shepherd's Purse

Warts

Antiviral - Dandelion

Water Retention

see Kidney, Bladder – diuretic

Wounds, Burns, Ulcers

see also: Blood - Reduce Bleeding; Infections; Inflammation; Skin
Antiseptic - Bear Garlic; Beech; Hop, Common; Horsetail, Field; Mustard, Garlic; Oak; Plantain; Queen of the Meadow; Spruce; Whortleberry; Yarrow
Astringent - Bear Garlic; Birch; Blackberry, Shrubby; Blackthorn; Cattail, Broadleaf; Chestnut, European; Chickweed, Common; Cinquefoil, Silverweed; Cleavers; Deadnettle, Purple; Dock; Filbert; Fireweed; Horsetail, Field; Maple, Sycamore; **Nettle, Stinging**; **Oak**; Plantain; **Queen of the Meadow**; Raspberry; Reed, Common; Rose, Dog; Shepherd's Purse; Sorrel; Strawberry; Whortleberry; Woodsorrel, Common; **Yarrow**
Detergent - Clover, Red
Emollient - Chickweed; Comfrey *Symphytum officinale* (leaves, root); Daisy, Lawn; Fireweed; Knotweed, Japanese; **Mallow, Common Marsh** *Althaea officinalis* (leaves, flowers); Quackgrass
Vulnerary - Blackberry, Shrubby; Bishop's Goutweed; Burdock; Cattail, Broadleaf; **Chickweed**; **Cleavers**; **Elderberry, Black**; Horsetail, Field; Knotweed, Japanese; **Mallow, Common Marsh** *Althaea officinalis* (leaves, flowers); Maple, Sycamore; Mustard, Garlic; **Plantain**; Shepherd's Purse; **St. John's Wort** *Hypericum perforatum* (aerial parts); **Yarrow**

Ulcers

Spoonwort, Common; Strawberry, Wild

Can I eat this plant?

Caution - important - please read

Please read all caution notes for each relevant plant. Also read the general safety notes, including notes on botanical families, especially where caution is indicated.

Toxic substance (indicated in orange) are described in greater detail in the safety section. For a description of medical terms and nutritive substances (brick-red) see the glossary in the Remedies section.

This list of plants was compiled from several sources which have claimed edibility of these plants or some of their parts. The information was cross-referenced with information from herbal medicine books and databases of poisonous plants. Some of it is contradictory. Every effort has been made to bring together as much data as possible to allow an informed decision about edibility.

Browsing Tips

The list below has basic details for over 300 plants for quick access to the most important information. About 50 plants (plant name in brick-red) are described in more depth. See also photo, map, calendar and remedies pages for those plants.

Key

Plant parts:

Leaf

Stem or trunk

Sap

Root and bulb

Flower

Fruit

Seed

Other:

Caution

Culinary

Medicinal

Domestic

Agrimony, Common

Botanical name: *Agrimonia eupatoria*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: tea
: cooked
Safety unknown

Alexanders

Botanical name: *Smyrnium olusatrum*
Family: Carrot (Apiaceae)
Biennial
Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:
(buds) : raw
: cooked

Angelica

Botanical name: *Angelica archangelica*
Family: Carrot (Apiaceae)
Biennial
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
: cooked
: flavoring
Contains furanocoumarin, especially the root, and when damaged or attacked by mould. **Eat sparingly.**

Angelica, Woodland *Angelica sylvestris* - see Angelica above

Archangel, Yellow

Botanical name: *Lamiastrum galeobdolon*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
(shoot) : cooked
Safety unknown

Arrowhead, Hawaii

Botanical name: *Sagittaria sagittifolia*
Family: Water-plantain (Alismataceae)
Perennial
Collectability: rare - avoid
Edible parts and how to consume:
(shoot) (peeled) : cooked
Safety unknown

Arum, Water

Botanical name: *Calla palustris*
Family: Arum (Araceae)
Perennial
Collectability: famine food - unsafe but potentially nutritious after careful preparation
Edible parts and how to consume:
: cooked
Contains oxalic acid and calcium oxalate.
Best avoided.

Asparagus

Botanical name: *Asparagus officinalis*
Family: Lily (Liliaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
(shoot) : raw
Fruit is mildly toxic. Shoots eaten in quantity may be kidney irritant.

Aster, Sea

Botanical name: *Tripolium pannonicum*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: cooked
Safety unknown

Atlantic Wakame *Alaria esculenta* - see Dabberlocks

Avens, Purple

Botanical name: *Geum rivale*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat

Continued .....

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : flavoring, tea

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Barberry, Common

Botanical name: *Berberis vulgaris*
Family: Barberry (Berberidaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

The bark (especially of the root) is toxic. The fruit is safe.

Barberry, Hollyleaved

Mahonia aquifolium - see Oregon Grape

Barley, Mouse

Botanical name: *Hordeum murinum*
Family: Grass (Gramniae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : flour
Safety unknown

Basil, Ascending Wild

Botanical name: *Calamintha ascendens* (*syn. Clinopodium ascendens*)
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : flavoring
Safety unknown

Basil, Wild

Botanical name: *Clinopodium vulgare*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw, flavoring
Safety unknown

Bear Garlic

Information about properties also apply to the close relative Ramps *Allium tricoccum*. See Collection, Storage and Notes for more information.
Botanical name: *Allium ursinum*
Family: Lily (Liliaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat

Take extra care with identification. Leaves can be mistaken for the leaves of the very poisonous plant Lily-of-the-Valley Convallaria majalis. May be toxic if consumed in large quantities.

Main benefit: Has most of the health benefits of cultivated garlic. Source of vitamins and minerals. Blood cleanser. Cholesterol reducing.

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: open woods, hedge or river banks
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Prefers: shade
Other: patch forming

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 40 cm
Other: garlic or onion smell

Leaf
Shape: lanceolate
Texture: satin sheen
Arrangement: basal rosette
Edge: smooth

Root
Type: oblong bulb

Flower
Shape: star
Arrangement: round umbel-like cluster on leafless stalk
Color:

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description
Whole plant ★★★ onion/garlic, slightly hot

How to Consume
whole plant - raw

Used as ...
Whole plant - food

Medicinal Use

Action:
Whole plant (bulb most active): anthelmintic, anti-asthmatic, anticholesterolemic, antiseptic, antispasmodic, astringent, cholagogue, depurative, diaphoretic, diuretic, expectorant, febrifuge, hypotensive, rubefacient, stimulant, stomachic, tonic, vasodilator, vermifuge

May treat:
Whole plant: diarrhoea, colic, wind, indigestion, loss of appetite, threadworm (infusion or enema), asthma, bronchitis, emphysema, high blood pressure, cholesterol; external: rheumatic/arthritic joints (stimulation to local circulation)

Other Use

Whole plant: insect (including moth) and mole repellant, disinfectant

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

 (bulbs) : when dormant

Preserving

 : dry to store. Leaves will also keep well in water (like cut flowers) for up to two weeks in a cool place. Leave a small amount of stem and stand in shallow water - avoid submerging the leaf.

Note

 : more active dried; infusion: 25g to 1/2 liter

Ramps *Allium tricoccum*, the close relative of Bear Garlic, is a protected species in Main, Rhode Island, Tennessee, some parks and in Quebec. It is best to assume that both species are in decline, and may also be protected in further states and provinces.

Glossary

lanceolate: shaped like a lance head; long, tapering to end
umbel: flower cluster with stalks joined in centre to form flat or curved surface; umbrella-like

Bedstraw, Sweet-scented

Botanical name: *Galium odoratum*
Family: Bedstraw (Rubiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat

⚠ Contains coumarin, especially when dried. For beverages it is best not to use more than three plants per liter.

Main Benefit:

: circulatory system, flavor

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: open woods, old, shady cottage gardens, see Note below
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Prefers: alkaline soil, shade
Other: patch forming

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 20 cm
Other: delicate, unbranched, smell of fresh-mown hay

Leaf
Shape: lanceolate
Texture: shiny
Arrangement: whorl of 6-9 leaves

Flower
Diameter: tiny
Arrangement: loose clusters at top of stem
When: May to June
Color:

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★★ sweet aroma, with scent of fresh-mown hay

How to Consume:

: raw, tea

Used as ...

: beverage, flavoring

Medicinal Use

Action:

: anticoagulant, anti-inflammatory, antispasmodic, cardiac, diaphoretic, diuretic, sedative, tonic

May treat:

: insomnia, nervous tension, varicose veins, biliary obstruction, hepatic jaundice, reduces high protein oedemas, especially lymphodema

Other Use

: dye: soft-tan, grey-green; dry: linen scent, moth repellent, pot-pourri

: red dye

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection
Collect just before or as plant comes into flower.
Sweet-scented Bedstraw can be mistaken for Cleavers *G. aparine*, a close relative. However, they are only superficially similar, mostly when Cleavers is young. Sweet-scented Bedstraw has a relatively short season (March to June), lacks the sticky barbs present on the entire Cleavers plant, and has a distinct smell of fresh cut hay when bruised. This smell is stronger when the plant is dried.

Drying
Dry to store and to increase aroma. The aroma increases considerably when the plant is dried, and is retained for a long time.

Notes
Sweet-scented Bedstraw is sometimes found in shady cottage gardens, especially derelict ones in the country side, where previous owners have discarded wood ashes.

Glossary

lanceolate: shaped like a lance head; long, tapering to end
whorl: ring of leaves around stem

Bedstraw, Yellow Spring

Botanical name: *Galium verum*
Family: Bedstraw (Rubiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

: details unknown

Safety unknown

Beech

Botanical name: *Fagus sylvatica*
Family: Beech (Fagaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good, specialized habitat

⚠ May be toxic if it contains tannin, and is consumed in large quantities.

Main Benefit:

: source of carbohydrates and protein

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: woods, often pure
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Prefers: base soil

General
Growth type: tree
Cycle: deciduous
Height: up to 35 meters
Other: shady; bare ground below

Leaf
Shape: pointed oval
Texture: ribbed
Arrangement: alternate
Edge: toothed
Other: bright green in spring

Trunk
Color: pale grey
Texture: smooth

Flower
Arrangement: pairs
When: April to May with leaves
Color:

Continued .....

Seed
Shape: three-sided
Color: red-brown
Size: small
Casing: prickly husk, four lobes open when ripe
Other: not every year, 3-8 year cycle

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

 ★★☆ mild

 ★★★ nutty

How to Consume:

 : best young, raw; leaf curd

 : raw, oil

Special preparation

 Difficult to peel, as very fiddly. Extract oil by crushing whole nut (without outer casing) and press the pulp. As some seeds may be moldy in the shell, it is best to test them by putting them in water. Fertile, i.e. viable seeds will sink.

Nutrition

 : fat, protein

Used as ...

 : food

 : food, condiment

Medicinal Use

Action:

 (bark) : antiseptic, antitussive, expectorant, febrifuge, odontalgic

May treat:

 (bark): skin

Other Use

 (trunk) : timber

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

 : ripe seeds fall to the ground; good mast years rotate on a three or more year cycle.

Beet, Sea

Botanical name: *Beta vulgaris maritima*
Family: Goosefoot (Chenopodiaceae)
Annual/perennial
Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

⚠ Contains oxalic acid.
This plant can concentrate soil toxins. Only pick from uncontaminated land.

Bellflower, Bluebell

Botanical name: *Campanula rotundifolia*
Family: Bellflower (Campanulaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw
Safety unknown

Bellflower, Giant

Botanical name: *Campanula latifolia*
Family: Bellflower (Campanulaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 (shoot, Vit C)  : raw
Safety unknown

Bellflower, Rampion

Botanical name: *Campanula rapunculoides*
Family: Bellflower (Campanulaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 (shoot)  : raw
Safety unknown

Bindweed, Field

Botanical name: *Convulvulus arvensis*
Family: Bindweed (Convolvulaceae)
Perennial climber
Collectability: common, plentiful, weed
Edible parts and how to consume:
Plant : flavoring
Safety unknown

Bindweed, Hedge

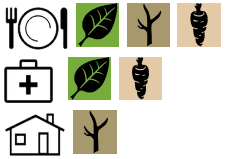
Botanical name: *Calystegia sepium*
Family: Bindweed (Convolvulaceae)
Perennial climber
Collectability: famine food - unsafe but potentially nutritious with careful preparation.
Common, widespread, weed

⚠ Laxative - can cause gastric upset.
May be mistaken for Great Bindweed (*C. silvatica*)

Main Benefit:

 : source of carbohydrates

Use - Overview



Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: hedges
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Other: locally prolific

General
Growth type: climbing herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 3 meters

Leaf
Shape: arrow
Edge: smooth

Stem
Other: winds around other plants for support

Flower
Shape: bell
Diameter: 35 mm
Petals/sepals: 2 bracts, 5 narrow sepals
When: June to September
Color:

Culinary Use

How to Consume:

 : cooked

Nutrition

 : starch, sugar

Continued ....

Used as ...

: food

Medicinal Use

Action:

: demulcent, diuretic, febrifuge, purgative

May treat:

: as poultice: boils will erupt within 24 hours

Other Use

: temporary cordage

Glossary

bracts: leaf of scale below calyx; parts of cone
calyx: collection of individual or, usually, joined sepals
sepals: protects bud before flower opens, forms leaf-like ring at base of flower, usually green

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Birch, Downy

Botanical name: *Betula pubescens*
Family: Birch (Betulaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: common, widespread, plentiful, good

Main Benefit:

: urinary system

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat

Type: woods, scrub
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Prefers: damp
Other: pioneer

General

Growth type: tree
Cycle: deciduous
Height: up to 20 meters
Other: delicate

Leaf

Shape: heart
Texture: downy
Arrangement: alternate, often pairs
Edge: toothed

Trunk

Color: rusty brown, later with white patches
Texture: papery, peeling

Flower

Shape: catkins
Arrangement: male: hanging; female: erect
When: April to May
Other: with leaves

Color:

Seed

Size: tiny

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

mildly balsamic

watery, bland, astringent

How to Consume:

: young: raw, tea, leaf curd

: raw, syrup, wine, vinegar

: cooked, flour

Special preparation

tea: 30-60g/liter, cool to 40° C, add a pinch of bicarbonate of soda to dissolve active principles, leave to infuse for a few hours

Nutrition

: starch

Used as ...

: food

: tea

: beverage

Medicinal Use

Action:

(inner bark) : astringent, diuretic, laxative

: anti-rheumatic, bitter, diaphoretic, lithontripic

May treat:

(inner bark) : skin complaints

: gout, rheumatism, water retention, renal oedema, cystitis, dissolves kidney and bladder stones

Other Use

(trunk) : timber

Collection, Storing, Notes

Drying

dry in shade

Note

see more in the sap section

Birch, European White *Betula pendula* - see Downy Birch above

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Bishop's Goutweed

Botanical name: *Aegopodium podagraria*
Family: Carrot (Apiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good, weed

May be mistaken for the highly toxic Hemlock Water Dropwort (Oenanthe crocata).

Main Benefit:

: rheumatic conditions

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat

Type: shady places
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Other: invasive, patch forming

General

Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 60cm
Other: hairless

Continued....

Leaf
Arrangement: group of 1-3 at end of leaf stalks
Edge: toothed

Flower
Petals/sepals: usually no bracts
Arrangement: umbels
When: May to August
Color:

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★☆ tangy

How to Consume:

young: raw, leaf curd

Special preparation

young: with stem; old: leaves only

Used as ...

: food

Medicinal Use

Action:

: anti-rheumatic, diuretic, sedative, vulnerary

May treat:

: painful joints, gout, rheumatism, arthritis, disorders of the urinary system and gastric tract, burns, stings, wounds

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

: for maximum size, when in flower, late spring to mid summer

Drying

: dry to store

Glossary

bracts: leaf or scale below calyx
calyx: collection of individual or, usually, joined sepals
sepal: protects bud before flower opens, forms leaf-like ring at base of flower, usually green
umbels: flower cluster with stalks joined in center to form flat surface; umbrella-like

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Bistort, Meadow

Botanical name: *Polygonum bistorta*
Family: Dock (Polygonaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

⚠ May cause photo sensitivity in sensitive people.
Contains oxalic acid.

Bittercress

Botanical name: *Barbarea vulgaris*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

(bud) : cooked

⚠ May be toxic for kidneys
This plant can concentrate soil toxins. Only pick from uncontaminated land.

Bittercress, Hairy

Botanical name: *Cardamine hirsuta*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Annual
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, weed

Main Benefit:
Rich in vitamins and minerals

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: dry wast places
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: annual
Height: up to 30 cm
Other: hairy

Leaf
Shape: pinnate
Arrangement: basal rosette
Other: small

Flower
Shape: cross
Diameter: up to 5 mm
Petals/sepals: round
Arrangement: branched clusters
Color:

Seed
Casing: long erect pods

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★☆ peppery

How to Consume:

: raw

: sprouted

Used as ...

: food

Glossary

pinnate: with series of leaflets on each side of a central stalk

---

Blackberry, Shrubby

Also known as Blackberry
Botanical name: *Rubus fruticosus*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: plentiful, common, invasive weed

⚠ Sharp thorns on stem and underside of leaf midrib.
Fruit can cause gastric upset if eaten in quantity. Canes can whip out when moved

Main Benefit:

: mucous membranes; source of antioxidants

Use - Overview

Continued ....

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: scrub, woods, open ground
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Other: patch forming

General
Growth type: cane shrub
Cycle: perennial
Height: 3 meters or more
Other: tangled, often reddish, variable

Leaf
Shape: pinnate
Texture: thorny midrib, hairy
Arrangement: 3-5 leaflets, alternate
Edge: toothed

Stem
Texture: thorny
Other: trailing canes, tips root on contact with ground

Flower
Diameter: 2-3 cm
Petals/sepals: 5
Arrangement: clusters near end
When: May to November
Other: faint rose scent
Color:

Fruit
Shape: round segments
Color: blue-black
Size: up to 2 cm
Other: called "Blackberry", juicy

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★☆ coconut-like, mildly spicy
★★☆ bland
★★☆ bland to sweet

How to Consume:
buds: raw; older: tea; leaf curd
young: raw
: cooked
early: raw; later: cooked

Special preparation
tea: 40-50g/liter, boil, infuse
: only consume if the thorns are still soft - cooking may soften slightly firm, but not yet sharp thorns
: long boil

Nutrition
: antioxidants
:Vitamin C, E, ellagic acid

Used as ...
: food, beverage, flavoring
: food

Medicinal Use

Action:
Unspecified part (see note [1] below), possibly
anti-inflammatory, astringent, depurative, diuretic, tonic, vulnerary, restorative on mucous membranes
: anticancer

May treat:
Unspecified part (see note [1] below), possibly
: candida, cough, hoarseness, digestive and urinary tract (cystitis), cuts and inflammation in the mouth
: degenerative diseases

Other Use
: thorny canes for plaster lath
: variable dye

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection
buds: before leaves unfurl and thorns harden
: mid-age
: best picked early in season as last berries often rot on branch; fruit grows on 2nd year cane; see also note [2] below

Drying
: dry (becomes more aromatic)

Notes
[1] The information source was unclear as to which part had these properties but implied leaves and root.
[2] It is best to pick only berries at mid-level and to leave the upper ones for birds. Also, leave the lower ones for foxes, as blackberries are one of the staples in a fox's diet during fruiting season.

Glossary
pinnate: with series of leaflets on each side of a central stalk

---

Blackcurrant, European
Botanical name: *Ribes nigrum*
Family: Currant (Grossulariaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:
: cooked
: raw
Safety unknown

Blackthorn
Botanical name: *Prunus spinosa*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread
⚠ The leaves, bark, flowers and seeds contain or produce hydrogen cyanide in contact with water.
Spines may cause septic wounds.

Main Benefit:
: regulates and cleanses the digestive system

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: scrub, woods, hedges
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General
Growth type: tree
Cycle: deciduous
Height: up to 4 meters
Other: tangled branches

Continued ....

Leaf
Shape: pointed oval
Arrangement: alternate
Edge: finely toothed
Other: small

Trunk
Color: dark brown
Texture: large spines throughout

Flower
Diameter: 10 mm
Arrangement: on spines
When: before leaves
Color:

Fruit
Shape: round
Color: blue-black
Size: up to 15 mm
Other: called "sloe", bloom on fruit

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★☆ very astringent and acid; better after frost or when made into jelly, syrup or for flavoring spirits

How to Consume:

: raw, jelly, syrup, flavoring, spirits

Special preparation

: for flavoring spirits prick the fruit; see fruit page for instructions on making syrup.

Used as ...

: food, flavoring

Medicinal Use

Action:

aperient, astringent, depurative, diaphoretic, diuretic, febrifuge, laxative, stomachic

May treat:

: cystitis, gout, rheumatism

: diarrhoea

Other Use

: green dye

: (trunk) timber: hard, for turnery, carving etc., bark: tannin, yellow dye (boiled in alkali)

: dark grey to green dye; unripe juice: laundry marking (almost indelible)

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

: best picked after first frost

Bladder Wrack

Botanical name: *Fucus vesiculosus* - Seaweed
Collectability: specialized habitat - tidal waters

Blueberry, Bog

Botanical name: *Vaccinium uliginosum*
Family: Heath (Ericaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: tea

: raw

Fruit may be mildly toxic if consumed in large quantities

Bogbean

Botanical name: *Menyanthes trifoliata*
Family: Bogbeen (Menyanthaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: rare, of little food value
Edible parts and how to consume:

: cooked

Leach the root in several changes of water to remove substance. Can cause gastric upset.

Borage, Common

Botanical name: *Borago officinalis*
Family: Borage (Boraginaceae)
Annual
Collectability: poisonous and of little value as food
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

Contains traces of pyrrolizidine alkaloids.

Bracken

Botanical name: *Pteridium aquilium*
Perennial
Collectability: famine food - unsafe but potentially nutritious with careful preparation
Invasive week
Edible parts and how to consume:

: cooked

May contain carcinogens - avoid.
Contains thiaminase.

Broom, Scotch

Botanical name: *Cytisus scoparius*
Family: Pea (Leguminosae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

: roasted

Green parts may be mildly toxic

Buckthorn, Sea

Botanical name: *Hippophae rhamnoides*
Family: Oleaster (Elaeagnaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat - coastal
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw (Vitamin C), can be used as lemon substitute

Buckwheat

Botanical name: *Fagopyrum esculentum*
Family: Dock (Polygonaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

: raw, sprouted

May cause photo sensitivity in sensitive people.
Contains oxalic acid.

Bugle, Common

Botanical name: *Ajuga reptans*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: poisonous and of little value as food

May be narcotic. **Has caused fatalities - avoid.**

Bugloss, Common Viper's

Botanical name: *Echium vulgare*
Family: Borage (Boraginaceae)
Biennial
Collectability: poisonous and of little value as food
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

Contact with hairs may cause dermatitis in sensitive people. May be toxic.
Contains pyrrolizidine alkaloids

Bulrush, Cosmopolitan

Botanical name: *Scirpus maritimus*
Family: Sedge (Cyperaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:

: flour
Safety unknown

Bur-reed, Simplestem

Botanical name: *Sparganium erectum*
Family: Bur-reed (Sparganiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

(base) : cooked
Safety unknown

Burdock, Greater *Arctium lappa* - see Burdock, Lesser below

Burdock, Lesser

Botanical name: *Arctium minus*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Biennial
Collectability: plentiful, good, worthwhile root

Seeds contain arctiin, a substance which can cause convulsions, increased respiration, later paralysis, also lowers blood pressure. It has shown anti-cancer effects. Arctiin belongs to a group of chemicals called lignans, which are phytoestrogens and antioxidant.
The fiberglass-like seed hairs are a skin irritant, and may be irritant by inhalation.

Main Benefit:

; throat and skin disorders, blood cleansing

: source of carbohydrates - see also note on inulin in the glossary below

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: waste places
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: biennial
Height: up to 1m

Leaf
Shape: broad heart
Other: large with hollow stalks

Root
Type: tapering
Color: dark
Size: big

Flower
Shape: egg
Diameter: up to 30mm
Petals/sepals: hooked bracts
Arrangement: short-stalked spikes
Color:

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

mucilaginous

How to Consume:

young: raw

: raw

(best young): raw, roasted, lactic soda

young: raw

: sprouted

Special preparation

: peel

Nutrition

: inulin (up to 45%)

Used as ...

: food

: food, beverage (coffee substitute, lactic soda)

Medicinal Use

Action:
Whole plant: antibacterial, anti-fungal, carminative

dried (possibly): aperient, cholagogue, depurative, (eliminates heavy metals), diaphoretic, diuretic, glucose-modulatory, vasodilator

: anti-inflammatory, depurative, diaphoretic, diuretic, glucose-modulatory, vasodilator,

May treat:

: throat, skin and other infections. Also has all the benefits of inulin

: throat/skin disorders; poultice (crushed): bruises, burns, sores

Other Use

: paper

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

: in 1st year before leaves die back, and in 2nd year before flowering stem is 10cm high

Drying

: dry to store

Glossary

bract: leaf or scale below calyx
calyx: collection of individual or, usually, joined sepals
sepal: protects bud before flower opens, forms leaf-like ring at base of flower, usually green

---

Burnet, Official

Botanical name: *Sanguisorba officinalis*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

(shoot) : raw
Safety unknown

Burnet, Small
Botanical name: *Sanguisorba minor*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
(shoot) : raw
Safety unknown

Butter and Egg
Botanical name: *Linaria vulgaris*
Family: Figwort (Scrophulariaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
(shoot) - cooked
May be mildly toxic

Buttercup, Creeping
Botanical name: *Ranunculus repens*
Family: Buttercup (Ranunculaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: poisonous and of little value as food, weed
Edible parts and how to consume:
: cooked
All parts are mildly toxic.

Buttercup, Cursed
Botanical name: *Ranunculus sceleratus*
Family: Buttercup (Ranunculaceae)
Annual
Collectability: poisonous and of little value as food
Edible parts and how to consume:
: cooked
All parts are toxic.
Leach in several changes of water to remove substance.

Buttercup, Fig
Botanical name: *Ranunculus ficaria*
Family: Buttercup (Ranunculaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: common, weed
Edible parts and how to consume:
(before flowering): raw
(after plant has withered): cooked
All parts are mildly toxic.

Buttercup, Tall
Botanical name: *Ranunculus acris*
Family: Buttercup (Ranunculaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: poisonous and of little value as food, weed
Edible parts and how to consume:
: cooked
All parts are toxic.

Cabbage, Wild
Botanical name: *Brassica oleracea*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
Safety unknown

Calamus
Botanical name: *Acorus calamus*
Family: Arum (Araceae)
Perennial
Collectability: suspect source information, caution advised, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:
(young) (shoot)
(peeled) : raw
The root of some ssp. may contain carcinogens.

Campion, Bladder
Also known as Maidenstears
Botanical name: *Silene vulgaris*
Family: Pink (Caryophyllaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
(shoot) : raw
Contains saponins.

Carraghen
Also known as Irish Moss
Botanical name: *Chondrus crispus* - Seaweed
Collectability: specialized habitat - tidal waters

Catsear, Common
Botanical name: *Hypochoeris radicata*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, weed

Main Benefit:
Source of vitamins and minerals

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: dry grassy areas
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 30cm or more
Other: slightly branched

Leaf
Shape: long
Texture: hairy
Arrangement: basal rosette
Edge: broadly toothed, rounded lobes

Flower
Arrangement: solitary on branched stems
Color:

Culinary Use
Flavor - Rating and Description
★★☆ mild, course

How to Consume:
young : raw

Continued ....

Used as ...

: food

Medicinal Use

Action:

: pectoral ooo,

May treat:

: chest and lung complaints

Cattail, Broadleaf

Information about properties also applies to Common Cattail *T. angustifolia*

Botanical name: *Typha latifolia*
Family: Reed-mace (Typhaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good, worthwhile root - specialized habitat

⚠ May be mistaken for the poisonous Yellow Flag when not in flower. Both may grow in the same habitat. Flag leaves have a distinct mid-rib, and are more brightly green, whereas Bulrush leaves have a more rounded surface, are more blue-green, and have a bloom.

Main Benefit:
Multiple use plant with source of carbohydrates and protein

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: freshwater margins, in water no deeper than 15 cm
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Prefers: wet
Other: patch forming

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: 2 meters or more

Leaf
Shape: long blades, rounded profile
Texture: smooth
Arrangement: fanning out from base
Edge: smooth
Other: blueish bloom

Root
Type: rhizome

Flower
Diameter: tiny
Arrangement: female: sausage-shaped cluster near top of spike; male: tail-shaped spike above female cluster
Color: f m

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★☆ cucumber-like

immature: sweet corn like

: roasted: nutty

How to Consume:

young base immature spike, pollen: raw

: raw, flour

: raw, roasted, flour, oil

Special preparation

remove rind

Nutrition

: 80% carbohydrate, mostly starch, some protein

pollen: protein

Used as ...

: food

: condiment

Medicinal Use

Action:

: diuretic

: diuretic, galactogogue, tonic,

pollen: astringent, diuretic, emmenagogue, haemostatic, refrigerant, sedative, suppurative, vulnerary

dried: anticoagulant; roasted with charcoal: haemostatic

May treat:

: external: wounds, boils, burns, inflammation

: abdominal pain, amenorrhoea, cystitis, vaginitis

dried: internal (not in pregnancy): kidney stones, haemorrhage, painful menstruation, abnormal uterine bleeding, post-partum pains, abscesses, lymphatic cancer, diarrhoea; external: injuries

Other Use

: thatch, paper, mats, compost, fuel, light (pith, oil-soaked), dried: insulation, buoyancy

female: tinder, cushion stuffing, insulation, nappy lining

pollen: highly flammable

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

pollen: brush off over container with fine brush to pollinate plant at the same time, giving pollen, and later seed too

: difficult to sever - use knife

Drying

: dry to store

Notes

: is minuscule and attached to down - hardly worth the effort to collect as food

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Cattail, Narrowleaf *Typha angustifolia* - see Cattail, Broadleaf above

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Celandine

Botanical name: Chelidonium majus
Family: Poppy (Papaveraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: poisonous

⚠ Contact with sap may cause dermatitis. All parts are toxic (especially the root) - toxicity may be reduced by heat. **May be fatal - avoid.**

Celery, Wild
Botanical name: *Apium graveolens*
Family: Carrot (Apiaceae)
Biennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
: cooked
: flavoring
Contact with sap my cause irritation in sensitive people.
May be mistaken for the highly toxic Hemlock Water Dropwort (Oenanthe crocata).

Centaury, European
Botanical name: *Centaurium erythraea*
Family: Gentian (Gentinaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
Whole plant : flavoring
Safety unknown

Chamomile, Corn
Botanical name: *Anthemis arvensis*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Annual/biennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
Medicinal
Safety unknown

Chamomile, German
Botanical name: *Matricaria recutita*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Annual/biennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
(shoot) : tea
Safety unknown

Chamomile, Roman
Botanical name: *Chamaemelum nobile*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
(shoot) : flavoring, tea
Contains coumarin.

Chamomile, Stinking
Also known as Mayweed
Botanical name: *Anthemis cotula*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Annual/biennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: flavoring
Contact and consumption may cause allergies in sensitive people.

Checker Tree
Also known as Wild Service Tree
Botanical name: *Sorbus torminalis*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw (bletted - nearly rotten)
Fruit can cause gastric upset if eaten in quantity.
The leaves, bark and seeds contain or produce hydrogen cyanide.

Cherry, Cornelian
Botanical name: *Cornus mas*
Family: Dogwood (Cornaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
: roasted
Safety unknown

Cherry, European Bird
Botanical name: *Prunus padus*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
: raw, if not bitter
The leaves, bark and seeds contain or produce hydrogen cyanide in contact with water.

Cherry, Sour
Botanical name: *Prunus cerasus*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
: raw, if not bitter
The leaves, bark and seeds contain or produce hydrogen cyanide in contact with water.

Cherry, Sweet
Botanical name: *Prunus avium*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
: raw, if not bitter
The leaves, bark and seeds contain or produce hydrogen cyanide in contact with water.

Chervil, Turnip-rooted
Botanical name: *Chaerophyllum bulbosum*
Family: Carrot (Apiaceae)
Biennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
(shoot) : raw
May be toxic.

Chervil, Wild
Botanical name: *Anthriscus sylvestris*
Family: Carrot (Apiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, weed
Continued ....

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

 : cooked

⚠ May be toxic.
See note on carrot family.

Chess-apple

Botanical name: *Sorbus aria*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw (when nearly rotten)

⚠ Seeds contain or produce hydrogen cyanide.

Chestnut, European

Botanical name: *Castanea sativa*
Family: Beech (Fagaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: plentiful, good, specialized habitat

Main Benefit:

 : source of carbohydrates and protein

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: woods
Distribution: mainly SE England, continental Europe

General
Growth type: tree
Cycle: deciduous
Height: up to 30 meters

Leaf
Shape: lanceolate
Texture: smooth
Arrangement: alternate
Edge: toothed
Other: up to 18cm

Trunk
Color: grey-brown
Texture: smooth when young, turning more rugged when mature

Flower
Shape: catkin
When: July
Color:

Seed
Shape: roundish
Color: dark brown
Size: 3cm
Casing: spiky husk
Other: 2-3 in case

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

 ★★★ cooked: sweet and mealy; raw: astringent

How to Consume:

 : raw, roasted, cooked, flour

Special preparation

 : peel inner casing to cook, pierce inner casing before roasting

Nutrition

 : starch, but does not contain oil

Used as ...

 : food, beverage (coffee substitute)

Medicinal Use

Action:

 bark: anti-inflammatory, astringent, expectorant,

May treat:

 : bleeding, diarrhoea, convulsive coughs (gargle)

 : rheumatism, back pain, stiff muscles/joints

Other Use

 bark, wood  husk : tanning, shampoo

 trunk : timber - hard, strong, light, durable

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

 throw stick into branches - ripe ones will fall

Drying

 bark : dry to store

 : dry in warm, ventilated room for about 2 months

Glossary
lanceolate: shaped like a lance head; long, tapering to end

Chestnut, Horse

Botanical name: *Aesculus hippocastanum*
Family: Horse Chestnut (Hippocastanaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: famine food - unsafe but potentially nutritious with careful preparation
Edible parts and how to consume:

 (fully ripe) : leached and cooked

⚠ Toxic. Leach in several changes of water to remove substance.
Contains high concentrations of saponins. **May be fatal – avoid.**

Chickweed, Common

Botanical name: *Stellaria media*
Family: Pink (Caryophyllaceae)
Annual
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good

⚠ Take extra care with identification, can be mistaken for very poisonous plants (Spurge).
The plant contains saponins.

Main Benefit:
Good for lymph and glandular system. Neutralizes over-acid system. Helps the body absorb maximum nutrients from food. Contains rutin

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: bare or cultivated ground
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

Continued ....

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: deciduous
Height: up to 50cm
Other: fragile, variable, bright green

Leaf
Shape: pointed oval
Texture: slightly fleshy

Stem
Texture: lines of fine hairs
Other: creeping

Flower
Shape: stellar
Diameter: 8-10mm
Petals/sepals: deep cleft
Arrangement: long stalks
When: all year

Color:

Seed
Casing: capsule

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★☆ mild, tender

How to Consume:

: raw

: cooked

Special preparation

As the seed is small and could easily pass through the digestive system, it is best to grind them to allow absorption of nutrients.

Nutrition
Whole plant: rutin, Calcium, Potassium, Iron, Vitamin C, 14% protein, 2% fat, 64% carbohydrates (dry)

Used as ...
Whole plant: food

Medicinal Use

Action:
Whole plant : astringent, carminative, demulcent, depurative, diuretic, emmenagogue, emollient, expectorant, galactagogue, laxative, ophthalmic, refrigerant, vulnerary

May treat:
Whole plant: cysts, fever, inflammation, candida; externally: soothes itchy skin conditions

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection
Whole plant: most tender from autumn to early summer

Drying
Whole plant: can be dried, but available most of the year, and best used fresh

Notes
Whole plant can be eaten. Very tender. Entire life cycle from germination to seed is 5-6 weeks.

Chickweed, Common Mouse-ear

Botanical name: *Cerastium fontanum*
Family: Pink (Caryophyllaceae)
Annual/perennial
Collectability: availability unknown, weed
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

(young) : cooked
Safety unknown

Chickweed, Sticky

Botanical name: *Cerastium glomeratum* (*syn. C. viscosum*)
Family: Pink (Caryophyllaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

(shoot) : details unknown
Safety unknown

Chicory

Botanical name: *Cichorium intybus*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root

Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

: cooked, roasted as coffee substitute, raw contains 64% inulin by weight - 9.3g (about 1/3 oz) provides 6g of inulin, the recommended daily amount

Toxic for retina if consumed in large quantities.

Chives, Wild

Botanical name: *Allium schoenoprasum*
Family: Lily (Liliaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: rare and of limited value as food
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

May be toxic if consumed in large quantities.

Cicely, Sweet

Botanical name: *Myrrhis odorata*
Family: Carrot (Apiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

May be toxic.

Cinquefoil, Creeping

Botanical name: *Potentilla reptans*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw
Safety unknown

Cinquefoil, Erect

Botanical name: *Potentilla erecta*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: cooked

Leach in several changes of water to remove substance

Cinquefoil, Silverweed

Botanical name: *Argentina anserina*
Formerly classified as: Potentilla anserina
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good, weed

Continued ....

Main Benefit:
Mucous membranes and skin

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: waste or grassy places
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 30 cm

Leaf
Shape: pinnate
Texture: downy
Arrangement: basal rosette
Edge: toothed
Other: silvery underside

Stem
Color: may be dark red
Other: creeping, long runners root at leaf nodes

Flower
Diameter: 15-20mm
Petals/sepals: 5
Arrangement: solitary on leaf stalk
When: May to August

Color:

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★☆ mild; older leaves are un-chewable raw

How to Consume:
: raw, tea

young shoots: raw

: raw, flour

Special preparation
: wash, scrape skin

Used as ...
Plant: food

Medicinal Use

Action:
Plant: analgesic (bruised as poultice), antispasmodic, astringent (root strongest), diuretic, haemostatic, odontalgic, tonic

: anti-inflammatory, expectorant, sedative

May treat:
Plant: haemorrhoids, diarrhoea, menstrual pain, acid stomach, inflamed intestine; external: sore throat (gargle), ulcers

Other Use
Plant: skin cleaning lotion

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection
: June best for medicinal use

: best late summer to autumn from large plants in loose soil

Drying
Dry in shade

Glossary
pinnate: with series of leaflets on each side of a central stalk

---

Clary, Wild
Also known as Wild Sage
Botanical name: *Salvia verbenaca*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: rare and of little value as food

Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw, flavoring

⚠ Contains clerodane diterpenes which can cause liver damage - **eat in moderation.**
Contains thujone.

Cleavers
Also known as Goosegrass
Botanical name: *Galium aparine*
Family: Bedstraw (Rubiaceae)
Annual
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, invasive weed

⚠ Contact with sap my cause irritation in sensitive people.
Consumption of the barbs may cause irritation. Cook to soften.
May be mistaken for Sweet-scented Bedstraw *G. odoratum*. See "Collection" below.

Main Benefit:
Spring cleansing tonic

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: hedges, waste places
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Other: patch forming

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: annual
Height: up to 2 meters or more
Other: clingy, sticks to clothes

Leaf
Shape: lanceolate
Texture: coarse
Arrangement: whorl of 6-8
Edge: fine barbed bristles

Stem
Texture: coarse
Cross Section: square
Other: straggly, tangled

Flower
Diameter: tiny
Arrangement: small stalked clusters from base of leaves
When: May to September

Color:

Seed
Shape: round
Color: green
Size: 4mm
Other: tiny, clingy bristles on surface

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★☆☆ bitter

How to Consume:
: cooked, tea, juice, leaf curd

: roasted, sprouted

Special preparation
All parts: cook to soften barbs. Does not apply to juice and leaf curd.

Continued ....

Used as ...

 : food

 : food, beverage (coffee substitute)

Medicinal Use

Action:

Aerial parts: anticancer, anti-inflammatory, aperient, astringent, depurative, diaphoretic, diuretic, febrifuge, hepatic, tonic, vulnerary

May treat:

Aerial parts: decoction, juice: cancer, cystitis, insomnia, glandular fever, ME, tonsillitis, hepatitis;

poultice: eczema, psoriasis, seborrhoea, ulcers, wounds and other skin problems

Other Use

 : filter

 : red dye

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

Best in May and June when in flower.

Cleavers can be mistaken for Sweet-scented Bedstraw *G. odoratum*, a close relative. However, they are only superficially similar, mostly when Cleavers is young. Sweet-scented Bedstraw has a relatively short season (March to June), lacks the sticky barbs present on the entire Cleavers plant, and has a distinct smell of fresh cut hay when bruised. Take care in identifying this plant correctly, as Sweet-scented Bedstraw contains a chemical which may prevent blood clotting.

Glossary

lanceolate: shaped like a lance head; long, tapering to end

whorl: ring of leaves around stem

Clematis, Evergreen

Botanical name: *Clematis vitalba*

Family: Buttercup (Ranunculaceae) 

Perennial

Collectability: suspect source information, caution advised

Edible parts and how to consume:

 (shoot) : cooked

 All parts are toxic.

Cloudberry

Botanical name: *Rubus chamaemorus*

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

Safety unknown

Clover, Bird

Botanical name: *Trigonella ornithopodioides*

Family: Pea (Leguminosae)

Annual/perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

Safety unknown

Clover, Red

Botanical name: *Trifolium pratense*

Family: Pea (Leguminosae)

Perennial

Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread

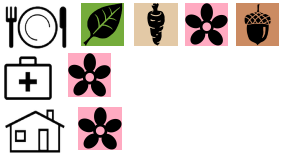
 May be slightly toxic if plant is diseased.

Seeds contain trypsin inhibitor.

Main Benefit:

Spring tonic, coughs, anticancer

Use - Overview



Features and Identification

Habitat

Type: grassy areas

Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

Prefers: alkaline soil

General

Growth type: herb

Cycle: perennial

Height: up to 50cm

Leaf

Shape: trefoil

Other: with whitish chevron or crescent

Root

Depth: deep

Flower

Shape: globular

Diameter: up to 40mm

Color: 

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

 delicate vanilla flavor

How to Consume:

 young: raw, cooked (best)

 : cooked

 young: raw

 : raw, cooked, sprouted; pods: cooked

Used as ...

 : food, flavoring

 : food

 : food, tea

Medicinal Use

Action:

 : anticancer (prevents blood flow to tumor), antispasmodic, aperient, depurative, diuretic, expectorant, sedative, tonic,

May treat:

 : internal: menopausal complaints, cancer of breast, ovaries, lymphatic system, skin conditions, coughs

Other Use

Plant: nitrogen fixing

 : yellow dye

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

 : best picked before flowering

Drying

 : dry to store

Glossary

trefoil: leaf with three leaflets or lobes

Clover, White

Botanical name: *Trifolium repens*

Family: Pea (Leguminosae)

Perennial

Continued ....

Collectability: famine food - unsafe but potentially nutritious with careful preparation
Edible parts and how to consume:
 (young)  : raw
 : cooked
 : flour
⚠ Contains or produces hydrogen cyanide when damaged.

Clover, Yellow
Botanical name: *Medicago lupulina*
Family: Pea (Leguminosae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown, weed
Edible parts and how to consume:
 : cooked
 : sprouted
⚠ Contains trypsin inhibitor.

Codlins-and-cream
Botanical name: *Epilobium hirsutum*
Family: Willowherb (Onagraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
 : details unknown
⚠ May be toxic

Coltsfoot
Botanical name: *Tussilago farfara*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: poisonous and of little value as food
Edible parts and how to consume:
 (young)  : raw
 : flavoring
⚠ Contains traces of pyrrolizidine alkaloids.

Comfrey, Common
Botanical name: *Symphytum officinale*
Family: Borage (Boraginaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: poisonous and of little value as food
⚠ Contains pyrrolizidine alkaloids (especially in the root and Russian Comfrey). **Known fatalities -- avoid.**

Coriander
Botanical name: *Coriandrum sativum*
Family: Carrot (Apiaceae) ⚠
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
 : raw
  : cooked, flavoring
⚠ Narcotic if consumed in quantity. Leaves contain oxalic acid.

Cornel, Lapland
Botanical name: *Cornus suecica*
Family: Dogwood (Cornaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
 : raw
Safety unknown

Cornsalad, Lewiston
Botanical name: *Valerianella locusta*
Family: Valerian (Valerianacea)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
  : raw
Safety unknown

Crabapple
Botanical name: *Malus sylvestris*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:
 : raw
⚠ Contains or produces hydrogen cyanide in the leaves, bark and seed.

Cranberry
Botanical name: *Vaccinium oxycoccus*
Family: Heath (Ericaceae)
Evergreen shrub
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:
 : tea
 : raw

---

Cranberrybush, European
Also known as Guelder Rose
Botanical name: *Viburnum opulus*
Family: Honeysuckle (Caprifoliaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: suspect source information, caution advised
Edible parts and how to consume:
 : raw
⚠ Fruit can cause gastric upset if eaten in quantity. The bark is toxic.

Creeping Jenny
Botanical name: *Lysimachia nummularia*
Family: Primrose (Primulaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
 : tea
Safety unknown

Crowberry, Black
Botanical name: *Empetrum nigrum*
Family: Crowberry (Empetraceae)
Evergreen shrub
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
 : raw
⚠ Leaves may be toxic.
Fruit may cause nausea if eaten in quantity

Cuckoo Flower
Botanical name: *Cardamine pratensis*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown

Continued ....

Edible parts and how to consume:

(shoot) (bud) : raw (Vit C)
Safety unknown

Cuckoo Pint

Botanical name: *Arum maculatum*
Family: Arum (Araceae)
Perennial
Collectability: famine food - unsafe but potentially nutritious with careful preparation
Edible parts and how to consume:

: cooked

Leach and boil in several changes of water to remove substance.
Contains oxalic acid and calcium oxalate in high concentrations - **avoid**.

Currant, Cultivated

Botanical name: *Ribes rubrum*
Family: Currant (Grossulariaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: plentiful, good, specialized habitat

May be confused with Guelder Rose (see plant list).
Leaves contain or produce hydrogen cyanide.

Main Benefit:

blood cleansing, good for kidneys and liver
Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: woods, especially near water
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Prefers: damp, shade

General
Growth type: shrub
Cycle: deciduous
Height: up to 1.2 meters

Leaf
Shape:3-5 lobes
Edge: toothed
Other: not aromatic like Black Currant

Stem
Other: erect or leaning

Flower
Diameter: tiny
Arrangement: drooping clusters
When: April to May

Color:

Fruit
Shape: round
Color: red
Size: 5-7mm
Other: shiny, translucent

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★★ tangy

How to Consume:

: raw

Nutrition

:Vitamin C

Used as ...

: food

Medicinal Use

Action:

Poultice: anti-rheumatic

antiscorbutic, aperient, refrigerant, sialagogue

May treat:

: sprains

Other Use

: yellow dye

Dabberlocks

Also known as Atlantic Wakame
Botanical name: *Alaria esculenta* - Seaweed
Collectability: specialized habitat - low tidal waters
Safety unknown

Daisy, Corn

Botanical name: *Glebionis segetum* (*syn. Chrysanthemum segetum*)
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: rare and of little value as food
Edible parts and how to consume:

(shoot) : cooked

Contains coumarin, especially when dried.

Daisy, Lawn

Botanical name: *Bellis perennis*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, weed
Main Benefit:

complaints of the respiratory tract, rheumatism and skin complaints

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: grassy areas
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Prefers: fertile soil, drained, sun

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 15 cm

Leaf
Shape: long oval
Texture: downy
Arrangement: basal rosette
Edge: toothed

Flower
Diameter: 15 mm
Arrangement: solitary on leafless stalk
When: most of the year

Color:

Culinary Use

How to Consume:

young: raw

: raw

: sprouted

Continued ....

Used as ...

: food

Medicinal Use

Action:

anodyne, antispasmodic, antitussive, astringent, demulcent, depurative, digestive, emollient, expectorant, laxative, opthalmic, purgative, tonic

May treat:

ointment: wounds, bruises, mouth ulcers, breast cancer

: eczema, complaints of the respiratory tract, rheumatic pains, painful/heavy periods

infusion: catarrh, rheumatism, arthritis, liver/kidney disorders, wounds, contusions, sprains, skin eruptions

Other Use

: insect repellent

Collection, Storing, Notes

Drying

dry to store

Daisy, Ox-eye

Botanical name: *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

Safety unknown

Dandelion

Botanical name: *Taraxacum officinale*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Perennial

Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good, weed, worthwhile root

The latex is slightly corrosive and may cause skin blistering. It should be used with care. When applying to warts avoid getting it onto healthy skin. Apply only once or twice, repeat at intervals if necessary.

Main Benefit:

liver, urinary tract, rheumatic conditions, blood cleanser, highly nutritious - see also note on inulin in the glossary below

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat

Type: grassy areas, waste places

Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General

Growth type: herb

Cycle: perennial

Height: up to 45cm

Other: variable

Leaf

Shape: long, narrow

Texture: smooth

Arrangement: basal rosette

Edge: shallow to deeply toothed

Stem

Texture: smooth

Cross hollow:

Root

Type: tapered

Color: cream

Depth: very deep

Flower

Diameter: 35-50mm

Arrangement: solitary, leafless stalk

Color:

Seed

Shape: long, thin

Size: 2mm

Other: attached to parachute, seed head forms delicate fluff ball

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

mild to bitter (small leaves best)

pungent

How to Consume:

young: raw; any: leaf curd

raw, roasted, lactic soda

raw, roasted (seeds are not suitable for sprouting due to long germination period - about 2 weeks, and need for temperature treatment)

: raw

Special preparation

: remove mid-rib

: scrub, don't peel

: remove green parts

: grind

Nutrition

: 2.7% protein, 9.2% carbohydrates, magnesium, very high in carotenoids, possibly contains inulin (see also note [1] below)

: potassium, inulin (up to 25%, see also note [1] below), no starch

Used as ...

: food

: food, juice (less bitter), beverage (coffee substitute, lactic soda)

: beverage

Medicinal Use

Action:

Whole plant: antibacterial, anticancer, antivirus, cholagogue, depurative, diuretic (high potassium, normally lost in excretion), hepatic, laxative, stomachic, tonic

May treat:

Whole plant: urinary tract/liver disorders, oedema, skin complaints, gout, rheumatism, arteriosclerosis, cellulite, diabetes

: best for urinary system

: best for liver, yeast infections, breast and lung cancer. Also has all the benefits of inulin.

latex can remove corns, warts and verrucae

Other Use

The plant breaks up dense, heavy soil and repels army worms.

: magenta-brown dye

Continued ....

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

 best when when plant is flowering, spring

 For less bitter flavor (food use) pick from September to February, with autumn being best for higher **inulin** content. For medicinal use (for maximum bitter content) pick June to August

Drying

 : dry to store (root becomes weaker after drying)

Note

[1] The information source states that the content of 24.7g (just under 1 oz) of raw dandelion greens supplies 6g of inulin (daily recommended amount). However, the **inulin**-rich part of dandelion is the root, and therefore the source is probably incorrect as to the part stated. Nevertheless, both parts are highly nutritious, regardless of those claims, so it would be beneficial to eat both.

Deadnettle, Henbit

Botanical name: *Lamium amplexicaule*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw
Safety unknown

Deadnettle, Purple

Botanical name: *Lamium purpureum*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Annual
Collectability: plentiful, common, weed

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: waste places, cultivated areas
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: annual
Height: up to 30cm

Leaf
Shape: heart
Texture: downy
Arrangement: pairs
Edge: finely toothed
Other: top leaves purple

Flower
Shape: lipped
Arrangement: in whorls
When: March to October
Color:

Culinary Use

How to Consume:

 : raw

Used as ...

 : food

Medicinal Use

Action:
Whole plant: **astringent**, **diaphoretic**, **diuretic**, **purgative**

May treat:
Whole plant: decoction: checking any kind of haemorrhage

 poultice: wounds

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

 best in spring and during flowering when biggest

---

Deadnettle, White

Botanical name: *Lamium album*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

 : tea
Safety unknown

Devil's-bit

Botanical name: *Succisa pratensis*
Family: Teasel (Dipsacaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 (shoot) : raw
Safety unknown

Dewberry, European

Botanical name: *Rubus caesius*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

 Sharp thorns

---

Dock, Bitter *Rumex obtusifolius* - see Dock, Curly below

Dock, Curly

Information about properties also applies to Bitter Dock *R. obtusifolius*
Botanical name: *Rumex crispus*
Family: Dock (Polygonaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good, weed

 Contains **oxalic acid**.
The root may cause gastric upset, nausea and dermatitis if eaten in excess.
Eat in moderation.

Main Benefit:

 blood cleanser, skin complaints

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: grassy places
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 1 meter

Leaf
Shape: lanceolate
Edge: wavy

Flower
Diameter: tiny
Arrangement: whorls on spiked clusters
When: June to October

Continued ....

Color:

Seed
Size: tiny

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★☆☆ bitter

How to Consume:

young (before stems develop): raw

: raw

: raw, flour, roasted

Special preparation

: peel

: as the seed is small and could easily pass through the digestive system, it is best to grind them to allow absorption of nutrients.

Nutrition

: Iron, Vitamin A, Vitamin C

Used as ...

: food

: beverage (coffee substitute)

Medicinal Use

Action:

: antiscorbutic, astringent, cholagogue, depurative, laxative, tonic,

May treat:

: constipation, diarrhoea, piles, blood complaints, anaemia, chronic skin diseases

poultice/salve/dusting powder: sores, ulcers, wounds, skin problems, nettle stings (juice), cancer

Other Use

dye: yellow, green to brown, dark grey (no need for mordant)
Plant: compost (roots and seeds must be well macerated in water to prevent spreading)

Collection, Storing, Notes

Drying

: dry to store

: slice, dry in sun or low oven

Glossary

lanceolate: shaped like a lance head; long, tapering to end

Dock, Patience

Botanical name: *Rumex patientia*
Family: Dock (Polygonaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: details unknown

Contains oxalic acid.

Dogwood, Common

Botanical name: *Cornus sanguinea*
Family: Dogwood (Cornaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: cooked

The leaves and root are mildly toxic

Dropwort

Botanical name: *Filipendula vulgaris*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw
Safety unknown

Duckweed, Common

Botanical name: *Lemna minor*
Family: Duckweed (Lemnaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: details unknown
Safety unknown

Dulse

Botanical name: *Palmaria palmata* - Seaweed
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat - tidal waters

---

Dulse, Pepper

Botanical name: *Laurencia pinnatifida* - Seaweed
Collectability: specialized habitat - tidal waters

Elderberry, Black

Information about properties also apply to Red Elderberry *S. racemosa*
Botanical name: *Sambucus nigra*
Family: Honeysuckle (Caprifoliaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: plentiful, common, good

The leaves, bark and seeds contain or produce hydrogen cyanide in contact with water.

It is best to remove seeds from the berries or avoid chewing them.
Unbroken seeds are more likely to pass through the system undigested.
Unripe berries are poisonous.

Main Benefit:

infusion: spring tonic, blood cleanser

: blood and tissue cleanser, coughs and colds

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: woods, scrub, hedges
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General
Growth type: tree
Cycle: deciduous
Height: up to 10 meters
Other:

Leaf
Shape: pinnate
Arrangement: usually five pair of leaflets
Edge: finely toothed

Trunk
Texture: deep fissures, corky

Flower
Diameter: 5mm
Petals/sepals: 5, joined at base
Arrangement: umbel-like
When: May to August
Other: fragrant

Color:

Continued ....

Fruit
Shape: round
Color: black
Size: 6mm
Other: ready when berries are black and bunch turns down

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★★ aromatic

★★☆ bland

How to Consume:

: raw

: raw, syrup

Nutrition

: Rutin

:Vitamin A, B, C, antioxidant anthocyanin

Used as ...

: flavoring, beverage, fritters, tea

: food, beverage, syrup

Medicinal Use

Action:

vulnerary

diaphoretic, diuretic, expectorant, febrifuge, galactagogue, pectoral

anti-rheumatic, diuretic, expectorant, purgative

May treat:

(external) - juice: inflamed eyes; ointment: bruises, sprains, chilblains, wounds

: chest complaints, infusion for eyewash (conjunctivitis), chilblains; inhalation: laryngitis, hoarseness; headaches; toothache

: fever, coughs and colds

Recipe
To make elderberry syrup:
5 parts crushed berries
1 part sugar
Simmer to evaporate to the thickness of honey
Dose:
Adult: 1-2 table spoons
Child: 1-2 tea spoons

Other Use

: insecticide, fungicide, insect repellent, green dye (with alum)

bark: dye; trunk: timber (mature wood is hard, branches contain pith which can be hollowed out to form tubes)

blue/purple dye; sap: "litmus" test - green in alkaline and red in acid solutions

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

: in sunny weather, after due has dried

Drying

: dry quickly in shade

: dry like raisins but beware of seeds

Glossary

pinnate: with series of leaflets on each side of a central stalk
umbels: flower cluster with stalks joined in centre to form flat or curved surface; umbrella-like

---

Elderberry, Red *Sambucus racemosa*

- see Elderberry above

Eryngo, Seaside

Botanical name: *Eryngium maritimum*
Family: Carrot (Apiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: rare and of little value as food
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

Evening Primrose, Common

Botanical name: *Oenothera biennis*
Family: Willowherb (Onagraceae)
Biennial
Collectability: plentiful, worthwhile root, specialized habitat, weed
Edible parts and how to consume:

(shoot) : raw

: cooked

: cooked, oil

Shoots may be toxic. Leaves and root may be irritating to throat.

Evening Primrose, Redsepal

Botanical name: *Oenothera glazioviana*
Family: Willowherb (Onagraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:

(shoot) : raw

: cooked

Shoots may be toxic. Leaves and root may be irritating to throat.

False Baby's Breath

Botanical name: *Galium mollugo*
Family: Bedstraw (Rubiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

Safety unknown

Fennel, Sweet

Botanical name: *Foeniculum vulgare*
Family: Carrot (Apiaceae)
Biennial/perennial
Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

: flavoring, sprouted

: cooked

May cause photo sensitivity in sensitive people. Contact with sap my cause irritation in sensitive people.

Fern spp.

Poisonous and of little value as food

Most ferns contain carcinogens and thiaminase and are not edible.

Feverfew
Botanical name: *Tanacetum parthenium*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: flavoring

Suspect source information - caution advised

Fig, Hottentot
Botanical name: *Carpobrotus edulis*
Family: Mesembryanthemum (Aizoaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

Safety unknown

Figwort, Woodland
Botanical name: *Scrophularia nodosa*
Family: Figwort (Scrophulariaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: cooked

Avoid with rapid heart rate

Filbert, Common
Botanical name: *Corylus avellana*
Family: Hazel (Corylaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: plentiful, common, good
Main Benefit:

source of carbohydrates and protein

Use - Overview

Features and Identification
Habitat
Type: scrub, woods, hedges
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General
Growth type: tree
Cycle: deciduous
Height: up to 6 meters

Leaf
Shape: roundish with small point
Texture: downy
Edge: toothed

Trunk
Color: silver-grey
Texture: metallic sheen

Flower
Shape: catkin
Arrangement: female: erect, male: hanging
When: December to April before leaves

Color:

Seed
Shape: oval, slight ridge
Color: pale to mid brown
Size: 10-25mm
Casing: hard shell, leaf cup

Culinary Use
Flavor - Rating and Description

★★★ sweet, nutty

How to Consume:

: raw (see note below)

Nutrition

dry: 16% protein, 60% fat, 20% carbohydrates

Used as ...

: food

Medicinal Use
Action:

: astringent, diaphoretic, febrifuge, stomachic, tonic, vermifuge,

Other Use
trunk : timber

Collection, Storing, Notes
Collection

: as a compromise on flavor and availability, best picked late September before the squirrels take them all (good luck!)

Drying

: remove leaf cup from shell before drying as this may draw too much moisture through transpiration

Note
Although hazel nuts can be eaten raw, they may be digested more easily when cooked or roasted.

Hazel come into bearing age at seven years, on branched stems.

Fireweed
Botanical name: *Chamerion angustifolium*
Family: Willowherb (Onagraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, weed, good, worthwhile root
Main Benefit:

Plant : soothing

: source of Vitamin A and C

Use - Overview

Features and Identification
Habitat
Type: waste places
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Other: patch forming; see Note [1] below

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 2 meters

Leaf
Shape: lanceolate
Arrangement: alternate
Edge: smooth

Root
Type: rhizome

Flower
Diameter: 20-30mm
Petals/sepals: 4, uneven
Arrangement: progressive on spike

Color:

Continued ....

Seed
Shape: with down
Size: tiny
Casing: long, pod-like tubes

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

 ★★☆ bland

How to Consume:

 (young shoots)  : raw

 : raw, flour

Special preparation

 : peel

Nutrition

 :Vitamin A and C

Used as ...

 : food, beverage, see Note [2] below

 shoots: food; pith: thickener

  : food

Medicinal Use

Action:
Plant: anticancer, anti-inflammatory, antispasmodic, astringent, demulcent, emollient, laxative, tonic

 peeled: may be antimalerial

May treat:
Plant: candida, diarrhoea, mucous colitis, irritable bowel syndrome, abdominal cramps, skin/mouth ulcers, prostate (especially cancer of the prostate)

 poultice: burns, sores, swelling, boils

Other Use

 down: tinder, pillow stuffing

Collection, Storing, Notes

Drying

 : dry about 10 days by hanging (not flowering plants)

Note
[1] Despite the fact that this plant often follows fire, it is not the heat which is required but bare ground, as the seed needs light to germinate. It will colonize any freshly opened ground, and subsequently spread by rhizome.
[2] Not suitable for leaf curd, as the juice has a thick, mucilaginous consistency.
[3] Food for the Elephant Hawk Moth caterpillar.

Glossary

lanceolate: shaped like a lance head; long, tapering to end

Flag, Yellow

Botanical name: *Iris pseudacorus*
Family: Iris (Iridaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: famine food - unsafe but potentially nutritious with careful preparation
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : cooked

⚠ Contact and consumption may cause allergies in sensitive people. The leaves and root can cause gastric upset - **avoid**.

Fumitory, Drug

Botanical name: *Fumaria officinalis*
Family: Fumitory (Fumariaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown, weed
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : curdling agent
Safety unknown

Gale, Sweet

Botanical name: *Myrica gale*
Family: Bog Myrtle (Myriaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: rare and of little value as food
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : flavoring

⚠ May cause abortion

Galingale

Botanical name: *Cyperus longus*
Family: Sedge (Cyperaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: rare and of little value as food
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : flavoring

---

Gallant Soldier

Botanical name: *Galinsoga parviflora*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown, weed
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

⚠ May be toxic to goats

Garlic, Wild *Allium ursinum* - see Bear Garlic

Geranium, Cut-leaved

Botanical name: *Geranium dissectum*
Family: Cranesbill (Geraniaceae)
Annual/perennial
Collectability: weed
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

 : cooked
Safety unknown

Glasswort, Slender

Botanical name: *Salicornia maritima (syn. S. europaea)*
Family: Goosefoot (Chenopodaceae)
Annual
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:

 (shoot) : cooked

 : oil

⚠ Beware of polluted water. Plant contains high concentrations of sodium (salt) and silica.

Goldenrod

Botanical name: *Solidago virgaurea*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : tea
Safety unknown

Good King Henry
Botanical name: *Chenopodium bonus-henricus*
Family: Goosefoot (Chenopodiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: cooked

May cause photo sensitivity in sensitive people.
Contains saponins and oxalic acid. Eat in moderation.
Contains or produces hydrogen cyanide.
Can concentrate nitrates.
This plant can also concentrate other soil toxins. Only pick from uncontaminated land.

Gooseberry, European
Botanical name: *Ribes uva-crispa*
Family: Currant (Grossulariaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:

(young) : raw

Sharp spines.
Leaves contain or produce hydrogen cyanide.

Goosefoot, Red
Botanical name: *Chenopodium rubrum*
Family: Goosefoot (Chenopodiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: cooked

: sprouted

May cause photo sensitivity in sensitive people.
Contains saponins and oxalic acid.
Contains or produces hydrogen cyanide.
Can concentrate nitrates.
This plant can also concentrate other soil toxins. Only pick from uncontaminated land. Eat in moderation.

Gorse, Common
Botanical name: *Ulex europaeus*
Family: Pea (Leguminosae)
Shrub
Collectability: plentiful, widespread, common, weed
Edible parts and how to consume:

(shoot tips) : tea

: pickled

Seeds may be toxic. Sharp thorns.

Grass
Family: Grass (Graminae)
Annual/perennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good
Edible parts and how to consume:
Humans can not digest the cellulose in the leaves, but the very nutritious and protein-rich sap can be extracted by juicing, and either drunk or processed into leaf curd. Some grasses also have other edible parts like roots, shoots, rhizomes, pollen and flowers, e.g. bamboos, Common Reed or Reedmace. Also see Couchgrass Elytrigia repens above.

Ground Ivy
Botanical name: *Glechoma hederacea*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown, weed
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

Groundsel, Common
Botanical name: *Senecio vulgaris*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Annual
Collectability: poisonous and of little value as food

Contains pyrrolizidine alkaloids.

Guelder Rose
Viburnum opulus - see Cranberrybush, European

Gypsywort
Botanical name: *Lycopus europaeus*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

Safety unknown

Hawk's Beard
Botanical name: *Crepsis tectorum*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

(young) : cooked

Safety unknown

Hawkbit, Bristly
Botanical name: *Leontodon hispidus*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown, weed
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

: roasted, beverage

Safety unknown

Hawthorn, Oneseed
Botanical name: *Crataegus monogyna*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: plentiful, common, good

Large, sharp thorns on trunk and branches

Main Benefit:

lowers blood pressure

regulates circulation and heart beat, protects blood vessels and reduces cholesterol, increases blood supply to brain and improves concentration and memory

Use - Overview

Features and Identification
Habitat
Type: scrub, woods, hedges
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

Continued ....

General
Growth type: tree
Cycle: deciduous
Height: up to 7 meters

Leaf
Shape: lobed
Arrangement: cluster at end of twig
Edge: toothed

Trunk
Texture: long, sharp thorns on trunk

Flower
Diameter: 8-15mm
Arrangement: small clusters
When: May to June
Color:

Fruit
Shape: oval
Color: red
Size: 10mm
Other: called "haw"

Seed
Casing: fruit
Other: one or more, depending on which species

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★☆ bland

★★☆ bland, similar to mealy apply

How to Consume:

: raw, tea, leaf curd

: tea, spirits

: raw, dried (fruit leather)

: roasted

Nutrition

Vitamin B, C, flavenoids (antioxidant), rutin, quercetin

Used as ...

: food, tea

: tea

: food

: beverage (coffee substitute)

Medicinal Use

Action:

: heart tonic

: antispasmodic, cardiac, diuretic, sedative, vasodilator, heart tonic

May treat:

poultice: draw splinters

: palpitations, vertigo, rheumatism, insomnia, Reynaud's disease, disorders of heart and circulatory system, angina, arteriosclerosis, acne rosaceae (lotion)

Other Use

trunk: timber, including root timber (hard, dense, for turnery, carving)

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

shake branches over wide container or sheet to collect falling petals or haws [see note 2]

Drying

: dry to store

: in sun or low oven, or as fruit leather

Notes
Safe for prolonged use
[1] Hawthorn may only be effective in mild conditions. Heart disease should only be treated by a qualified health practitioner. Consult practitioner if on heart medication.
[2] As the petals are the active part of the flower, it is best to leave the flower to develop into fruit for later collection or for the birds.

Heather

Botanical name: *Calluna vulgaris*
Family: Heath (Ericaceae)
Shrub
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:

(shoot) : tea

Hedgenettle, Common

Botanical name: *Stachys officinalis*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: tea

: raw
Safety unknown

Hedgenettle, Marsh

Botanical name: *Stachys palustris*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

(shoot) - cooked

: raw

: details unknown
Safety unknown

Herb Bennet

Botanical name: *Geum urbanum*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:

: flavoring, tea

Herb Sophia

Botanical name: *Descurainia sophia*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

(shoot) : cooked

: raw, sprouted
Safety unknown

Hollyhock

Botanical name: *Alcea rosea*
Family: Mallow (Malvaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

(inner) : raw

: starch
Safety unknown

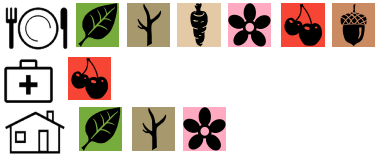
Hop, Common

Botanical name: *Humulus lupulus*
Family: Hemp (Cannabaceae)
Perennial climber
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat

Contact with plant may cause dermatitis in sensitive individuals. Hairs can irritate eyes. Rich in estrogenic substances which may interfere with hormonal therapy. In case of breast cancer consult with health practitioner before consuming.
Marked depression may be accentuated.
May be mistaken for White Bryony *Bryonia cretica*.

Main Benefit:
Sedative

Use - Overview



Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: hedges, scrub
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Prefers: lowlands

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 6 meters
Other: hairy vine

Leaf
Shape: palmate
Edge: toothed

Stem
Other: winds itself around support

Flower
Shape: female: cone-like, papery
Arrangement: male: branched clusters
When: July to September
Other: male and female flowers on separate plants
Color:

Culinary Use

How to Consume:

young: raw

young shoots: raw

: cooked

: tea

Nutrition

Rutin

Used as ...

: food

cones (dry): beverage, flavoring, preservative for beer

Medicinal Use

Action:

cones: anodyne, antiseptic, antispasmodic, diuretic, febrifuge, hypnotic, nervine, sedative, stomachic, tonic

May treat:

cone: boils, bruises, cancer, cramps, cough, cystitis, delirium, diarrhoea, dyspepsia, fever, inflammation, insomnia, jaundice, nerves, neuralgia, rheumatism, worms; stuffed in pillows to release volatile oils for restful sleep

Other Use

: brown dye

: fibre - similar to hemp, but weak

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

for medicinal use: when resinous grains have formed inside cone late August to early September when edges also turn brown

Drying

: dry in shade carefully

Notes
The active ingredient of hop is the resinous grains (lupulin) on the surface of the female cones, mostly at the base of the scales.
The cone-like female flowers are sometimes called fruit when mature, although they change little in appearance, but will develop the above substance.

Glossary

palmate: having lobes or leaflets like spread fingers

Hornpoppy, Yellow

Botanical name: *Glaucium flavum*
Family: Poppy (Papaveraceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: oil

The leaves, stem and root are toxic

Horseradish

Botanical name: *Armoracia rusticana*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

: flavoring

: sprouted

Mildly toxic. Gastric irritant.
Prolonged contact with root may cause blisters.

Horsetail, Field

Botanical name: *Equisetum arvense*
Family: Horsetail (Equisetaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, weed

Toxic if consumed in large quantities .
Contains thiaminase.
Contains equisetic acid, a potent heart and nerve sedative.
May be mistaken for poisonous Marsh Horsetail *E. palustris*

Main Benefit:

urinary tract, prostate gland, wound healing

Use - Overview

Continued ....

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: grassy areas, often near water courses
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Other: patch forming invasive plant

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 60 cm
Other: non-flowering plant with spore bearing head in early spring, followed by barren, coarse plant resembling a miniature conifer tree

Fertile Stem
Color: brown
Texture: segmented, succulent
Other: oval spore-bearing tip, precedes barren stem

Barren Stem
Color: green
Texture: segmented, tough
Other: silica crystals can be seen on the surface of the green fronds, succeeds the fertile stem

Culinary Use

How to Consume:
fertile and vegetative stems: cooked

nodules attached to root: raw

Special preparation
fertile: peel, discard tip

vegetative: remove leaf sheaths

Nutrition
minerals, Vitamin C

Used as ...
: food

Medicinal Use

Action:
fertile: anodyne, antiseptic, astringent, carminative, diaphoretic, diuretic, galactagogue, haemostatic, vulnerary,

May treat:
fertile: internal (tea, juice): cough, hoarseness, cystitis, bed wetting, benign enlargement of prostate gland; external: eczema, ulcerous/slow healing wounds, rheumatism, neuralgia; sitzbad: candida

Other Use
: contains silica - can be used to scour saucepans and as a sander for finishing wood; foliar spray for: mint rust, blight and other mildew - boil stems for a few minutes, leave for a day, strain, dilute 1:2 with water

Collection, Storing, Notes

Drying
: dry to store

Iceland Moss
Botanical name: *Cetraria islandica*
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: leach for jelly, cooked
Safety unknown
Jewelweed Impatiens capsensis - see Balsam, Himalayan

Jack-go-to-bed-at-noon
Botanical name: *Tragopogon pratensis*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Annual/perennial
Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root

Edible parts and how to consume:
(shoot) : raw
Safety unknown

Jewelweed, Ornamental
Botanical name: *Impatiens glandulifera*
Family: Balsam (Balsaminaceae)
Annual
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, invasive non-native weed

Plant contains calcium oxalate.
Seeds are safe.
This is a highly invasive plant. Please read the collection notes below.

Main Benefit:
: source of carbohydrates

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: waste places, especially near streams
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Prefers: moisture
Other: non-native, invasive, patch forming

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: annual
Height: up to 1.5 meters

Leaf
Shape: lanceolate
Arrangement: opposite or in 3s
Edge: finely toothed, red

Stem
Color: green-red
Texture: smooth
Cross Section: hollow
Other: succulent, swollen internodes

Flower
Petals/sepals: uneven lobes and short, bent spur
When: June to October
Other: scented
Color: depth varies

Seed
Color: black
Size: 2-3mm
Casing: fluted capsule, swollen centre with pointed ends
Other: ripe pods burst open when touched

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description
nutty, faintly perfumed

How to Consume:
: raw, oil

Nutrition
carbohydrates, Vitamin C

Used as ...
: food, condiment

Other Use
Plant: yellow dye
: oil for lighting

Continued ....

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

The seed capsule bursts open on contact. Catch the seeds by placing a bag carefully over the plant and beating it.

Notes

Ornamental Jewelweed is a highly invasive introduced species and a serious problem. All collected seeds should be thoroughly crushed, whether they are intended for food or not, to avoid the spread of this weed, including the spread through sewage from undigested seeds.

Make sure the seeds do not get caught in clothing and hair and spread beyond the growing area.

It is a shallow-rooted annual which can easily be pulled up or cut before seeding. However, its easy spread still makes eradicating a difficult task.

Never cultivate this plant. The available edible seeds should only be seen as a silver lining of a problem, and eating the seeds (if care is taken as described above) stops at least some seeds from becoming plants.

Glossary

lanceolate: shaped like a lance head; long, tapering to end

Juniper, Common

Botanical name: *Juniperus communis*
Family: Cypress (Cupressaceae)
Evergreen shrub
Collectability: rare and of little value as food
Edible parts and how to consume:

: tea

: flavoring, tea

: roasted, beverage (cone slow to mature)

May be toxic to kidneys if consumed in large quantities. Avoid if pregnant.

Kelp

Botanical name: Laminaria digitata - Seaweed
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat - very low tidal waters

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Kenilworth Ivy

Botanical name: *Cymbalaria muralis*
Family: Figwort (Scrophulariaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

May be mildly toxic

Kidneyvetch, Common

Botanical name: *Anthyllis vulneraria*
Family: Pea (Leguminosae)
Annual/perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: tea

Seeds are toxic if consumed in large quantities. Toxins may be removed by prolonged boiling and discarding the water.

Knapweed, Lesser

Botanical name: *Centaurea nigra*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

(petals) : raw
Safety unknown

Knotgrass, Common

Botanical name: *Polygonum aviculare*
Family: Dock (Polygonaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

May cause photo sensitivity in sensitive people.
Contains oxalic acid.

Knotweed, Curlytop

Botanical name: *Persicaria lapathifolia* (*syn. Polygonum l.*)
Family: Dock (Polygonaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown, weed
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

May cause photo sensitivity in sensitive people.
Contains oxalic acid.

Knotweed, Japanese

Botanical name: *Fallopia japonica* (*syn. Polygonum cuspidatum, P. japonicum*)
Family: Dock (Polygonaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good, worthwhile root, weed

May cause photo sensitivity in sensitive people.
Contains oxalic acid.
This plant is often sprayed with herbicides and may not show signs of wilting. Only pick from areas known to be untreated.

This is a highly invasive plant. Please read the collection notes below.

Main Benefit:
Resveratrol may have antitumor properties and protect against cardiovascular disease. It may also act as an antioxidant and anti-inflammatory.
Contains emodin, which regulates bowel movement.
High in Vitamin C.

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat

Type: waste land
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Other: invasive, forming dense patches

General

Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 3 meters

Leaf

Shape: shield
Texture: thin, matt

Continued ....

Arrangement: alternate
Edge: smooth
Other: up to 15cm

Stem
Cross Section: hollow and woody when mature

Root
Type: woody rhizome
Colour: bright orange
Size: extensive
Depth: very deep

Flower
Diameter: tiny
Arrangement: large clusters at top
When: July to October
Color:

Seed
Size: tiny
Other: needs long, hot summer to mature

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description
: cooked: ★★★ sour, rhubarb-like (raw: astringent)

How to Consume:
: cooked, leaf curd (low yield, but acid content allows curdling without heat)
: shoots up to 20cm: cooked
: cooked
: raw

Special preparation
: older stems : peel
As the seed is small and could easily pass through the digestive system, it is best to grind them to allow absorption of nutrients.

Nutrition
Unspecified part: Vitamin C, Resveratrol

Used as ...
: food
: food, as lemon substitute in recipes

Medicinal Use

Action:
anticancer, depurative, diuretic, emollient, febrifuge, laxative, stomachic

Other Use

: stain remover
: yellow dye

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection
Destroy all remnants by burning or thorough maceration in water. Avoid leaving pieces in the ground.

Notes
Seriously invasive weed which is illegal to grow or dispose of in landfill sites. It has long-lived, extremely deep roots which spread laterally, and grows new plant from small fragments. Disturbing the root can cause the plant to put up new shoots. It is tolerant of herbicides.
Habitat for invertebrates, reptiles and amphibians. Source of nectar for bees late in the season.

Lady's Mantle, Hairy

Botanical name: *Alchemilla vulgaris*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
: cooked
Safety unknown

Lady's Thumb, Spotted *Polygonum persicaria* - see Redshank

Lambsquarters

Botanical name: *Chenopodium album*
Family: Goosefoot (Chenopodiaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown, weed

Edible parts and how to consume:
: cooked
: sprouted
May cause photo sensitivity in sensitive people.
Contains saponins and oxalic acid.
Contains or produces hydrogen cyanide.
Can concentrate nitrates.
This plant can also concentrate other soil toxins. Only pick from uncontaminated land.

Laver

Botanical name: *Porphyra umbiliculis* - Seaweed
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat - tidal waters

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Leek, Broadleaf Wild

Botanical name: *Allium ampeloprasum*
Family: Lily (Liliaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: rare and of little value as food

Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
May be toxic if consumed in large quantities

Leek, Sand

Also known as Rocambole
Botanical name: *Allium scorodoprasum*
Family: Lily (Liliaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
May be toxic if consumed in large quantities

Leek, Three-cornered

Botanical name: *Allium triquetrum*
Family: Lily (Liliaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
May be toxic if consumed in large quantities

Lettuce, Bitter

Botanical name: *Lactuca virosa*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Biennial
Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw

Continued .....

: oil

The sap is narcotic if consumed in quantity. May be toxic.
Contains oxalic acid.

Lettuce, Miner's
Botanical name: *Claytonia perfoliata*
Family: Dock (Portulacaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
Safety unknown

Lettuce, Wall
Botanical name: *Mycelis muralis*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw

Licorice Root, Scottish
Botanical name: *Ligusticum scoticum*
Family: Carrot (Apiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
(shoot) : raw, flavoring

Lingonberry
Botanical name: *Vaccinium vitis-idaea*
Family: Heath (Ericaceae)
Evergreen shrub
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: tea
: raw
Leaves are mildly toxic

Loosestrife, Garden Yellow
Botanical name: *Lysimachia vulgaris*
Family: Primrose (Primulaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
(young) : details unknown
Safety unknown

Loosestrife, Purple
Botanical name: *Lythrum salicaria*
Family: Loosestrife (Lythraceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: cooked
Safety unknown

Loosestrife, Spatulaleaf
Botanical name: *Lythrum portula*
Family: Loosestrife (Lythraceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
Safety unknown

Lungwort, Common
Botanical name: *Pulmonaria offinialis*
Family: Borage (Boraginaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: suspect source information, caution advised
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
Does not contain pyrrolizidine alkaloids, which are often present in other Borage species.

Maidenhair, Common
Botanical name: *Adiantum capillus-veneris*
Perennial
Collectability: rare and of little value as food
Edible parts and how to consume:
: cooked
May contain carcinogens.
Contains thiaminase.

Maidentears *Silene vulgaris* - see Campion, Bladder

Mallow, Common Marsh
Botanical name: *Althaea officinalis*
Family: Mallow (Malvaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: Rare and protected.
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
Safety unknown

Mallow, High
Botanical name: *Malva sylvestris*
Family: Mallow (Malvaceae)
Annual/perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
Can concentrate nitrates.

Mallow, Musk
Botanical name: *Malva moschata*
Family: Mallow (Malvaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
Can concentrate nitrates.

Maple
Acer spp. - see also Maple, Sycamore below
Family: Maple (Aceraceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:
: details unknown
: raw, syrup

Maple, Sycamore
Botanical name: *Acer pseudoplatanus*
Family: Maple (Aceraceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: plentiful, common, weed
Main Benefit:
potential source of carbohydrates
: source of carbohydrates and sweetener

Continued ....

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: woods, hedges
Distribution: Europe, North America

General
Growth type: tree
Cycle: deciduous
Height: up to 30 meters
Other: casts dense shade

Leaf
Shape: palmate
Arrangement: opposite on long stalks
Edge: toothed

Trunk
Color: reddish-brown
Texture: smooth when young, flaking when old

Flower
Diameter: small
Petals/sepals: 5
Arrangement: hanging clusters
When: April to June

Color:

Seed
Shape: round
Size: 8mm
Casing: 30mm winged key, mirrored pairs in clusters

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★☆☆ bitter

★★☆ bland, slightly sweet

How to Consume:

see note below, leaf curd

: raw, syrup

see note below

Special preparation

: see sap sub-section for more information

: remove papery wing case

Nutrition

: sugar (25g per liter)

Used as ...

food (see note below)

: sweetener, beverage (see note below)

Medicinal Use

Action:

inner bark: **astringent**, **vulnerary**

May treat:

inner bark: wash: skin problems, sore eyes; poultice: wounds

Other Use

for wrapping fruit and vegetable to store

trunk: timber

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

: see sap sub-section for more information

Notes
There is no direct information about edibility of the leaves and seeds, but the information implies that it may be safe to eat both, and that they may be acceptable food. The seeds are certainly plentiful and should be nutritious.

: less flow than Sugar Maple or even Birch, but sweeter than Birch

Glossary

palmate: having lobes or leaflets like spread fingers

Marigold, Yellow Marsh

Botanical name: *Caltha palustris*
Family: Buttercup (Ranunculaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: poisonous and of little value as food
Edible parts and how to consume:

(young) : cooked

Toxic. **Avoid**.
Produces the toxin protoanemonin in varying quantities when damaged.
Take extra care identifying, handling and preparing plants in this family.

Mayweed *Anthemis cotula* - see Chamomile, Stinking

Mayweed, Disc

Botanical name: *Matricaria discoidea*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw, tea

Consumption may cause allergies in sensitive people.
It may contain **coumarin**, especially when dried.

Medlar

Botanical name: *Mespilus germanica*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw (best bletted - when nearly rotten)

Toxic if consumed in large quantities.
Seeds contain or produce **hydrogen cyanide**.

Melilot, Tall

Botanical name: *Melilotus altissimus*
Family: Pea (Leguminosae)
Biennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

(shoot) (pods) : cooked

Contains **coumarin**, especially when dried.

Mignonette, Yellow

Botanical name: *Reseda lutea*
Family: Mignonette (Resedaceae)
Bienniel/perennial

Continued ....

Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw
Safety unknown

Milkvetch, Licorice
Botanical name: *Astragalus glycyphyllos*
Family: Pea (Leguminosae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw, condensed juice
Safety unknown

Milkwort, Common
Botanical name: *Polygala vulgaris*
Family: Dock (Polygalaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : tea

 May be toxic if consumed in large quantities

---

Mint, Apple
Botanical name: *Mentha rotundifolia*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : flavoring

 Essential oil may be toxic if consumed in quantity. May cause abortion.

Mint, Corsican *Mentha requienii* - see Apple Mint above
Mint, Eau-de-Cologne *Mentha citrata* - see Apple Mint above
Mint, Water *Mentha aquatica* - see Apple Mint above
Mint, Wild *Mentha arvensis* - see Apple Mint above

Monkey Flower
Botanical name: *Mimulus guttatus*
Family: Figwort (Scrophulariaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw
Safety unknown

Moss spp.
Suspect source information - edibility unlikely

Mountain Ash, European
Also known as Rowan
Botanical name: *Sorbus aucuparia*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: plentiful, common, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : cooked, jelly

 Fruit can cause gastric upset if eaten in quantity. Cooking destroys substance. The leaves, bark and seeds contain or produce hydrogen cyanide.

Mulberry
Botanical name: *Morus spp.*
Family: Mulberry (Moraceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

---

Mustard, Black
Botanical name: *Brassica nigra*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

 (bud) : cooked

 : raw, flavoring

 May be toxic

---

Mustard, Charlock
Botanical name: *Sinapis arvensis*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

 : cooked

 : sprouted, flavoring

 May be toxic when pods form

---

Mustard, Field
Botanical name: *Brassica rapa*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Annual/biennial
Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

---

Mustard, Garlic
Botanical name: *Alliaria petiolata*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Biennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, good, weed

Main Benefit:

 : source of vitamins and minerals

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: open woods, hedges
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Prefers: shade

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: biennial
Height: up to 1 meters
Other: faint garlic smell

Leaf
Shape: heart
Texture: leather
Edge: small round teeth

Flower
Shape: cross
Diameter: small
Arrangement: clusters on top of stalk

Color:

Continued ....

Seed
Casing: long erect pods
Other: often moldy before mature

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★☆ mild garlic and mustard

How to Consume:

: raw

: cooked

Special preparation

: eaten with pods

Nutrition

:Vitamin C

Used as ...
Plant: food

: condiment ("mustard"), sprouted

Medicinal Use

Action:

anti-asthmatic, anti-inflammatory, antiscorbutic, antiseptic, diaphoretic, vermifuge, vulnerary

May treat:

internal: bronchitis, asthma, eczema; poultice: ulcers, itching caused by bites and stings

Other Use

Plant: yellow dye

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

: best before flowering

Drying
Dry to store

Notes
Food for Yellow-tipped Butterfly

Mustard, Hedge

No image for this plant
Botanical name: *Sisymbrium officinale*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Annual
Collectability: plentiful, common, weed

⚠ May be toxic if consumed in large quantities - may affect heart

Main Benefit:
Vocal chords

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: hedges, waste places
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: annual
Height: up to 80 cm
Other: hairy, spreading branches

Leaf
Shape: deeply pinnately lobed

Flower
Shape: cross
Diameter: 3mm
When: May to September

Color:

Seed
Casing: 6-20mm long pods
Other: erect, close to stem

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

bitter, cabbage-like

mustard

How to Consume:

: raw

Special preparation

boil in 3-4 changes of water to remove bitterness

Used as ...

: food

: food, flavoring, condiment ("mustard"), sprouted

Medicinal Use

Action:
Plant: antiaphonic, diuretic, expectorant, laxative, stomachic

May treat:
Plant: loss of voice

Other Use

Plant: soil conditioner - root secretions sweeten an acid soil

Collection, Storing, Notes

Drying
Use fresh for medicinal purposes. Dry plants are ineffective.

Glossary

pinnate: with series of leaflets on each side of a central stalk

---

Mustard, White

Botanical name: *Sinapis alba*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

: sprouted, flavoring

⚠ Seeds may be toxic (as pods form), and contact with them may cause dermatitis in sensitive people.

Nettle, Dwarf *Urtica urens* - see Stinging Nettle below

Nettle, Stinging

Botanical name: *Urtica dioica*
Family: Nettle (Urticaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good, weed

⚠ Contact with plant causes irritation.
Older leaves contain cystoliths, gritty particles - a kidney irritant.
Irritating hairs contain formic acid and other irritants which are destroyed by cooking or drying.
This plant can concentrate soil toxins. Only pick from uncontaminated land.

Main Benefit:
Very nutritious. General tonic, blood and tissue cleanser, and beneficial for the adrenal glands and the immune, endocrine, nervous, urinary and digestive system. May protect neighboring plants from fungal attack. Good wildlife plant.

Continued ....

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: waste ground
Distribution: temperate world
Prefers: manure, urine, phosphate rich soil
Other: patch forming

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 1.2 meters
Other: stinging hairs

Leaf
Shape: heart
Texture:hairy
Arrangement: opposite on short stalks
Edge: toothed

Root
Type: rhizome
Color: yellow
Depth: very deep

Flower
Diameter: tiny
Arrangement: drooping spikes
When: May to October

Color:

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★★ spinach-like, course

How to Consume:

: raw dried, cooked (about 6 minutes), juice, tea, leaf curd

: sprouted

Special preparation

: must be cooked, dried or juiced to destroy the irritants or make them ineffective

Nutrition
One of the most nutritious greens available. Rich in minerals, especially iron, calcium, phosphorus and potassium; vitamins A, B complex and C, protein

Used as ...

: food, beverage

: food

Medicinal Use

Action:
Plant: antiasthmatis, anti-diarrhoea, anti-inflammatory, astringent, depurative, diuretic, galactagogue, haemostatic, lithontripic, tonic

: anti-fungal

May treat:

: blood forming, stimulates digestion, regulates blood pressure and blood sugar, improves circulation, inflammation

Internal: anaemia, asthma, arthritis, cystitis, excessive menstruation, haemorrhoids, skin complaints, hay fever, stress

External (infusion, juice): skin complaints, gout, neuralgia, haemorrhoids, bites, stings, burns

Leaves brushed over skin: increases circulation and helps with rheumatic conditions

: enlargement of prostate gland

: bed wetting

Other Use
Plant (not the seed): liquid plant feed (macerated in water), insect repellant, compost.

: juice: rennet substitute, green dye

: fibre for cordage, cloth or paper

: yellow dye (with alum), fungicide

: in poultry mash increases egg laying; oil: lighting

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection
With rubber, plastic or leather gloves to protect from stings. Cut up to twice per year without exhausting plant.

for food: before flowering to avoid cystoliths.

Drying
Dry in shade

Notes
Valuable wildlife plant

Nipplewort

Botanical name: *Lapsana communis*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Annual
Collectability: plentiful, common, weed

Main Benefit:

: source of vitamins and minerals

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: bare waste ground
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: annual
Height: up to 90 cm
Other: hairy, no milky sap

Leaf
Shape: arrow-shaped, variable
Edge: toothed
Other: pale green

Flower
Diameter: 1-2cm
Arrangement: branched clusters
When: June to October

Color:

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★☆ bitter, radish-like

How to Consume:

: raw, leaf curd

Used as ...

: food

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection
Best before flowering

Oak

Botanical name: *Quercus L.*
Family: Beech (Fagaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: plentiful, common

Continued ....

Contains tannin in high concentrations, especially in the acorns of Red Oak species.

Main Benefit:

Source of carbohydrates and ellagic acid

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: woods, hedges
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General
Growth type: tree
Cycle: deciduous
Height: up to 35 meters

Leaf
Shape: oblong
Edge: rounded lobes
Other: base lobes overlap stalk

Trunk
Color: grey-brown
Texture: rugged

Flower
Shape: catkin
When: April to May with leaves
Color:

Seed
Shape: oval
Color: mid brown when ripe
Size: 20mm
Casing: hard, smooth, with scaly cap

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

: bitter

How to Consume:

: fermented

: cooked, roasted, flour

Special preparation

Grind for flour, or roast for coffee substitute. Grinding up the acorns will speed leaching.

To remove the bitter and toxic tannin pre-boil to soften shell, remove shell and boil in several changes of water. Alternatively, steep ground acorns in running water (like a stream) for 2-4 days, wrapped in cheesecloth or similar fabric.

Untested method with theoretical potential: sprouting supposedly destroys some or all of the tannin, however, it also makes the acorn woody through lignin formation. A possible way to break down the tannin and lignin is to ferment the acorns with *Lactobacillus plantarum* using
the same process as making sauerkraut. *L. plantarum* has the relatively unique ability to break down these substances. Fortunately, *L. plantarum* is ubiquitous and is likely to be one of the lactic bacteria to quickly colonize the brined acorns. It is also present in kefir culture (both milk and water kefir).

For more information on lactic fermentation see the Storage and Preparation sub-section.

Nutrition

: carbohydrates, fat, protein, ellagic acid

Used as ...

: beverage

: food, beverage (coffee substitute)

Medicinal Use

Action:

All used parts (including galls) : anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, astringent, decongestant, haemostatic, tonic

May treat:

All used parts: chronic diarrhoea, dysentery, fevers, haemorrhages; external: wounds, skin eruptions, sweaty feet, piles, vaginal inflammation/ discharge; mouth wash: mouth and throat infections

Other Use

bark : tannin for leather tanning

(galls): tannin, dye; ink: black (plus iron salt), brown (plus alum), yellow (plus tin salt)

trunk : timber

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

galls: after insects hatch

bark: from 5-12 year old branches

collect brown acorns from ground; tree does not produce seed every year

Drying

bark : dry to store

Notes
A very valuable wildlife tree

Glossary
lignin: substance forming woody cell walls

Onion, Largeflower

Botanical name: *Allium macropetalum*
Family: Lily (Liliaceae)
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

May be toxic if consumed in large quantities

Orache, Spear-leaved

Botanical name: *Atriplex prostrata*
Family: Goosefoot (Chenopodiaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: cooked

Can concentrate nitrates.
This plant can also concentrate other soil toxins. Only pick from uncontaminated land.

Oregon Grape

Also known as Hollyleaved Barberry
Botanical name: *Mahonia aquifolium*
Family: Barberry (Berberidaceae)
Evergreen shrub

Continued ....

Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw
Safety unknown

Oregano
Botanical name: *Origanum vulgare*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : flavoring
Safety unknown

Orpine
Botanical name: *Hylotelephium telephium* (*syn. Sedum telephium*)
Family: Stonecrop (Crassulaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

 : cooked

 May be mildly toxic if eaten in quantity

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Oxalis, Yellow
Botanical name: *Oxalis corniculata*
Family: Wood-sorrel (Oxalidaceae)
Annual/perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Safety unknown
see Wood-sorrel

Ox-tongue, Bristly
Botanical name: *Picris echioides*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Annual/biennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw
Safety unknown

Oyster Plant
Botanical name: *Mertensia maritima*
Family: Borage (Boraginaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: suspect source information, caution advised. Also rare.
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

 : details unknown

 May contain pyrrolizidine alkaloids.

Parsley, Fool's
Botanical name: *Aethusa cynapium*
Family: Carrot (Apiaceae)
Annual
Collectability: poisonous and of little value as food, weed

 Toxic (mostly the root) - **avoid**.
See note on carrot family.

Parsley Piert, Field
Botanical name: *Aphanes arvensis*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw
Safety unknown

Parsnip, Cow
Botanical name: *Heracleum maximum*
Family: Carrot (Apiaceae) 
Biennial/perennial
Collectability: suspect source information, caution advised; weed
Edible parts and how to consume:

 (shoot) : raw

 : cooked

 When young the plant is easily mistaken for Giant Hogweed Heracleum mantegazzianum, which is particularly high in irritants.
Contains furanocoumarin, especially when damaged or attacked by mould.

Parsnip, Wild
Botanical name: *Pastinaca sativa*
Family: Carrot (Apiaceae) 
Biennial
Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : cooked

 : raw

 : flavoring

 Leaves contains furanocoumarin, especially when damaged or attacked by mould.
See note on carrot family.

Pea, Beach
Botanical name: *Lathyrus japonicus*
Family: Pea (Leguminosae)
Perennial
Collectability: rare, specialized habitat - coastal
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

 : cooked

 Seeds are toxic if consumed in large quantities
Note: the plant dies when trampled.

Pear, Common
Botanical name: *Pyrus communis*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:

 (when nearly rotten) : cooked

---

Pennycress, Field
Botanical name: *Thlaspi arvense*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

 : flavoring, sprouted
Safety unknown

Pennyroyal
Botanical name: *Mentha pulegium*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: rare, protected and of little value as food

Continued ....

Edible parts and how to consume:

: flavoring

Essential oil may be toxic if consumed in large quantities. May cause abortion. Contains pulegone, which may cause liver damage. Children, including the unborn are more vulnerable to liver damage. Avoid if pregnant.

Peppermint

Botanical name: *Mentha piperita*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: flavoring

Essential oil may be toxic if consumed in large quantities. May cause abortion.

Pepperweed, Broadleaved

Botanical name: *Lepidium latifolium*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: rare and of little value as food
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw, flavoring

Pimpernel, Scarlet

Botanical name: *Anagallis arvensis*
Family: Primrose (Primulaceae)
Annual
Collectability: poisonous

Contact with plant may cause dermatitis in sensitive people. Toxic.

Pine

Botanical name: *Pinus spp.*
Family: Pine (Pinaceae)
Evergreen tree
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:

: tea

: raw

Bark, and possibly other parts may contain large amounts of terpenes, volatile organic compounds, which are toxic in quantity. Eat in moderation.

Plantain, Buck's Horn

Botanical name: *Plantago coronopus*
Family: Plantain (Plantaginaceae)
Annual/perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw
Safety unknown

Plantain, Common *Plantago major* - see Narrowleaf Plantain below

---

Plantain, European Water

Botanical name: *Alisma plantago-aquatica*
Family: Water-plantain (Alismataceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: cooked

All parts are toxic - toxicity may be destroyed by heat. Boil root in several changes of water to remove substance.

Plantain, Narrowleaf

Information about properties also apply to Common Plantain *P. major*.
Botanical name: *Plantago lanceolata*
Family: Plantain (Plantaginaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good, weed
Main Benefit:

: blood cleanser, wound antiseptic

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: grassy places, waste ground
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 50 cm
Other: coarse

Leaf
Shape: lanceolate
Texture: parallel ribs
Arrangement: basal rosette
Edge: smooth

Flower
Diameter: tiny
Arrangement: oval, dense cluster on tall leafless stalk
When: May to September
Color:

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★☆☆ bitter, coarse

How to Consume:

: raw, juiced, leaf curd

: cooked

: flour

Special preparation

: remove tough ribs

: As the seed is small and could easily pass through the digestive system, it is best to grind them to allow absorption of nutrients.

Nutrition

:Vitamin C

:Vitamin B1, high in fibre

Used as ...

: food

Medicinal Use

Action:

: antihistamine, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, astringent, demulcent, deobstruent, depurative, diuretic, expectorant, haemostatic, laxative, opthalmic, refrigerant, vermifuge

: gut scouring agent (like psyllium), vermifuge

May treat:

external: stops bleeding, wound disinfectant, aids healing (including septic wounds); skin complaints (ulcers, cuts, insect bites and stings, nettle stings, bruising), conjunctivitis; internal: complaints of respiratory, urinary and gastric tract

Continued ....

Other Use

dye: gold, brown

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

Best before flowering.

for medicinal use collect late summer

Drying

Dry quickly in sun or drying cabinet/oven at 40-50°C; avoid browning. They will also keep a few days in shallow water like cut flowers.

Notes

Some constituent chemicals are oil soluble, some water soluble. For full benefit consume with fat containing food.

Glossary

lanceolate: shaped like a lance head; long, tapered to end

Plum, Cherry

Botanical name: *Prunus cerasifera*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

: raw, if not bitter

The leaves, bark and seeds contain or produce hydrogen cyanide in contact with water.

Plum, European

Botanical name: *Prunus domestica ssp insitita*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

The leaves, bark and seeds contain or produce hydrogen cyanide in contact with water.

Pond-Lily, Yellow

Botanical name: *Nuphar advena*
Family: Water-lily (Nymphaeaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw
Safety unknown

Poppy, Corn

Botanical name: *Papaver rhoeas*
Family: Poppy (Papaveraceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown, weed
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw (befoer flowering)

: raw

May be toxic. Eat in moderation. Seeds are safe.

Primrose

Botanical name: *Primula L.*
Family: Primrose (Primulaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

Primrose, Cowslip

Botanical name: *Primula veris*
Family: Primrose (Primulaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

Flower stamens may cause allergic reaction
Note: leaves are food for the Duke of Burgundy fritillary caterpillar

---

Purslane, Sea

Botanical name: *Atriplex portulacoides* (*syn. Halimione portulacoides*)
Family: Goosefoot (Chenopodiaceae)
Evergreen shrub
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat - coastal
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

This plant can concentrate soil toxins. Only pick from uncontaminated land.

Pyrenese Star of Bethlehem

Botanical name: *Ornithogalum pyrenaicum*
Family: Lily (Liliaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

(shoot) : cooked

Contact with the bulb may cause dermatitis in sensitive people

---

Quackgrass

No image for this plant

Botanical name: *Elytrigia repens*
Family: Grass (Graminae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good, invasive weed

Sap may irritate skin of sensitive individuals.

Main Benefit:

: source of protein, vitamins and minerals

: urinary tract, prostate gland, skin

Use - Overview

Whole plant

Features and Identification

Habitat

Type: cosmopolitan
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Other: patch forming, invasive

General

Growth type: spreading ground cover
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 60cm

Continued ....

Leaf
Shape: long narrow blades

Root
Type: creeping rhizome

Flower
Arrangement: spikes
When: June to September

Color:

Seed
Other: ears

Culinary Use

How to Consume:

: raw, juice, leaf curd

: flour

Used as ...

: food

Medicinal Use

Action:

: anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, aperient, demulcent, diuretic, emollient, lithontripic, tonic, vermifuge,

May treat:

: kidney, liver and urinary disorders, including. cystitis, urethritis, kidney stones; prostate, gastro-intestinal inflammation, skin eruptions, swollen limbs, chronic catarrh

: helps to eliminate and prevent kidney stones, and detox a sluggish system

Other Use

Whole plant: liquid plant feed (macerated)

: grey dye

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

: best gathered spring and autumn

Drying

: wash well, dry in the sun or low oven/dehydrator

Notes

: may need alternating temperatures to sprout, making it impractical

Glossary

cosmopolitan: belonging to many or all parts of the world

Queen Anne's Lace

Botanical name: *Daucus carota*

Family: Carrot (Apiaceae)
Biennial
Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:

: cooked

Tops may be toxic.
Contains furanocoumarin, especially when damaged or attacked by mould.

Queen of the Meadow

Botanical name: *Filipendula ulmaria*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat, weed

Contains methyl salicylate - not suitable for individuals with heightened sensitivity to aspirin.
Contains traces of coumarin, especially when dried.

Main Benefit:

dried: strengthens heart, helps prevent stroke.
Contains methyl salicylate which changes into salicylic acid and salicylates of sodium, potassium and magnesium when dried. These salts are an antidote to uric acid (which causes gout) and oxalic acid (which causes kidney stones with uric acid). It has the benefit of aspirin (derivative) without the irritating effects on the gastric tract.

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: meadows, river banks, ditches
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Prefers: moisture
Other: locally abundant

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 1.2 meters

Leaf
Shape: pinnate
Texture: downy underside
Arrangement: 2 - 5 pairs with three-part terminal leaf
Edge: toothed
Other: pale underside

Stem
Color: may be dark red
Texture: hairless

Flower
Diameter: 2-5 mm
Petals/sepals: 5-6
Arrangement: frothy clusters
Other: scent of fresh hay

Color:

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★☆ hint of vanilla

How to Consume:

: cooked, tea

Special preparation

Infusion: 40-50 g per liter. Should not be heated above 90° C, as boiling will drive off the salicylic acid.

Used as ...

: flavoring, beverage

: food, tea

Medicinal Use

Action:

: anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, astringent, depurative, diaphoretic, diuretic, stomachic, tonic

: analgesic, antiemetic, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, astringent, depurative, diuretic, stomachic, tonic

Continued ....

May treat:

: rheumatic conditions, gout, feverish conditions, kidney and bladder complaints (including cystitis, stones), oedema, cellulitis, cardiac complaints, arteriosclerosis, insomnia, hyperacidity, heartburn, gastritis, peptic ulcers

: headache

Other Use

: yellow dye

: dye: grey to black brown with copper mordant
Plant: strewing herb, pot-pourri

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

: in flower when fully open

Drying

In shade below 40°C

: separate from stem

Glossary

pinnate: with series of leaflets on each side of a central stalk

---

Radish, Wild

Botanical name: *Raphanus raphanistrum*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:

(pods, young) : raw

: oil
Safety unknown

Rampion

Botanical name: *Campanula rapunculus*
Family: Bellflower (Campanulaceae)
Bienniel/perennial
Collectability: rare and of little value as food
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw
Safety unknown

Ramps *Allium ursinum* - see Bear Garlic

Rape

Botanical name: *Brassica napus*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Annual/biennial
Collectability: suspect source information, caution advised
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

: oil, flavoring

The oil of the seeds is toxic, except in some cultivars.

Raspberry, American Red

Information about properties also apply to many other Rubus species.

Botanical name: *Rubus idaeus*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat

Thorns on stems

Main Benefit:

mouth inflammation, child labour, contains ellagic acid

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat

Type: scrub, open woods, especially in hills
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Prefers: partial shade

General

Growth type: canes
Cycle: perennial, 2-year canes
Height: up to 1.8 meters

Leaf

Shape: pinnate
Arrangement: 3-7 leaflets
Edge: toothed
Other: silvery underside

Stem

Color: light brown
Texture: woody, small thorns
Other: whip-like, erect or leaning

Flower

Diameter: 9-11mm
Arrangement: clusters
When: April to August
Color:

Fruit

Shape: round segments
Color: dull red
Size: 10-20mm
Other: juicy

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★★ sweet, fruity, juicy

How to Consume:

: tea

: raw, juice, syrup

Nutrition

:Vitamin C, ellagic acid

Used as ...

: tea

: food, flavoring

Medicinal Use

Action:

: anti-inflammatory, astringent, birthing aid (taken last three months of pregnancy, not earlier), cardiac, decongestant, opthalmic, opthalmic, stimulant, tonic, tonic for uterus

: antiscorbutic, diuretic, refrigerant,

May treat:

: diarrhoea, menstrual cramps; external: (gargle) tonsillitis, mouth inflammation; (poultice) sores, minor wounds, burns, varicose ulcers, conjunctivitis

Other Use

: paper (after fruiting)

: purple to dull blue dye

Continued ....

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

: check cavity as it sometimes contains maggots

Drying

dry slowly in well ventilated place

Glossary

pinnate: with series of leaflets on each side of a central stalk

---

Redshank

Also known as Lady's Thumb, Spotted
Botanical name: *Polygonum persicaria*
Family: Dock (Polygonaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown, weed
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

May cause photo sensitivity.
Contains oxalic acid.

Reed, Common

Botanical name: *Phragmites australis*
Family: Grass (Graminae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, good, worthwhile root, specialized habitat

Care should be taken not to gather plants from polluted water, and to wash all lower parts thoroughly to avoid soil-born contamination.
Blades are sharp.

Main Benefit:

: source of carbohydrates

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat

Type: marshes, shallow water
Distribution: world, except Amazon basin
Other: patch forming, dislikes very acid or poor soil

General

Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 4 meters

Leaf

Shape: long blades
Arrangement: alternate, clasping stem
Other: grey-green

Stem Trunk

Cross Section: round, hollow

Flower

Arrangement: feathery clusters at top of stem
Color:

Culinary Use

How to Consume:

partly unfolded : cooked, flour

young shoots : cooked

sugary sap from mature injured stem: raw

: cooked, flour

Special preparation

: dry, grind

: to extract: boil in water and evaporate

: as the seed is small and could easily pass through the digestive system, it is best to grind them to allow absorption of nutrients.

Nutrition

: carbohydrate, sugar

Used as ...

: food

: sweetener

Medicinal Use

Action:

ashes: styptic,

: antiemetic, refrigerant

: anti-asthmatic, antidote, antiemetic, antitussive, depurative, diuretic, febrifuge, lithontripic, sedative, sialagogue, stomachic

May treat:

: bronchitis, cholera; ashes: septic wounds

internal (juice or dried powder): diarrhoea, fevers, vomiting, coughs with thick phlegm, lung abscesses, urinary tract infections, food poisoning (especially from sea foods); external (mixed with gypsum): halitosis, toothache

decoction: cholera, food poisoning

Other Use

Whole plant: alcohol (as fuel), compost, thatching, building, woven goods, insulation, cordage, paper
Living plant: grey-water and sewage treatment

: light green dye

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

: best before leaves form

Drying

: dry to store

Notes

: more active dried; infusion: 25g to 1/2 liter

Restharrow, Common

Botanical name: *Ononis repens*
Family: Pea (Leguminosae)
Shrub
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

Safety unknown

Rhubarb, Monk's

Botanical name: *Rumex alpinus*
Family: Dock (Polygonaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: suspect source information, caution advised
Edible parts and how to consume:

: details unknown

Contains oxalic acid.

Rocambole *Allium scorodoprasum* - see Leek, Sand

Rose, Dog

Information about properties also applies to Field Rose *R. arvensis* and other closely related roses.

Botanical name: *Rosa canina*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: plentiful, common, good

⚠ Sharp thorns.
Seed hairs are irritant - remove before consuming seed.

Main Benefit:
May reduce the incidence of cancer and stop or reduce the growth of tumors

: source of Vitamin C

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: scrub, hedges
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General
Growth type: cane
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 3 meters

Leaf
Shape: pinnate
Arrangement: 2-3 pair leaflets
Edge: toothed

Stem
Color: green
Texture: smooth with sparse curved thorns
Other: trailing, whip-like

Flower
Diameter: 45-50mm
Other: scented
Color:

Fruit
Shape: oval
Color: red
Size: 20mm
Other: called "hip"

Seed
Shape: oval, hairy
Color: cream
Size: 3mm with casing
Casing: fruit

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★★ slightly sour, sweeter after frost

How to Consume:

petals: raw, tea, wine

: raw, tea, syrup

: cooked

Special preparation

: remove seeds - see note below

: rub off irritant hairs - see note below

Nutrition

: rich source of minerals and Vitamins, especially Vitamin C (one cup equals approx.40 oranges) and Vitamin E, carotene, flavenoids and essential fatty acids

: Vitamin E, essential fatty acids

Used as ...

: beverage

: food, beverage, flavoring

: food

Medicinal Use

Action:

petals: **astringent**, **carminative**, **diuretic**, **laxative**, **opthalmic**, **tonic**

: **anti-rheumatic**, **antiscorbutic**, **depurative**

with hairs: **vermifuge**,

May treat:

: colds, influenza, minor infectious diseases, diarrhoea, gastritis

with hairs: intestinal worms

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

: petals only, flowers best left to form fruit for later collection or for wildlife.

: best when softened by frost and well ripe when the pulp can be easily squeezed out of the hip

Drying

: dry in ventilated place, below 40°C

: dry in sun, grind into powder

Notes
The seeds with their irritating hairs can be removed by halving the fruit and drying it. Shake them vigorously in a lidded jar to dislodge the seeds, then in a sieve over some newspaper or outdoors (take care not to inhale or touch the hairs). This way the hairs can also be removed from the seeds.

Glossary

pinnate: with series of leaflets on each side of central stalk

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Rose, Field *Rosa arvensis* - see Rose, Dog above

Rose of Sharon

Botanical name: *Hibiscus syriacus*
Family: Mallow (Malvaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

: details unknown
Safety unknown

Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia* - see Mountain Ash, European

Rush, Flowering

Botanical name: *Butomus umbellatus*
Family: Flowering Rush (Butomaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: rare and of little value as food

Continued ....

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : cooked

 : details unknown

---

Rushes

Botanical name: *Juncus spp.*
not generally edible

Ryegrass, Perennial

Botanical name: *Lolium perenne*
Family: Grass (Graminae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : leaf curd, juice

 : flour

---

Sage, Wild *Salvia verbenaca* - see Clary, Wild

Salsify

Botanical name: *Tragopogon porrifolius*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Biennial
Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:

 (shoot)   : raw

 : sprouted
Safety unknown

Samphire, Rock

Botanical name: *Crithmum maritimum*
Family: Carrot (Apiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: specialized habitat - coastal
Edible parts and how to consume:

 (shoot) : raw

 (pods) : pickled

---

Saxifrage, Golden

Botanical name: *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*
Family: Saxifrage (Saxifragaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

May be mistaken for the poisonous young Leafy Spurge *Euphorbia esula*

Sea Kale

Botanical name: *Crambe maritima*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 (shoot)  : raw

 (bud) : cooked
Safety unknown

Sea Lettuce

Botanical name: *Ulva lactuca* - Seaweed
Collectability: specialized habitat - tidal waters

Seapink *Armeria maritima* - see Thrift

Sedge, Hanging

Botanical name: *Carex pendula*
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 (if free from ergot) : cooked, flour
Safety unknown

Self-heal, Common

Botanical name: *Prunella vulgaris*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw
Safety unknown

Service Tree, Wild *Sorbus torminalis* - see Checker Tree

Shepherd's Purse

Botanical name: *Capsella bursa-pastoris*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Annual
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good, weed

Susceptible to mold. Avoid moldy leaves.

Main Benefit:
Plant: Bleeding; urinary, digestive and respiratory tract. Source of Vitamin C

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: waste ground
Distribution: temperate world
Other: dislikes lime

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: annual
Height: up to 35 cm

Leaf
Shape: long
Arrangement: mostly basal rosette
Edge:deeply lobed

Flower
Shape: cross
Diameter: 2-3mm
When: February to November
Color:

Seed
Size: tiny
Casing: heart-shaped pods

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description
Plant: spicy cabbage

How to Consume:
Plant: raw

Nutrition

 : iron, calcium, cholin, Vitamin C

 : 35% fatty oil
Unspecified part: fumaric acid

Continued ....

Used as ...

: food

Medicinal Use

Action:

Plant: anticancer, anti-fertility, antiscorbutic, astringent, depurative, diuretic, emmenagogue, haemostatic, hypotensive, oxytoxic, stimulant, vasoconstrictor, vasodilator, vulnerary

May treat:

Plant: reduces heavy bleeding, also heavy periods, varicose veins, haemorrhoids, arteriosclerosis, hypertension, inflammation of mucosae of digestive, respiratory and urinary tract

Other Use

placed in water will kill mosquitos and their larvae; grown in salty soil will sweeten it by absorbing the salt

Collection, Storing, Notes

Drying

Best used fresh as it looses potency when dried.

Sleepydick

Botanical name: *Ornithogalum umbellatum*

Family: Lily (Liliaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: rare and of limited value as food

Edible parts and how to consume:

(bulb) : raw

Bulb is said to be toxic, as are the leaves and flowers.

Snowberry, Common

Botanical name: *Symphoricarpos albus*

Family: Honeysuckle (Caprifoliaceae)

Deciduous shrub

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

Mildly toxic (mostly the leaves and root).

Contains saponins.

Sorrel, Common Sheep *Rumex acetosella* - see Sorrel, Garden below

---

Sorrel, Garden

Information about properties also applies to Common Sheep Sorrel R. acetosella

Botanical name: *Rumex acetosa*

Family: Dock (Polygonaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good, weed

Contains oxalic acid.

Main Benefit:

: blood cleanser, source of Vit. C

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat

Type: grassy places

Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

Prefers: iron rich soil

General

Growth type: herb

Cycle: perennial

Height: up to 90 cm

Leaf

Shape:long arrow, upper clasp stem

Texture: smooth

Arrangement: alternate

Edge: smooth

Flower

Diameter: tiny

Arrangement: spikes, loosely branched

Color:

Seed

Size: tiny

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★★ lemony

How to Consume:

: raw, juiced for rennet

: cooked, flour

: cooked

: raw, flour

Special preparation

: as the seed is small and could easily pass through the digestive system, it is best to grind them to allow absorption of nutrients.

Nutrition

:Vitamin C

Used as ...

: food, curdling agent, lemon substitute

: food

Medicinal Use

Action:

: anthelmintic, antiscorbutic, astringent, depurative, diuretic, febrifuge, laxative

: astringent, diuretic, haemostatic

May treat:

internal: skin complaints; external: cooked and mushed (poultice): brings boils and abscesses to a head; itchy skin and ringworm (juice mixed with fumitory)

: jaundice, gravel, kidney stones

Other Use

: grey-blue dye, silver polish

: dark green to brown dye (no mordant)

Collection, Storing, Notes

Drying

Dry to store.

Notes

Avoid iron (except s/s) and aluminum implements. Plant will react with iron or leach aluminum into the food due to its high acidity.

Glossary

palmate: having lobes or leaflets like spread fingers

Sowthistle, Common
Botanical name: *Sonchus oleraceus*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Biennial
Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
(peeled) : cooked
Remove prickles

Sowthistle, Field
Botanical name: *Sonchus arvensis*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
(shoot) : cooked
: cooked, roasted
Remove prickles

Sow Thistle, Spiny
Botanical name: *Sonchus asper*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
: cooked
Remove prickles

Spear Altbush
Botanical name: *Atriplex patula*
Family: Goosefoot (Chenopodiaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
: cooked
May cause photo sensitivity in sensitive people.
Can concentrate nitrates.
This plant can also concentrate other soil toxins. Only pick from uncontaminated land.

Spearmint
Botanical name: *Mentha spicata*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: flavoring
Essential oil may be toxic if consumed in large quantities. May cause abortion.

Speedwell, European
Botanical name: *Veronica beccabunga*
Family: Figwort (Scrophulariaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: specialised habitat - damp, aquatic
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw
Safety unknown

Speedwell, Germander
Botanical name: *Veronica chamaedrys*
Family: Figwort (Scrophulariaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: tea
Safety unknown

Spoonwort
Botanical name: *Cochlearia officinalis*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat
Inland sources grow mainly along winter-salted roads. Plants should only be collected where traffic levels are very low to avoid pollutants. It is worth checking beyond any hedge banks, where the soil may still be saline enough for the plants to grow, but there the bank protects them from vehicle pollution. Follow the law and the country code when potentially entering on private land.
Main Benefit:
: source of Vitamin C

Use - Overview

Features and Identification
Habitat
Type: coastal, verges of salted roads, near salt mines
Distribution: N. and Central Europe, North America
Prefers: salt
Other: locally abundant

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 50cm

Leaf
Shape: lower: heart
Texture: fleshy
Arrangement: base clump, top clasping stem
Edge: wavy

Flower
Shape: cross
Diameter: up to 10mm
Arrangement: clusters at branch ends
When: April to August
Color:

Seed
Casing: near-round pods

Culinary Use
Flavor - Rating and Description
★★☆ variable, menthol-like, pungent, strong or salty, slightly fleshy

How to Consume:
: raw

Nutrition
:Vitamin C

Used as ...
: food

Medicinal Use
Action:
: antiscorbutic, aperient, diuretic, stimulant

Continued ....

May treat:

external: ulcers

Collection, Storing, Notes

Drying
Best used fresh for the Vitamin C content, but can be dried to store.

Spruce

Information about properties also apply to other closely related Picea species.

Picea spp.
Family: Pine (Pinaceae)
Evergreen tree
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat

Bark, and possibly other parts may contain large amounts of terpenes, volatile organic compounds, which are toxic in quantity. Eat in moderation.

Main Benefit:

: source of Vitamin C

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: forests, especially mountains and uplands
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General
Growth type: tree
Cycle: evergreen
Height: up to 60 meters

Leaf
Shape: needle, 4-sided
Texture: hard, waxy
Arrangement: side and top of twigs
Other: 20mm

Trunk
Color: purple-brown
Texture: rough

Flower
Shape: male: catkin; female: cone
Color:

Seed
Casing: cone

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

Tangy

How to Consume:

: young: raw, juice; mature: tea

inner bark : cooked, flour

male : raw; female (immature): cooked

: raw

Special preparation

: crush to extract juice

: as the seed is small and could easily pass through the digestive system, it is best to grind them to allow absorption of nutrients.

Nutrition

:Vitamin C

Used as ...

: food, tea

bark : food

Medicinal Use

Action:

: antibacterial, antiseptic, expectorant, sedative

May treat:

: boils, abscesses (poultice with sap or resin)

Other Use

trunk: timber

resin: varnishes etc.

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

Immature pale green tufts from April to May, often found on the ground after a windy spell. Contrasting young tufts are easily seen on the tree.

St. John's Wort, Common

Botanical name: *Hypericum perforatum*
Family: St.John's Wort (Clusiaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: suspect source information, caution advised, weed
Edible parts and how to consume:

: tea

May cause photo sensitivity in sensitive people.

Stonecrop, Goldmoss

Botanical name: *Sedum acre*
Family: Stonecrop (Crassulaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

Contact with sap may cause irritation. Can cause gastric upset if eaten in quantity. May be toxic.

Stonecrop, Jenny's

Botanical name: *Sedum reflexum*
Family: Stonecrop (Crassulaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

Can cause gastric upset if eaten in quantity. May be toxic.

Stork's-bill, Redstem

Botanical name: *Erodium cicutarium*
Family: Cranesbill (Geraniaceae)
Annual/biennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

Safety unknown

Strawberry, Woodland

Botanical name: *Fragaria vesca*
Family: Rose (Rosaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: common, widespread, good

Continued ....

Main Benefit:

: blood building, rheumatic conditions, contains ellagic acid

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: shady grassy places, open woods
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Prefers: lime

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 25 cm

Leaf
Shape: trefoil
Texture: shiny top, downy below
Edge: toothed

Stem
Texture: silky hairs
Other: creeping, often producing new rooted plant where stem touches ground

Flower
Diameter: 15mm
Petals/sepals: 5, pointed, close together
Arrangement: solitary
When: April to July

Color:

Fruit
Shape: heart
Color: red

Seed
Size: tiny
Casing: fruit
Other: the seeds sit in dimples on the surface of the fruit

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★★ sweet-sour, like cultivated, but stronger flavor

How to Consume:

young: raw, tea

: roasted (coffee substitute)

: raw

Nutrition

iron, potassium, ellagic acid

Used as ...

: food

Medicinal Use

Action:

: astringent, depurative, diuretic, laxative, tonic

: astringent, diuretic,

May treat:

diarrhoea; external: sunburn, chilblains; powdered in oil: open sores

diarrhoea, chronic dysentery; external: chilblains

(contains salicylic acid) rheumatism, gout, liver and kidney complaints

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection
May be mistaken for Barren Strawberry, Potentilla sterilize, a non-fruiting cousin. See image page to compare.

hidden below leaves

Drying

: dry to store

Notes

more active dried; infusion: 25g to 1/2 liter.
Food for the Grizzled Skipper caterpillar.

Glossary

trefoil: leaf with three leaflet or lobes

Strawberry Tree

Botanical name: *Arbutus unedo*
Family: Heath (Ericaceae)
Evergreen shrub
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw
Safety unknown

Sweet Oar Weed

Botanical name: *Laminaria saccharina* - Seaweed
Collectability: specialized habitat - tidal waters

Sweet Clover, Yellow

Botanical name: *Melilotus officinalis*
Family: Pea (Leguminosae)
Bienniel
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

(pods) : raw, flavoring

(shoot) : cooked

: details unknown

Contains coumarin, especially when dried.

Swinecress, Greater

Botanical name: *Coronopus squamatus*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Annual/biennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: cooked

: sprouted
Safety unknown

Tansy, Common

Botanical name: *Tanacetum vulgare*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: suspect source information, caution advised
Edible parts and how to consume:

: flavoring

Contains thujone.
Does not contain pyrrolizidine alkaloids, which are present in some of Tansy's close relatives.

Thistle, (Blessed) Milk

Botanical name: *Silybum marianum*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Biennial
Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:

(peeled) : raw

Continued ....

 (bud) : cooked

 : roasted, sprouted

⚠ Remove prickles.
Can concentrate nitrates.

Thistle, Bull

Botanical name: *Cirsium vulgare*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Biennial
Collectability: common, widespread, weed, palatable, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:

 (bud) : cooked

 : raw, sprouted

⚠ Remove prickles

Thistle, Canada

Botanical name: *Cirsium arvense*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial
Collectability: common, widespread, palatable, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

 (peeled) : cooked

 : sprouted

⚠ Remove prickles

Thistle, Marsh

Botanical name: *Cirsium palustre*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Biennial
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat, weed, palatable, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

 (young) : cooked

 : sprouted

⚠ Remove prickles

Thistle, Prickly Russian

Botanical name: *Salsola pestifer*
Family: Goosefoot (Chenopodaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 (shoot) : raw

 : cooked, sprouted
Safety unknown

Three-lobed Beggarsticks

Botanical name: *Bidens tripartita*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 (young) : cooked
Safety unknown

Thrift

Botanical name: *Armeria maritima*
Family: Sea Lavender (Plumbaginaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: specialized habitat - coastal
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : cooked

 : details unknown
Safety unknown

Trefoil, Bird's-foot

Botanical name: *Lotus corniculatus*
Family: Pea (Legumiosae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : sprouted

⚠ Contains or produces hydrogen cyanide.

Turnip, St. Anthony's

Botanical name: *Ranunculus bulbosus*
Family: Buttercup (Ranunculaceae) ⚠
Perennial
Collectability: poisonous and of little value as food. Weed
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : cooked

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Valerian, Garden

Botanical name: *Valeriana officinalis*
Family: Valerian (Valerianacea)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : flavoring

 : details unknown

⚠ Narcotic - may be addictive if consumed for prolonged period. Consume for no more than three months.

Valerian, Red

Botanical name: *Centranthus ruber*
Family: Valerian (Valerianaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

 : cooked
Safety unknown

Vetch, Bird

Botanical name: *Vicia cracca*
Family: Pea (Leguminosae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 (shoot)  : cooked

⚠ Seeds are toxic if consumed in large quantities. Toxins may be removed by prolonged boiling and discarding the water.

Vetch, Bush

Botanical name: *Vicia sepium*
Family: Pea (Leguminosae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

 : cooked

Continued ....

Seeds are toxic if consumed in large quantities. Toxins may be removed by prolonged boiling and discarding the water.

Vetch, Garden

Botanical name: *Vicia sativa*
Family: Pea (Leguminosae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
(shoot) (pods) : cooked

Seeds are toxic if consumed in large quantities. Toxins may be removed by prolonged boiling and discarding the water.

Vetch, Tiny

Botanical name: *Vicia hirsuta*
Family: Pea (Leguminosae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
(shoot) : cooked

Seeds are toxic if consumed in large quantities. Toxins may be removed by prolonged boiling and discarding the water.

Violet, Sweet

Botanical name: *Viola odorata*
Family: Violet (Violaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
: raw

Safety unknown

Walnut, English

Botanical name: *Juglans regia*
Family: Walnut (Juglandaceae)
Deciduous tree
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat

The seed casing can stain clothes and skin.
Needs careful storage as susceptible to dangerous moulds.

Main Benefit:

dietary source of melatonin, source of protein, carbohydrates and ellagic acid

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: hedgerows, parks, gardens
Prefers: moisture, light, warmth
Other: mostly planted, usually bare ground below tree due to growth inhibiting substances exuded by the tree

General
Growth type: tree
Cycle: deciduous
Height: up to 30 meters

Leaf
Shape: palmate
Texture: glossy
Arrangement: opposite pairs of leaflets
Edge: smooth
Other: aromatic

Trunk
Color: grey, smooth when young
Texture: smooth when young, turning more rugged when mature

Flower
Shape: catkin
Arrangement: male: hanging; female: erect
When: April to May, before leaves
Color:

Fruit
Shape: oval
Color: green, brown when fully ripe
Size: up to 40 mm
Other: thin flesh layer over large seed

Seed
Shape: convoluted, brain-like appearance
Color: cream-colored flesh with brown papery skin
Size: 30mm
Casing: woody, crinkled, light brown

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description
nutty

How to Consume:
: raw, syrup
: raw, pickled

Nutrition
: fat, protein, ellagic acid

Used as ...
: beverage, sweetener
: food

Recipe
Base recipe to make pickled Walnuts
Use non-iron (unless stainless steel or coated/plated) vessels and implements.

Use green Walnuts collected around late June or early July. Test if soft enough with a pin. If it goes in a good way the nut can be used. Wash the nuts, drain and test how much liquid will be needed to cover the nuts by pouring water over them and measuring the water after pouring it off. This will avoid wasting brine or having a shortfall. Prick each nut several times deeply to allow the brine to enter.

Essential ingredients:
- approx. 150 g salt to 1 liter of water (recipes vary) - or by volume about 1 measure salt to 10 measures water
- water for the brine to generously cover the nuts
- boiled vinegar to generously cover the nuts (type according to taste)
- preserving jars

Non-essential ingredients:
- herbs and spices to taste for the vinegar
- up to 500 g sugar per liter of water to counter the tartness of the vinegar (add gradually and taste the vinegar, it may only require a few spoons of sugar)

Boil the water and salt until the salt is dissolved. Cool and pour over nuts. Leave to soak for about 5 days and swish around the nuts every day. Replace the brine and soak for another 5 days or so. Drain, spread on a tray and dry for up to three days when they will have turned dark brown to black. Boil

Continued ....

and flavor the vinegar if desired. Place nuts in a clean jar, cover with hot vinegar and seal.

Store in a cool place. The pickled nuts are said to be ready anywhere from 2-8 weeks and may keep up to two years.

Medicinal Use

Action:

: alterative, anthelmintic, anti-inflammatory, astringent, depurative

: anticancer, diuretic, lithontripic, stimulant

May treat:

: constipation, chronic coughs, asthma, diarrhoea, dyspepsia, skin ailments

internal: cancer, low back pain, frequent urination, chronic cough, asthma, constipation, stones in the urinary tract; external (poultice): dermatitis, eczema

Other Use

: yellow and brown dye, pesticide, herbicide, insect repellent

trunk : timber - a fine cabinet timber, also used for gun stocks

: dye (no mordant required): yellow (unripe husk); brown (ripe husk); black if iron implement is used; source of tannin, hair colorant,

: wood polish, non-yellowing glossy paint medium

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

The seed is ripe when the fruit falls to the ground and splits open. Remove the outer case as soon as possible. Wear rubber or similar gloves as the flesh will stain skin (and other things too!). Wash the nuts in a bucket of water which will also sort the rotten from the good. Good walnuts will sink. To remove hulls which have not split open step on them on a hard surface. Beware that everything which comes into contact with the juice or flying debris will be stained.
Walnuts can be harvested unripe from June for pickling when the inner shell is still soft.
Collect leaves singly.

Preserving and Storing

Walnuts should be carefully stored as they are susceptible to mold which can produce the highly toxic aflatoxin, a potent carcinogen. Nuts without shells will also go rancid quickly as they are exposed to air. They are best eaten fresh or stored in their shell until eaten. If there are any moldy nuts in a batch of cracked nuts, the entire batch should be discarded. Stored in the shell they can keep up to a year. Pickled they may keep up to two years.
Leaves and bark can be dried to store. Spread out thinly on a tray.

Notes

Walnuts bear seed after about 10 years, grafted cultivars possibly sooner

Glossary

palmate: having lobes or leaflets like spread fingers

Water-lily, White

Botanical name: *Nymphaea alba*
Family: Water-lily (Nymphaeaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: rare (protected) and of little value as food
Edible parts and how to consume:

: cooked

Leach in several changes of water to remove substance. May be toxic.

Water-lily, Yellow

Botanical name: *Nuphar lutea*
Family: Water-lily (Nymphaeaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: cooked

Leach in several changes of water to remove substance. May be toxic.

Watercress

Botanical name: *Nasturtium officinale*
Formerly classified as: Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat - aquatic
Edible parts and how to consume:

: cooked

: flavoring, sprouted

Avoid water courses going through pasture. Wash well and cook to destroy water-borne parasites.

Whitetop

Botanical name: *Lepidium draba* (*syn. Cardaria draba*)
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: weed
Edible parts and how to consume:

: flavoring

: sprouted

May be toxic

Whitlow-grass, Wall

Botanical name: *Draba muralis*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw (Vitamin C)
Safety unknown

Whortleberry

Botanical name: *Vaccinium myrtillus*
Family: Heath (Ericaceae)
Deciduous shrub
Collectability: good, specialized habitat

The leaves should only be consumed up to three weeks at a time

Main Benefit:

antioxidants, strengthens blood vessels

Use - Overview

Continued ....

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: woods, moors
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Prefers: acid soil
Other: not on lime, patch forming

General
Growth type: shrub
Cycle: deciduous
Height: up to 50 cm
Other: hairless

Leaf
Shape: oval
Arrangement: alternate
Edge: finely toothed
Other: small

Stem
Cross Section:angular

Flower
Shape: bell
Diameter: 6 mm
Arrangement: single or paired
When: April to July

Color: 

Fruit
Shape: round
Color: blue-black
Size: up to 10 mm
Other: purplish bloom

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★☆ mildly sweet-sour

How to Consume:

: tea

: raw, dried

Nutrition

: **glucoquinones** - reduces blood sugar levels

skin : **anthocyanin**, **anthocyanosides**

Used as ...

: beverage

: food

Medicinal Use

Action:

: **antiseptic** (urinary tract), **astringent**, **diuretic**, **diuretic**

fresh: **laxative**; dried: **antibacterial**, **astringent**; berry skin: **vasodilator**

May treat:

diabetes (if taken for prolonged period; not replacing conventional treatment); external: ulcers, ulceration of mouth or throat

fresh: diarrhoea; berry skin: varicose veins, haemorrhoids, capillary fragility, improves night vision, circulation and memory

Other Use

: green dye

: blue or black dye/ink

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

: only green leaves

: hidden under leaves

Drying

: dry in gentle heat

: in shade

Notes
Indicates acid soil.

Wintergreen, Snowline

Botanical name: *Pyrola minor*
Family: Dock (Pyrolaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

: details unknown
Safety unknown

Woodsorrel, Common

Information about properties also apply to the close relative Mountain Woodsorrel *Oxalis montana*

Botanical name: *Oxalis acetosella*
Family: Wood-sorrel (Oxalidaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat

⚠ Wood-sorrel can be mistaken for Clover species when neither plant is in flower.
Contains **oxalic acid** and traces of **calcium oxalate**. Eat in moderation.

Main Benefit:

: source of Vitamin C

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat
Type: woods, hedges
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere
Other: patch forming

General
Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 10 cm
Other: delicate plant

Leaf
Shape: trefoil
Other: closes at night, pale green when young

Stem
Other: creeping

Flower
Petals/sepals: 5
Arrangement: solitary on long leafless stalk
When: April to May

Color: 

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★★★ lemony

How to Consume:

: raw

Continued ....

Nutrition

:Vitamin C

Used as ...

: food; juice: curdling agent, lemon substitute

: food

Medicinal Use

Action:

: anodyne, antiscorbutic, astringent, diuretic, emmenagogue, expectorant, febrifuge, stomachic

May treat:

: fever; external (crushed): boils, abscesses, wounds

Other Use

removes mould stains from linen (not tried, and may leave linen with green stains instead)

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

The best time is from autumn to spring. In summer the leaves become dry and bitter, or die back entirely.

Drying

Dry to store

Glossary

trefoil: leaf with three leaflet or lobes

Wormwood, Common

Botanical name: *Artemisia vulgaris*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown, weed

Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw

Toxic if consumed in large quantities. Contact with plant may cause dermatitis in sensitive people. Contains thujone.

Yarrow, Common

Botanical name: *Achillea millefolium*
Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)
Perennial

Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good, weed

Prolonged consumption may cause allergies. Leaves and flower may also cause photosensitivity on contact. Contains thujone.

Main Benefit:

Circulatory and urinary system; promotes sweating

Use - Overview

Features and Identification

Habitat

Type: grassy areas
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General

Growth type: herb
Cycle: perennial
Height: up to 45 cm
Other: downy, aromatic

Leaf

Shape: pinnate
Arrangement: alternate along stem, large basal leaves
Edge: feathery

Flower

Arrangement: umbel-like cluster at top of stem

Color: (may be either)

Culinary Use

Flavor - Rating and Description

★☆☆ bitter

★★☆ aromatic

How to Consume:

young: raw, tea

: tea

Used as ...

: food, beverage

: beverage, flavoring

Medicinal Use

Action:

Plant: anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, antispasmodic, astringent, bitter, carminative, cholagogue, diaphoretic, digestive, diuretic, emmenagogue, haemostatic, hepatic, odontalgic, stimulant, vasodilator, vulnerary

May treat:

Plant: wounds, skin eruptions, colds, kidney disease, menstrual pain, circulatory problems, tooth ache

Other Use

Plant (without seeds): compost activator, liquid plant feed, insect repellent. Good companion plant which attracts good insects and repels bad. Also has healing effect on nearby sick plants.

dye : yellow, green

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

Harvest when in flower. See also Caution Notes above.

Drying

Dry to store

Notes

Contains anti-inflammatory agent azulene (content varies).

Useful to cavity-nesting birds who use it in their nests to repel parasites.

Glossary

pinnate: with series of leaflets on each side of a central stalk
umbel: flower cluster with stalks joined in centre to form flat or curved surface; umbrella-like

Calendar

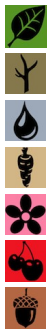
Important! Inclusion in this list does not imply safety. Read the full description of the plant in the full plant list, as well as information in the safety section.

The purpose of this list is to find out what plant or part of it is available at any given time. The plant part icons also help to quickly locate a food for any desired purpose, and may help to plan a meal containing greens (leaves and stems), carbohydrates (roots and seeds), protein (leaves, roots and seeds) and maybe a desert (fruit). Also see information on the various parts on their respective page in the Plant Parts section.

The monthly availability should only be seen as a rough guide. Variations in climate and location can make a significant difference in availability. The findings are based on observations in the moderate climate of west Wales, and also takes into consideration the findings of several years. This gives a range of availability with early and late harvests which may not match every location and year. Apply this information relative to your situation.

The calendar only gives details about availability of plants which are featured in the in-depth profiles. Refer to the profile for more details.

Key – Plant parts

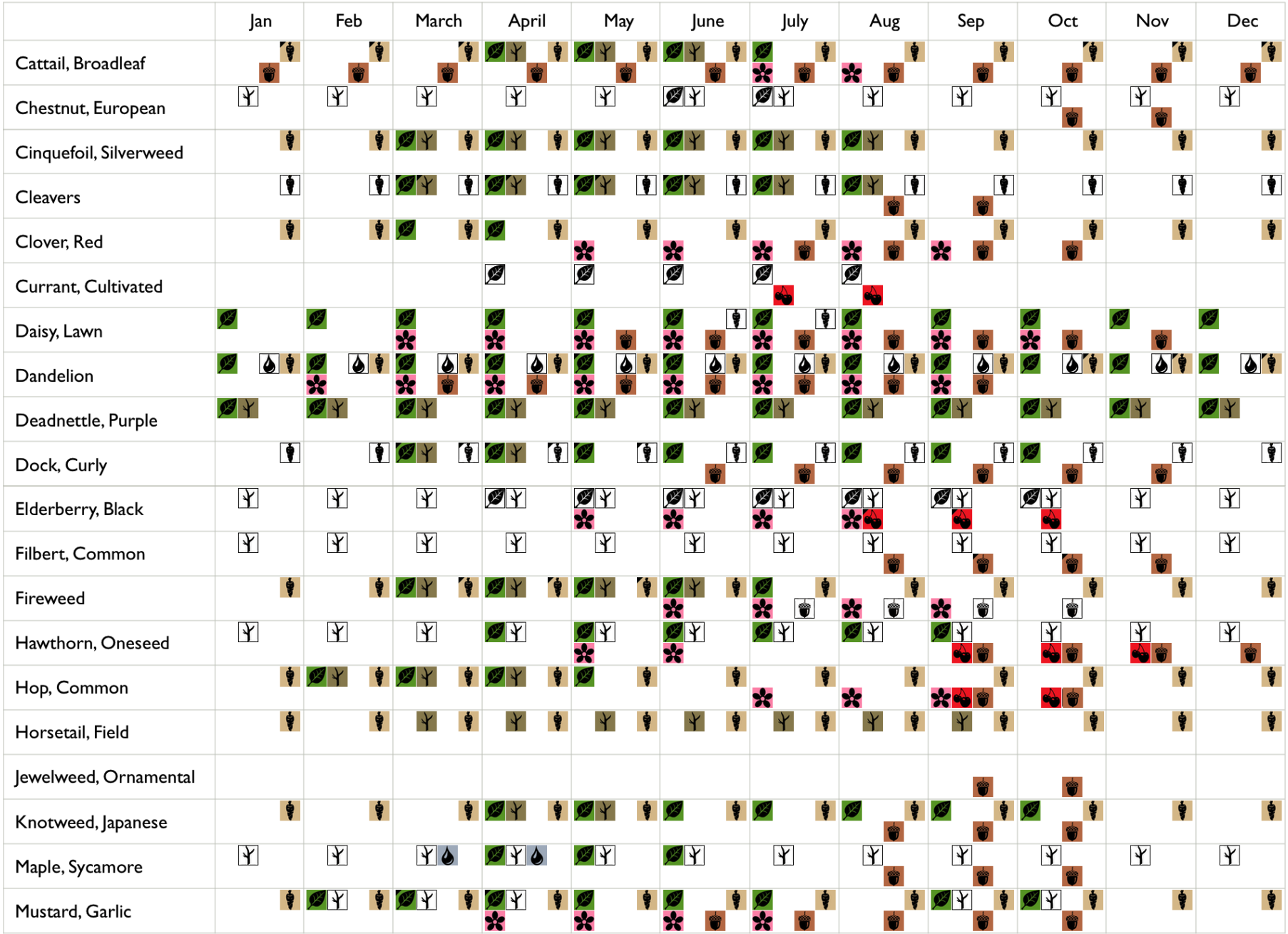


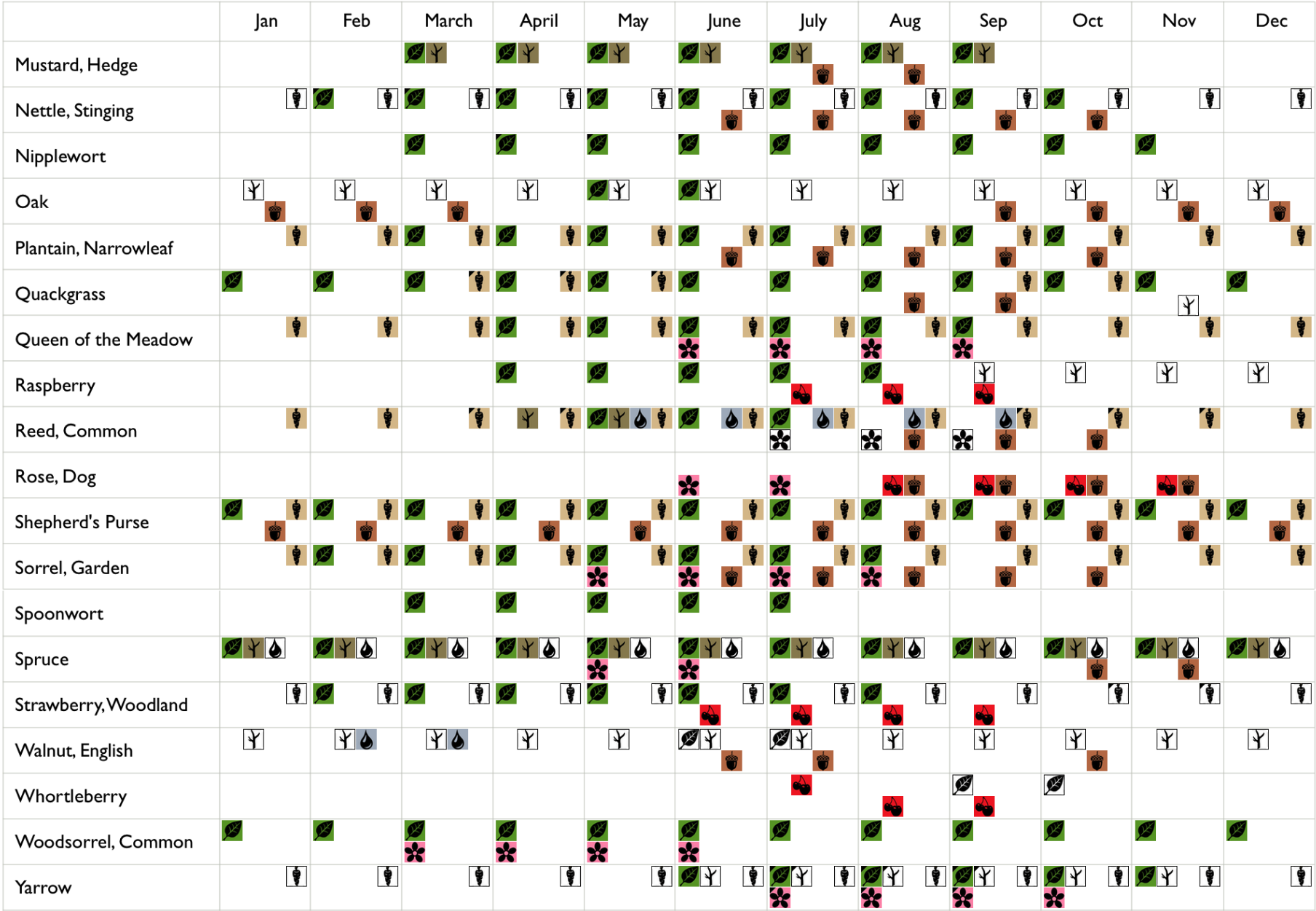
- Leaf
- Stem or trunk
- Sap
- Root and bulbs
- Flower
- Fruit
- Seed

Parts with black and white icons are for non-culinary use only.

Icons with corner markings indicate peak condition.

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bear Garlic												
Bedstraw, Sweet-scented												
Beech												
Bindweed, Hedge												
Birch, Downy												
Bishop's Goutweed												
Bittercress, Hairy												
Blackberry, Shrubby												
Blackthorn												
Burdock, Lesser												
Catsear, Common												


Jan
Feb
March
April
May
June
July
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec
Cattail, Broadleaf
Chestnut, European
Cinquefoil, Silverweed
Cleavers
Clover, Red
Currant, Cultivated
Daisy, Lawn
Dandelion
Deadnettle, Purple
Dock, Curly
Elderberry, Black
Filbert, Common
Fireweed
Hawthorn, Oneseed
Hop, Common
Horsetail, Field
Jewelweed, Ornamental
Knotweed, Japanese
Maple, Sycamore
Mustard, Garlic


Jan
Feb
March
April
May
June
July
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec
Mustard, Hedge
Nettle, Stinging
Nipplewort
Oak
Plantain, Narrowleaf
Quackgrass
Queen of the Meadow
Raspberry
Reed, Common
Rose, Dog
Shepherd's Purse
Sorrel, Garden
Spoonwort
Spruce
Strawberry, Woodland
Walnut, English
Whortleberry
Woodsorrel, Common
Yarrow

Leaf

Leaves are best picked young and tender in spring and early summer, but can often be picked all year round. Some will turn bitter when the plant starts flowering. They are high in minerals, vitamins, chlorophyll, as well as some protein which can be extracted from bulk material and processed into leaf curd.

To safeguard the plant's future availability, as well as its survival, it is best to take only a few leaves from each plant. Where the plant is plentiful and the leaves are small, and the stem tender, the whole plant can be consumed.

Unless otherwise stated, leaves can be eaten raw and added to salads. They can also be cooked in any way cultivated greens are cooked, though wild plants are often bitter or have a strong flavor, and are best mixed with other, more palatable foods or flavored with condiments. To reduce bitterness in leaves try standing them in water overnight.

Some leaves have strong pungent or spicy flavors and are best used in small quantities for flavoring. Taste before picking any quantity.

Most leaves can be dried to store, however, drying may change the chemical composition of some plants. Check plant details for more information.

Some leaves can be stored alive for several days, even up to a week or two in a cool place, by standing them in water the way cut flowers are kept. Large leaves with stems can be stored like this individually (e.g. Ramson, Sea Beat etc.), or left on a common stalk if the leaves are small. Change the water daily and add a little sugar to help them keep fresh longer.

Leaf Curd - High Protein Food

Leaves contain in varying amounts protein, a macro nutrient difficult to obtain in the wild all year round. To get enough protein from eating leaves, one would have to chew one's way through large piles of them, and risk diarrhoea, or worse, in the process. Some plants, like trees and grasses, whose leaves are not palatable or digestible could still yield an acceptable and highly nutritious food, leaf curd, by means of a relatively simple process. Separating out the protein also leaves behind most (but not all!) nitrates, oxalic acid, tannin, saponins and other plant toxins, but also many other nutrients. This process is used to obtain mainly a high-protein food.

To make leaf curd, leaves need to be juiced first (see notes on juicing in the Information section). The highest juice yield comes from fresh leaves, picked in the morning and processed immediately. The juice is heated rapidly to boiling point. The protein coagulates (familiar from boiling eggs) and floats to the surface as small grains, which are strained from the liquid and can either be eaten in this moist grainy state if safe laves are used, or washed, pressed into tofu-like curds and dried for storage, and is later reconstituted.

An alternative method is to boil some water and dribble the juice into the boiling water where it coagulates immediately.

Large quantities of plant matter are needed to obtain a portion of leaf curd. About a laundry basket of Stinging Nettles (high protein content) will yield about a cup of curd, before pressing, as seen in the above photo.

Avoid leaves from plants known to be poisonous, e.g. leaves from any member of the genus Prunus, as well as old discolored leaves. Leaves which yield a mucilaginous juice (e.g. Rosebay Willowherb and Mallows) or producing a very fine curdled grain which is difficult to separate out, are not suitable.

The protein from the juice may also curdle in an acidic liquid. The juice of leaves which are high in acid, like Japanese Knotweed or Sorrel which contain oxalic acid, may not need heating to form grains (not tested).

Important! Read the full description of the plant in the plant list.

Agrimony, Common *Agrimonia eupatoria* - tea
Alexanders *Smyrnium olusatrum* - raw
Angelica *Angelica archangelica* - raw
Archangel, Yellow *Lamiastrum galeobdolon* - cooked
Arrowhead, Hawaii *Sagittaria sagittifolia* - raw
Aster, Sea *Aster tripolium* - cooked
Avens, Purple *Geum rivale* - flavoring, tea
Barberry, Common *Berberis vulgaris* - raw
Basil, Ascending Wild *Calamintha ascendens* - flavoring
Basil, Wild *Clinopodium vulgare* - raw, flavoring
Bear Garlic *Allium ursinum* - raw
Bedstraw, Sweetscented *Galium odoratum* - raw, flavoring
Bedstraw, Yellow Spring *Galium verum* - raw
Beech *Fagus sylvatica* - raw
Beet, Sea *Beta vulgaris* maritima - raw
Bellflower, Bluebell *Campanula rotundifolia* - raw
Bellflower, Rampion *Campanula rapunculoides* - raw
Bellflower, Giant *Campanula latifolia* - raw
Bindweed, Hedge *Calystegia sepium* - cooked
Birch, Downy *Betula pubescens* - raw
Bishop's Goutweed *Aegopodium podagraria* - raw
Bistort, Meadow *Polygonum bistorta* - raw
Bittercress *Barbarea vulgaris* - raw
Bittercress, Hairy *Cardamine hirsuta* - raw
Blackberry, Shrubby *Rubus fruticosus* - raw, young buds
Blackcurrant, European *Ribes nigrum* - cooked
Blueberry, Bog *Vaccinium uliginosum* - tea
Borage, Common *Borago officinalis* - raw
Broom, Scotch *Cytisus scoparius* - raw
Buckwheat *Fagopyrum esculentum* - raw
Bugle, Common *Ajuga reptans* - raw
Bugloss, Common Viper's *Echium vulgare* - raw
Burdock, Great *Arctium lappa* - raw
Burnet, Official *Sanguisorba officinalis* - raw
Burnet, Small *Sanguisorba minor* - raw

Buttercup, Creeping *Ranunculus repens* - cooked
Buttercup, Cursed *Ranunculus sceleratus* - cooked
Buttercup, Fig *Ranunculus ficaria* - before flowering, raw
Buttercup, Tall *Ranunculus acris* - cooked
Cabbage, Wild *Brassica oleracea* - raw
Calamus *Acorus calamus* - young - raw
Campion, Bladder *Silene vulgaris* - raw
Catsear, Common *Hypochoeris radicata* - raw
Cattail, Broadleaf *Typha latifolia* - raw
Celandine *Chelidonium majus* - leached, cooked
Celery, Wild *Apium graveolens* - raw
Chamomile, Stinking *Anthemis cotula* - flavoring
Chervil, Wild *Anthriscus sylvestris* - raw
Chickweed, Common *Stellaria media* - raw
Chickweed, Common Mouse-ear *Cerastium fontanum* - raw
Chickweed, Sticky *Cerastium glomeratum* - details unknown
Chicory *Cichorium intybus* - raw
Chives, Wild *Allium schoenoprasum* - raw
Cicely, Sweet *Myrrhis odorata* - raw
Cinquefoil, Creeping *Potentilla reptans* - raw
Cinquefoil, Silverweed *Argentina anserina* - raw
Clary, Wild *Salvia horminoides* - raw - rare plant
Cleavers *Galium aparine* - juiced, cooked -
Clover, Bird *Trigonella ornithopodioides* - raw
Clover, Red *Trifolium pratense* - raw
Clover, White *Trifolium repens* - young - raw
Clover, Yellow *Medicago lupulina* - cooked
Codlins-and-cream *Epilobium hirsutum* - details unknown
Coltsfoot *Tussilago farfara* - young - raw
Coriander *Coriandrum sativum* - raw
Cornsalad, Lewiston *Valerianella locusta* - raw
Cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccus* - tea
Cuckoo Flower *Cardamine pratensis* - raw
Cuckoo Pint *Arum maculatum* - cooked
Daisy, Corn *Chrysanthemum segetum* - cooked
Daisy, Lawn *Bellis perennis* - raw
Daisy, Ox-eye *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum* - raw
Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* - raw
Deadnettle, Henbit *Lamium amplexicaule* - raw
Deadnettle, Purple *Lamium purpureum* - raw
Deadnettle, White *Lamium album* - raw
Dock, Curly *Rumex crispus* - raw -
Dock, Patience *Rumex patientia* - details unknown
Dropwort *Filipendula vulgaris* - raw
Duckweed, Common *Lemna minor* - details unknown
False Baby's Breath *Galium mollugo* - raw
Fennel, Sweet *Foeniculum vulgare* - raw
Fig, Hottentot *Carpobrotus edulis* - raw
Fireweed *Chamerion angustifolium* - raw
Fumitory, Drug *Fumaria officinalis* - curdling agent
Gale, Sweet *Myrica gale* - flavoring
Gallant Soldier *Galinsoga parviflora* - raw
Geranium, Cut-leaved *Geranium dissectum* - raw
Goldenrod *Solidago virgaurea* - tea
Good King Henry *Chenopodium bonus-henricus* - cooked
Gooseberry *Ribes uva-crispa* - young - raw
Goosefoot, Red *Chenopodium rubrum* - cooked
Grass - leaf curd, juiced
Ground Ivy *Glechoma hederacea* - raw
Hawkbit, Bristly *Leontodon hispidus* - raw
Hawk's Beard Crepsis tectorum - young - cooked
Hawthorn, Oneseed *Crataegus monogyna* - young - raw
Hedgenettle, Common *Stachys officinalis* - tea
Herb Bennet *Geum urbanum* - flavoring, tea
Herb Sophia *Descurainia sophia* - cooked
Hollyhock *Alcea rosea* - raw
Hop, Common *Humulus lupulus* - raw
Horseradish *Armoracia rusticana* - raw
Iceland Moss *Cetraria islandica* - leach for jelly, cooked
Juniper, Common *Juniperus communis* - tea - rare plant
Kenilworth Ivy *Cymbalaria muralis* - raw
Knotgrass, Common *Polygonum aviculare* - raw
Knotweed, Curlytop *Persicaria lapathifolia* - raw
Knotweed, Japanese *Fallopia japonica* - cooked
Lady's Mantle, Hairy *Alchemilla vulgaris* - raw
Lambsquarters *Chenopodium album* - cooked
Leek, Broadleaf Wild *Allium ampeloprasum* - raw
Leek, Sand *Allium scorodoprasum* - raw
Leek, Three-cornered *Allium triquetrum* - raw
Lettuce, Bitter *Lactuca virosa* - raw
Lettuce, Miner's *Claytonia perfoliata* - raw
Lettuce, Wall *Mycelis muralis* - raw
Licorice Root *Ligusticum scoticum* - raw, flavoring
Lingonberry *Vaccinium vitis-idaea* - tea
Loosestrife, Garden *Lysimachia vulgaris* - young
Loosestrife, Purple *Lythrum salicaria* - cooked
Loosestrife, Spatulaleaf *Lythrum portula* - raw
Lungwort, Common *Pulmonaria offinialis* - raw
Maidenhair, Common *Adiantum capillis-veneris* - cooked
Mallow, Common Marsh *Althaea officinalis* - raw
Mallow, High *Malva sylvestris* - raw
Mallow, Musk *Malva moschata* - raw
Maple Acer spp. - details unknown
Maple, Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* - details unknown
Marigold, Yellow Marsh *Caltha palustris* - young - cooked
Melilot, Tall *Melilotus altissimus* - cooked
Mignonette, Yellow *Reseda lutea* - raw
Milkwort, Common *Polygala vulgaris* - tea
Mint, Apple *Mentha rotundifolia* - flavoring
Mint, Corsican *Mentha requienii* - flavoring
Mint, Eau-de-Cologne *Mentha citrata* - flavoring
Mint, Water *Mentha aquatica* - flavoring

Mint, Wild *Mentha arvensis* - flavoring
Monkey-flower, Common *Mimulus guttatus* - raw
Mustard, Black *Brassica nigra* - raw
Mustard, Charlock *Sinapis arvensis* - raw
Mustard, Field *Brassica rapa* - raw
Mustard, Garlic *Alliaria petiolata* - raw
Mustard, Hedge *Sisymbrium officinale* - raw
Mustard, White *Sinapis alba* - raw
Nettle, Stinging *Urtica dioica* - cooked, leaf curd, juiced
Nipplewort *Lapsana communis* - raw
Old-man-in-the-spring *Senecio vulgaris* - raw
Onion, Largeflower *Allium macropetalum* - raw
Orache, Spear-leaved *Atriplex hastata* - cooked
Oregano *Origanum vulgare* - flavoring
Orpine *Hylotelephium telephium* - raw
Ox-tongue, Bristly *Picris echioides* - raw
Oyster Plant *Mertensia maritima* - raw
Parsley Piert *Aphanes arvensis* - raw
Parsnip, Wild *Pastinaca sativa* - cooked
Pea, Beach *Lathyrus japonicus* - raw
Pennycress, Field *Thlaspi arvense* - raw
Pennyroyal *Mentha pulegium* - flavoring
Peppermint *Mentha piperita* - flavoring
Pepperweed, Broadleaved *Lepidium latifolium* - raw, flavoring
Pimpernel, Scarlet *Anagallis arvensis* - raw
Pine Pinus spp - tea
Plantain, Buck's Horn *Plantago coronopus* - raw
Plantain, Narrowleaf *Plantago lanceolata* - raw
Poppy, Corn *Papaver rhoeas* - raw (before flowering)
Primrose *Primula L.* - raw
Primrose, Cowslip *Primula veris* - raw
Purslane, Sea *Atriplex portulacoides* - raw
Quackgrass *Elytrigia repens* - leaf curd, juiced
Queen of the Meadow *Filipendula ulmaria* - cooked, tea
Radish, Wild *Raphanus raphanistrum* - raw
Rampion *Campanula rapunculus* - raw
Rape *Brassica napus* - raw
Raspberry, American Red *Rubus idaeus* - tea
Redshank *Polygonum persicaria* - raw
Reed, Common *Phragmites australis* - partly unfolded - cooked
Rhubarb, Monk's *Rumex alpinus* - details unknown
Rose, Dog *Rosa canina* - tea
Rose of Sharon *Hibiscus syriacus* - raw
Ryegrass, Perennial *Lolium perenne* - leaf curd, juiced
Samphire, Rock *Crithmum maritimum* - raw
Saxifrage, Golden *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium* - raw
Sea Kale *Crambe maritima* - raw
Selfheal, Common *Prunella vulgaris* - raw
Shepherd's Purse *Capsella bursa-pastoris* - raw
Sorrel, Garden *Rumex acetosa* - raw
Sowthistle, Common *Sonchus oleraceus* - raw
Sowthistle, Field *Sonchus arvensis* - raw
Sow Thistle, Spiny *Sonchus asper* - raw
Spear Saltbush *Atriplex patula* - raw
Spearmint *Mentha spicata* - flavoring
Speedwell, European *Veronica beccabunga* - raw
Speedwell, Germander *Veronica chamaedrys* - tea
Spoonwort *Cochlearia officinalis* - raw - high in Vitamin C
Spruce Picea spp. - raw
Stonecrop, Goldmoss *Sedum acre* - raw
Stonecrop, Jenny's *Sedum reflexum* - raw
Stork's-bill, Redstem *Erodium cicutarium* - raw
Strawberry, Woodland *Fragaria vesca* - raw
Sweet Clover, Yellow *Melilotus officinalis* - raw, flavoring
Swinecress, Greater *Coronopus squamatus* - cooked
Tansy, Common *Tanacetum vulgare* - flavoring
Tare, Tiny *Vicia hirsuta* - cooked
Thistle, Bull *Cirsium vulgare* - cooked
Thistle, Canada *Cirsium arvense* - raw
Thistle, Marsh *Cirsium palustre* - raw
Thistle, (Blessed) Milk *Silybum marianum* - raw
Thistle, Prickly Russian *Salsola pestifer* - raw
Thrift *Armeria maritima* - cooked
Turnip, St. Anthony's *Ranunculus bulbosus* - cooked
Valerian, Garden *Valeriana officinalis* - flavoring
Valerian, Red *Centranthus ruber* - raw
Vetch, Bird *Vicia cracca* - cooked
Vetch, Garden *Vicia sativa* - cooked
Violet, Sweet *Viola odorata* - raw
Water-lily, Yellow *Nuphar lutea* - cooked
Watercress *Nasturtium officinale* - raw
Whitetop *Lepidium draba* (syn. *Cardaria draba*) - flavoring
Whitlow Grass, Wall *Draba muralis* - raw - high in Vit. C
Whortleberry *Vaccinium myrtillus* - tea
Wintergreen, Snowline *Pyrola minor* - raw
Woodsorrel, Common *Oxalis acetosella* - raw
Wormwood, Common *Artemisia vulgaris* - raw
Yarrow *Achillea millefolium* - raw

Stem

Bark

The inner bark of some trees can be eaten to obtain carbohydrates. It is best eaten cooked and ground up. Remove narrow vertical strips of the outer bark near the base of the tree and strip off the inner bark with a knife. This is easiest in the spring when the sap is rising when it is also most palatable with the raised sugar content. Avoid ring-barking the tree as this will kill it. The bark of some trees, including some common ones (e.g. trees and shrubs of the Prunus genus), is toxic. **This is famine food only.**

Suitable trees:
Aspen, Birch, Maples, Pine, Poplar, Spruce, Willow (caution: contains salicylic acid, avoid if sensitive to Aspirin)

Herb stems

Where the leaves of a plant are edible and the stem is soft, it may be eaten together with the leaves. The stems of some plants are soft when young, but turn woody later, and can only be consumed as shoots, or when their outer skin is removed.

Remove tough fibrous parts, and any thorns or prickles, barbs or tough hairs, as they may not soften when cooked.
See also the Sap section.

Important! Read the full description of the plant in the plant list.

Agrimony, Common *Agrimonia eupatoria* - tea
Alexanders *Smyrnium olusatrum* - raw
Angelica *Angelica archangelica* - raw
Archangel, Yellow *Lamiastrum galeobdolon* - shoot - cooked
Arrowhead, Hawaii *Sagittaria sagittifolia* - shoot - cooked
Asparagus *Asparagus officinalis* - shoot - raw
Aster, Sea *Aster tripolium* - cooked
Bellflower, Giant *Campanula latifolia* - shoot - raw
Birch, Downy *Betula pubescens* - inner bark - flour
Blackberry, Shrubby *Rubus fruticosus* - raw, young, peeled -
Bur-reed, Simplestem *Sparganium erectum* - base cooked
Burdock, Greater *Arctium lappa* - young - raw
Burnet, Small *Sanguisorba minor* - young - raw
Burnet, Official *Sanguisorba officinalis* - young - raw
Butter and Egg *Linaria vulgaris* - shoot - cooked
Calamus *Acorus calamus* - shoot - raw
Campion, Bladder *Silene vulgaris* - shoot - raw
Cattail, Broadleaf *Typha latifolia* - shoot - raw
Chamomile, German *Matricaria recutita* - shoot
Chamomile, Roman *Chamaemelum nobile* - shoot - flavoring, tea
Chervil, Turnip-rooted *Chaerophyllum bulbosum* - shoot - raw
Chickweed, Common *Stellaria media* - raw
Chickweed, Common Mouse-ear *Cerastium fontanum* young - cooked
Chickweed, Sticky *Cerastium glomeratum* - shoot - details unknown
Cinquefoil, Silverweed *Argentina anserina* - young shoots - raw
Clematis, Evergreen *Clematis vitalba* - shoot - cooked
Cuckoo Flower *Cardamine pratensis* - shoot - raw
Daisy, Corn *Chrysanthemum segetum* - shoots - cooked
Devilsbit *Succisa pratensis* - shoots - raw
Dock, Curly *Rumex crispus* - raw
Evening Primrose, Common *Oenothera biennis* - shoot - raw
Evening Primrose, Redsepal *Oenothera glazioviana* - shoot - raw
Fennel, Sweet *Foeniculum vulgare* - raw
Fireweed *Chamerion angustifolium* - young shoots - raw, later - cooked
Fumitory, Drug *Fumaria officinalis* - curdling agent
Gallant Soldier *Galinsoga parviflora* - raw
Glasswort, Slender *Salicornia europaea* - shoot - cooked
Gorse, Common *Ulex europaeus* - shoot tips - tea
Heather *Calluna vulgaris* - shoots - tea
Hedgenettle, Marsh *Stachys palustris* - shoots - cooked
Herb Sophia *Descurainia sophia* - shoot - cooked
Hollyhock *Alcea rosea* - inner - raw
Hop, Common *Humulus lupulus* - shoot - cooked
Horsetail, Field *Equisetum arvense* - fertile - cooked
Jack-go-to-bed-at-noon *Tragopogon pratensis* - shoot - raw
Knotweed, Japanese *Fallopia japonica* - shoot - cooked
Licorice Root *Ligusticum scoticum* - shoot - raw, flavoring
Melilot, Tall *Melilotus altissimus* - shoot - cooked
Mustard, Charlock *Sinapis arvensis* - cooked
Mustard, Hedge *Sisymbrium officinale* - raw
Parsnip, Cow *Heracleum maximum* - shoot - raw
Pyrenese Star of Bethlehem *Ornithogalum pyrenaicum* - shoots - cooked
Raspberry, American Red *Rubus idaeus* - young - cooked
Reed, Common *Phragmites australis* - shoot - raw
Salsify *Tragopogon porrifolius* - shoot - raw
Samphire, Rock *Crithmum maritimum* - shoot - raw
Sea Kale *Crambe maritima* - shoots - raw
Sowthistle, Common *Sonchus oleraceus* - peeled - cooked
Sowthistle, Field *Sonchus arvensis* - shoots - cooked
Sow Thistle, Spiny *Sonchus asper* - raw
Spruce Picea spp. - inner bark - cooked
Sweet Clover, Yellow *Melilotus officinalis* - shoot - cooked
Tare, Tiny Vicia hirsuta - shoot - cooked
Thistle, Bull Cirsium vulgare - cooked -
Thistle, Canada Cirsium arvense - peeled - cooked -
Thistle, Marsh Cirsium palustre - raw -
Thistle, (Blessed) Milk Silybum marianum - peeled - raw -
Thistle, Prickly Russian Salsola pestifer - shoot - raw
Vetch, Bird Vicia cracca - shoots - cooked
Vetch, Garden Vicia sativa - shoots - cooked -
Water-lily, Yellow Nuphar lutea - cooked -

Sap

Trees

Some trees yield a sugar-rich sap which can be drunk raw, fermented into alcoholic beverages or gently boiled down to syrup (10 liters or more sap makes approx. 1 liter syrup).

The most copious flow is approximately during the first half of March, with up to 2 liters per day. Yield varies with species, as does the sugar content.

Fresh sap can spoil within a day or two (becomes cloudy and sour). Store syrup in an airtight container and place in a cool place. This syrup can become moldy. To store for extended periods, the syrup should be sterilized. Adding 4-6 cloves and a little cinnamon may help to preserve it longer (untested by author).

Yield is best when nights are frosty, and days are warm and sunny.

Drilling Method

Drill a hole in the lower trunk, approximately 30mm deep, angled slightly upwards and the diameter of the tube used (10-20mm) giving a tight fit to prevent leakage. Insert one end of some plastic tube partway into the hole and the other end into a container, covering the opening with cloth to exclude leaves, insects etc., but allowing air to be expelled as the container fills up.

To protect the tree from damage, insert a tight-fitting wooden plug after tapping is complete, and seal any leaks with wax or proprietary sealing compound. Do not tap for more than two days, and tap the same tree every other year maximum. Tap only mature trees.

Twig Method

The easy way to tap a tree is by simply cutting, or even breaking off the end of some thin branches. Put the ends of the branches into the neck of a bottle, tie the bottle to the branches and gently weigh them down to make sure the bottle hangs in as upright a position as possible. Branches want to point upwards. You can tie a small log or other weight to the branches, tie them to vegetation below or lean a long stick of the right weight onto the branches to make them bend down.

Easier still, is to use a plastic bag instead of a bottle, but make sure first that the bag does not leak, or that there are no nearby branches or sharp objects which can puncture the bag, even in a breeze. Secure it with string or an elastic band.

There is no need for any sealing after the tapping. The small twigs will heal over by themselves. However, bear in mind that they will continue to drip for several days during the height of the short flow season. Towards the end of the flow season they will stop within a day or less.

This method is suitable for any tree where the branches are easy to reach, and can be done on younger trees.

For more in-depth information on tree sap harvesting and processing go to this web article http://bit.ly/19GL0P1 (link shortened for easier copying) and also follow the links on the page and comments below the post.

Other Plants

All plants will contain some sap in their tissue which can be extracted as juice through various juicing methods, provided the plant is non-toxic. One plant, in particular, will also yield a sugar-rich sap from its stem - the Common Reed, Phragmitis australis.

Important! Read the full description of the plant in the plant list.

Birch Betula spp. - raw
Maple* Acer spp. - raw, syrup
Reed, Common *Phragmites australis* - raw
Maple, Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* - raw, syrup
Walnut, English* *Juglans regia* - raw, syrup
Larch spp.

* high in sugar

Root

Including other underground parts: bulbs, tubers, rhizomes etc.

Roots are the energy storehouse of plants and often store extra reserves during dormancy (perennial herbs). They are often rich in carbohydrates, a macro nutrient difficult to find throughout the year in nature in quantities needed for sustained energy. Unlike seeds, they usually evade being eaten by animals.

Although many roots are edible, and those of perennial plants are available all year round, in practice there are several problems with collecting them. It is difficult to identify dormant roots without the rest of the plant, unless very distinct. They are often very tough and small, especially when the energy is in the growing plant. It is illegal to dig up plants without the permission of the land owner, and once the root is dug up, the plant is effectively destroyed. However, their rich nutrient content sometimes justifies collection.

Roots should be well scrubbed, especially when they are eaten raw. They are digested most easily cooked. Tough, or very bitter skin should be removed. To reduce cooking time cut into small pieces. Some roots contain toxic substances, and where indicated, should be soaked and cooked in several changes of water, ideally after pulping the root and containing the pulp in a muslin bag.

The most efficient way to pulp small roots for juicing is crushing. Larger roots can also be juiced by crushing or by grating teeth as in centrifugal type juicers, or the 'Champion' juicer, which also has tiny teeth, but arranged along a cylinder.

It is also possible to make a fizzy lactic soda drink - a kind of root beer or variation on ginger ale, with roots. Roots carry anaerobic lactic bacteria which are beneficial to health. For more information and a link for step-by-step instructions read the lactofermentation sub-section in the Information section.

Roots are best collected

- if the plant is prolific, invasive, or is to be removed for some reason anyway
- in a survival situation (if the benefit outweighs the energy expended in digging)
- when the benefit outweighs the loss of the plant
- when identification is certain
- when the plant has stored its reserves for dormancy, but when it is starting to emerge or is dying down for the winter, so that the above ground parts help to identify it
- from plants with relatively large roots and storage bodies

The roots of some plants are able to regenerate from small fragments (e.g. Japanese Knotweed). When digging for roots of invasive perennials, remove all fragments and destroy by safe means, such as burning or maceration in water until they are liquefied.

Important! Read the full description of the plant in the plant list.

Roots shown in color indicate those which are known to be more than just thread-size. However, others may be worth investigating.

Alexanders *Smyrnium olusatrum* - cooked
Angelica *Angelica archangelica* - cooked
Arrowhead, Hawaii *Sagittaria sagittifolia* - avoid, rare
Arum, Bog *Calla palustris* - cooked
Avens, Purple *Geum rivale* - flavoring, tea
Bear Garlic *Allium ursinum* - bulb - raw
Beet, Sea *Beta vulgaris maritima* - raw
Bellflower, Giant *Campanula latifolia* - raw
Bellflower, Rampion *Campanula rapunculoides* - raw
Bindweed, Hedge *Calystegia sepium* - cooked, starch
Bistort, Meadow *Polygonum bistorta* - raw
Blackberry, Shrubby *Rubus fruticosus* - cooked
Bogbean *Menyanthes trifoliata* - cooked
Bracken *Pteridium aquilium* - cooked
Bulrush, Cosmopolitan *Scirpus maritimus* - flour
Bur-reed, Simplestem *Sparganium erectum* - cooked
Burdock, Greater *Arctium lappa* - raw
Buttercup, Creeping *Ranunculus repens* - cooked
Buttercup, Fig *Ranunculus ficaria* - after plant has withered, cooked
Calamus *Acorus calamus* - peeled - raw
Cattail, Broadleaf *Typha latifolia* - raw
Celery, Wild *Apium graveolens* - cooked
Chervil, Wild *Anthriscus sylvestris* - cooked-
Chervil, Turnip-rooted *Chaerophyllum bulbosum* - raw
Chicory *Cichorium intybus* - cooked, roasted
Chives, Wild *Allium schoenoprasum* - raw
Cicely, Sweet *Myrrhis odorata* - raw
Cinquefoil, Erect *Potentilla erecta* - leached and cooked
Cinquefoil, Silverweed *Argentina anserina* - raw, starch
Clover, Red *Trifolium pratense* - cooked
Clover, White *Trifolium repens* - cooked
Coltsfoot *Tussilago farfara* - raw
Coriander *Coriandrum sativum* - cooked, flavoring
Cuckoo Pint *Arum maculatum* - leached and cooked
Daisy, Ox-eye *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum* - raw
Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* - raw
Dropwort *Filipendula vulgaris* - raw
Eryngo, Seaside *Eryngium maritimum* - raw - rare plant
Evening Primrose, Common *Oenothera biennis* - cooked
Evening Primrose, Redsepal *Oenothera glazioviana* - cooked
Fennel, Sweet *Foeniculum vulgare* - cooked
Figwort, Woodland *Scrophularia nodosa* - cooked
Fireweed *Chamerion angustifolium* - raw
Galingale *Cyperus longus* - flavoring - rare plant
Geranium, Cut-leaved *Geranium dissectum* - cooked
Gypsywort *Lycopus europaeus* - raw
Hawkbit, Bristly *Leontodon hispidus* - roasted, beverage
Hedgenettle, Common *Stachys officinalis* - raw
Hedgenettle, Marsh *Stachys palustris* - raw
Herb Bennet *Geum urbanum* - flavoring, tea
Hollyhock *Alcea rosea* - starch
Hop, Common *Humulus lupulus* - details unknown
Horseradish *Armoracia rusticana* - flavoring
Horsetail, Field *Equisetum arvense* - cooked
Jack-go-to-bed-at-noon *Tragopogon pratensis* - raw
Knotweed, Japanese *Fallopia japonica* - cooked
Lady's Mantle, Hairy *Alchemilla vulgaris* - cooked

Leek, Broadleaf Wild Allium ampeloprasum - raw
Leek, Sand *Allium scorodoprasum* - raw
Leek, Three-cornered *Allium triquetrum* - raw-
Lettuce, Miner's *Claytonia perfoliata* - raw
Licorice Root *Ligusticum scoticum* - raw, flavoring -
Loosestrife, Purple *Lythrum salicaria* - cooked
Mallow, Common *Marsh Althaea officinalis* - raw
Marigold, Yellow *Marsh Caltha palustris* - cooked
Milkvetch, Licorice *Astragalus glycyphyllus* - raw, condensed juice
Mustard, Field *Brassica rapa* - raw
Onion, Largeflower *Allium macropetalum* - raw
Orpine *Hylotelephium telephium* - cooked
Oyster Plant *Mertensia maritima* - details unknown
Parsnip, Cow *Heracleum Maximum* - cooked
Parsnip, Wild *Pastinaca sativa* - raw
Pepperweed, Broadleaved *Lepidium latifolium* - raw, flavoring
Plantain, European Water *Alisma plantago-aquatica* - leached and cooked
Pond-lily, Yellow *Nuphar advena* - raw
Quackgrass *Elytrigia repens* - cooked
Queen Ann's Lace *Daucus carota* - cooked
Queen of the Meadow *Filipendula ulmaria* - cooked
Radish, Wild *Raphanus raphanistrum* - raw
Rampion *Campanula rapunculus* - raw
Raspberry, American Red *Rubus idaeus* - cooked
Reed, Common *Phragmites australis* - cooked
Restharrow, Common *Ononis repens* - raw
Rose of Sharon *Hibiscus syriacus* - details unknown
Rush, Flowering *Butomus umbellatus* - cooked
Salsify *Tragopogon porrifolius* - raw - safety unknown
Sea Kale *Crambe maritima* - raw
Shepherd's Purse *Capsella bursa-pastoris* - raw
Sleepydick *Ornithogalum umbellatum* - bulb - raw
Sorrel, Garden *Rumex acetosa* - cooked
Sow-thistle, Common *Sonchus oleraceus* - cooked
Sowthistle, Field *Sonchus arvensis* - cooked, roasted
Sow Thistle, Spiny *Sonchus asper* - cooked
Strawberry, Woodland *Fragaria vesca* - cooked
Sweet Clover, Yellow *Melilotus officinalis* - details unknown
Swinecress, Greater *Coronopus squamatus* - cooked
Thistle, Bull *Cirsium vulgare* - cooked
Thistle, Canada *Cirsium arvense* - raw
Thistle, Marsh *Cirsium palustre* - young - cooked
Thistle, (Blessed) Milk *Silybum marianum* - raw
Thrift *Armeria maritima* - details unknown
Turnip, St. Anthony's *Ranunculus bulbosus* - cooked
Valerian, Red *Centranthus ruber* - cooked
Water-lily, White *Nymphaea alba* - cooked
Water-lily, Yellow *Nuphar lutea* - cooked

Flowers

Flowers, unless very plentiful, are best left for insects who depend on them for survival, and to allow the plant to seed or develop fruit. Some flowers may be the sole food of important or even rare insects, whilst they are mostly of negligible value to humans, and many plants, especially annuals, rely on flowers to set seed to ensure the genetic survival.

Important! Read the full description of the plant in the plant list.

Agrimony, Common *Agrimonia eupatoria* - tea
Alexanders *Smyrnium olusatrum* - buds - raw
Bear Garlic *Allium ursinum* - raw
Bellflower, Giant *Campanula latifolia* - raw
Birch, Downy *Betula pubescens* - raw
Bittercress *Barbarea vulgaris* - buds - cooked-
Bittercress, Hairy *Cardamine hirsuta* - raw
Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* - raw
Borage, Common *Borago officinalis* - raw-
Cattail, Broadleaf *Typha latifolia* - immature, pollen - raw
Chamomile, German *Matricaria recutita* - tea
Chamomile, Roman *Chamaemelum nobile* - flavoring, tea
Chicory *Cichorium intybus* - raw
Chives, Wild *Allium schoenoprasum* - raw
Clary, Wild *Salvia horminoides* - raw - rare plant
Clover, Red *Trifolium pratense* - raw
Clover, White *Trifolium repens* - raw
Coltsfoot *Tussilago farfara* - flavoring
Cornsalad, Lewiston *Valerianella locusta* - raw
Creeping Jenny *Lysimachia nummularia* - tea
Cuckoo Flower *Cardamine pratensis* - bud - raw
Daisy, Lawn *Bellis perennis* - raw
Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* - raw
Deadnettle, White *Lamium album* - raw
Elderberry, Black *Sambucus nigra* - raw
Fennel, Sweet *Foeniculum vulgare* - raw
Feverfew *Tanacetum parthenium* - flavoring
Fireweed *Chamerion angustifolium* - buds - raw
Gallant Soldier *Galinsoga parviflora* - raw
Gorse, Common *Ulex europaeus* - pickled
Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* - tea
Hedgenettle, Common *Stachys officinalis* - tea
Hollyhock *Alcea rosea* - raw
Hop, Common *Humulus lupulus* - female - details unknown
Jack-go-to-bed-at-noon *Tragopogon pratensis* - raw
Kidneyvetch, Common *Anthyllis vulneraria* - tea
Knapweed, Lesser *Centaurea nigra* - petals - raw
Leek, Broadleaf *Wild Allium ampeloprasum* - raw
Leek, Sand *Allium scorodoprasum* - raw
Leek, Three-cornered *Allium triquetrum* - raw
Lettuce, Miner's *Claytonia perfoliata* - raw
Licorice Root *Ligusticum scoticum* - raw, flavoring
Mallow, High *Malva sylvestris* - raw
Mallow, Musk *Malva moschata* - raw
Mayweed, Disc *Matricaria discoidea* - raw, tea
Mustard, Black *Brassica nigra* - buds - cooked
Mustard, Charlock *Sinapis arvensis* - cooked
Mustard, Garlic *Alliaria petiolata* - raw
Onion, Largeflower *Allium macropetalum* - raw
Oregon Grape *Mahonia aquifolium* - raw
Oyster Plant *Mertensia maritima* - raw
Primrose *Primula L.* - raw
Primrose, Cowslip *Primula veris* - raw-
Queen of the Meadow *Filipendula ulmaria* - flavoring, tea
Radish, Wild *Raphanus raphanistrum* - raw
Rose, Dog *Rosa canina* - raw
Rose of Sharon *Hibiscus syriacus* - raw
Salsify *Tragopogon porrifolius* - raw - safety unknown
Sea Kale *Crambe maritima* - bud - cooked
Sorrel, Garden *Rumex acetosa* - cooked
Spruce Picea spp. - male: raw, female: cooked
St. John's Wort, Common *Hypericum perforatum* - tea
Tansy *Tanacetum vulgare* - flavoring
Thistle, Bull *Cirsium vulgare* - bud - cooked -
Thistle, (Blessed) Milk *Silybum marianum* - bud - cooked
Violet, Sweet *Viola odorata* - raw
Woodsorrel, Common *Oxalis acetosella* - raw

Fruit

Most fruit wants to be eaten in order to disperse the seed. The only ethical question is, who should eat it? Ownership and fair use would answer the question about humans, however, a lot of wildlife relies on fruit for survival, and it is therefor unfair to strip a plant, even if there is no human competition. Foxes, for example, will eat blackberries almost as a staple during fruiting periods, I see the seed-speckled purple evidence every late summer!

Fruit is high in vitamins and minerals, and some (especially the blue-black types) are high in antioxidant flavenoids, as well as sugar for energy.

Very palatable fruit may be gathered in the wild, often escapees from gardens, and may be found well removed from human habitation where birds take the seed into the depth of the countryside, or where a cottage may have stood many years ago.

Fruit from wild plants can be preserved in the same way as domesticated varieties. Berries may be dried whole like raisins whilst larger fruit should be thinly sliced before placing in a dehydrator, solar or otherwise. Sliced fruit may also be dried by stringing on thin twine and hung in a warm, well ventilated place. This may take up to ten days, and the fruit should be protected from moisture and insects. Fruit picked for jellies should be only just ripe.

Making Fruit Leather from Haws

This method was shown on TV by British bushcraft expert Ray Mears. Place raw haws in a large bowl and crush between hands. The pulp should be semi-liquid. If it is too dry add a few drops of water. Skim skins and stones with hands and squeeze out remaining juicy pulp. After a few minutes it will start to firm up into a jelly. Haws are high in pectin, which helps this firming up process. When firm enough cut thin slices and dry these in the sun, a well ventilated warm place or in a dehydrator.

However, Ray Mears has strong hands, and it looked easy when he did it, but, like me, you may find it not quite so easy. An untried method, which probably works well, and allows the nutritious skins to be included, is to use a colander or other hole (rather than wire) sieve with holes only just smaller than the seeds. Press the haws through holes and proceed as above. A small amount of cider vinegar or lemon juice mixed in may prevent oxidation where the fruit pulp turns dark on exposure to air.

This process may also work with other pulpy fruit (untried).

Making Raw Syrup

The juice of fruit can be drawn from it by sugar which is hydrophilic. This process preserves more of the nutrients. It works best with berries, especially soft berries. Rose hips should be fully ripe. It also makes very tart berries more palatable.

Prick the fruit a few times with a needle or other clean, pointed object. Layer the fruit in a jar with a generous sprinkling of sugar between each layer. A tall, narrow jar works better than a wide shallow one. It reduces the surface area where mould can form. As the juice is drawn it dissolves the sugar and forms a syrup which surrounds the fruit. A covering of syrup helps to prevent mould forming on the surface. If it does form, remove and add concentrated sugar water to cover the fruit.

Leave in a cool place until the liquid surrounding the fruit is a rich color, having absorbed much of the juice. The syrup can be used to flavor drinks or desserts, or used as a remedy or tonic where appropriate. A healthy fizzy lactic drink can be made with other additions. See the Lactofermentation sub-section in the Information section. The fruit may also be eaten, though check the details of individual plants for any exceptions where seeds may be poisonous or irritant.

As a rough guide for making sugar water for syrup use sugar and water in equal weights.

Always use clean containers and tools, although sterilization is not necessary. Cover jar to exclude insects and dust.

Honey is not suitable as a sugar substitute if the syrup is used to make a lactic drink, as honey is slightly antiseptic and prevents the lactic bacilli from doing their job.

Important! Read the full description of the plant in the plant list.

Arum, Bog *Calla palustris* - cooked
Barberry, Common *Berberis vulgaris* - raw
Blackberry, Shrubby *Rubus fruticosus* - raw
Blackcurrant, European *Ribes nigrum* - raw

Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* - raw, jelly, flavoring, syrup
Blueberry, Bog *Vaccinium uliginosum* - raw
Buckthorn, Sea *Hippophae rhamnoides* - raw
Checkertree *Sorbus torminalis* - raw - nearly rotten
Cherry, Cornelian *Cornus mas* - raw
Cherry, European Bird *Prunus padus* - raw
Cherry, Sour *Prunus cerasus* - raw
Cherry, Sweet *Prunus avium* - raw
Chess-apple *Sorbus aria* - raw - when nearly rotten
Cloudberry *Rubus chamaemorus* - raw
Cornel, Lapland *Cornus suecica* - raw
Crabapple *Malus sylvestris* - raw
Cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccus* - raw
Crowberry, Black *Empetrum nigrum* - raw
Currant, Cultivated *Ribes rubrum* - raw
Dewberry, European *Rubus caesius* - raw
Dogwood, Common *Cornus sanguinea* - cooked
Elderberry, Black *Sambucus nigra* - raw
Fig, Hottentot *Carpobrotus edulis* - raw
Gale, Sweet *Myrica gale* - flavoring
Gooseberry *Ribes uva-crispa* - raw-
Guelder Rose *Viburnum opulus* - raw
Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* - raw
Juniper, Common *Juniperus communis* - flavoring, tea - rare
Lingonberry *Vaccinium vitis-idaea* - raw
Medlar *Mespilus germanica* - raw - when nearly rotten
Mountain Ash *Sorbus aucuparia* - cooked, jelly
Mulberry Morus ssp - raw
Oregon Grape *Mahonia aquifolium* - raw
Pear, Common *Pyrus communis* - nearly rotten, cooked
Plum, Cherry *Prunus cerasifera* - raw
Plum, European *Prunus domestica* - raw
Raspberry, American *Red Rubus idaeus* - raw
Rose, Dog *Rosa canina* - raw
Snowberry, Common *Symphoricarpos albus* - raw
Strawberry, Woodland *Fragaria vesca* - raw
Strawberry Tree *Arbutus unedo* - raw
Wintergreen, Snowline *Pyrola minor* - details unknown
Whortleberry *Vaccinium myrtillus* - raw

Seed

Seeds, including nuts, are a good source of carbohydrates (including fat) and protein, macro nutrients which are difficult to find in plant sources. Seeds from herbs are sometimes aromatic and best used as spices. Taste before harvesting any quantity.

Keep in a dry place, remove any outer casing, especially green fleshy parts which may rot. Some green outer parts, like the leafy cap of the hazel nut, may also draw moisture from the seed as it transpires, leaving a shriveled nut inside.

Some trees and shrubs only produce nuts every few years and yield can vary when they do crop. It is best to gather these nuts only in good years unless in real need, as wildlife may depend on the crop for survival.

Wild grass seeds are too small to bother with for flour. Most grains have an outer husk which needs to be removed.

Very small seeds just pass through the body and cannot be digested unless well chewed or mechanically cracked with a seed/grain mill or a mortar and pestle, which also releases more flavor.

Sprouting

Sprouted seeds are more nutritious, and often easier to digest than the dormant seed. In practice, however, not all seeds of wild plants are suitable or safe to sprout. Many wild plant seeds need to undergo changes in temperature, have specific light requirements and long germination periods which makes sprouting a complicated and drawn out process. Only those seeds which germinate within less than a week and without complex requirements are suitable.

If the seed, stem and leaves are considered safe to eat, then the sprouted seed is safe as well.

Seeds of pulses, which are often not safe to eat raw, may be safe after sprouting.

Important! Read the full description of the plant in the plant list.

Agrimony, Common *Agrimonia eupatoria* - cooked
Angelica *Angelica archangelica* - flavoring
Arum, Bog *Calla palustris* - cooked
Barley, Mouse *Hordeum murinum* - flour
Bedstraw, Yellow Spring *Galium verum* - details unknown
Beech *Fagus sylvatica* - raw, oil
Birch, Downy *Betula pubescens* - flour
Bistort, Meadow *Polygonum bistorta* - raw
Bittercress, Hairy *Cardamine hirsuta* - sprouted, though small and fiddly
Broom, Scotch *Cytisus scoparius* - roasted
Buckwheat *Fagopyrum esculentum* - raw, sprouted
Bulrush, Cosmopolitan *Scirpus maritimus* - flour
Cattail, Broadleaf *Typha latifolia* - raw, flour
Celery, Wild *Apium graveolens* - flavoring
Cherry, Cornelian *Cornus mas* - roasted
Cherry, European Bird *Prunus padus* - raw, if not bitter
Cherry, Sour *Prunus cerasus* - raw, if not bitter
Cherry, Sweet *Prunus avium* - raw, if not bitter
Chestnut, European *Castanea sativa* - cooked
Chestnut, Horse *Aesculus hippocastanum* - fully ripe, leached and cooked
Chickweed, Common *Stellaria media* - cooked
Cleavers *Galium aparine* - roasted, sprouted
Clover, Red *Trifolium pratense* - sprouted
Clover, White *Trifolium repens* - flour
Clover, Yellow *Medicago lupulina* - sprouted
Coriander *Coriandrum sativum* - cooked, flavoring
Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* - raw
Dock, Curly *Rumex crispus* - raw
Evening Primrose, Common *Oenothera biennis* - cooked, oil
Evening Primrose, Redsepel *Oenothera glazioviana* - raw
Fennel, Sweet *Foeniculum vulgare* - flavouring, sprouted
Filbert, Common *Corylus avellana* - raw
Flag, Yellow *Iris pseudacorus* - cooked
Glasswort, Slender *Salicornia europaea* - oil
Goosefoot, Red *Chenopodium rubrum* - sprouted
Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* - roasted
Hedgenettle, Marsh *Stachys palustris* - details unknown
Herb Sophia *Descurainia sophia* - raw, sprouted
Hop, Common *Humulus lupulus* - details unknown
Hornpoppy, Yellow *Glaucium flavum* - oil
Horseradish *Armoracia rusticana* - sprouted
Jewelweed, Ornamental *Impatiens glandulifera* - raw
Juniper, Common *Juniperus communis* - roasted, beverage rare plant
Knotgrass, Common *Polygonum aviculare* - raw
Knotweed, Curlytop *Persicaria lapathifolia* - raw
Knotweed, Japanese *Fallopia japonica* - raw
Lambsquarters *Chenopodium album* - sprouted
Lettuce, Bitter *Lactuca virosa* - oil
Licorice Root *Ligusticum scoticum* - raw, flavoring
Mallow, High *Malva sylvestris* - raw
Mallow, Musk *Malva moschata* - raw-
Maple Acer spp. - details unknown
Maple, Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* - details unknown
Melilot, Tall *Melilotus altissimus* - pods - cooked
Mustard, Black *Brassica nigra* - raw, flavoring
Mustard, Charlock *Sinapis arvensis* - sprouted, flavoring
Mustard, Garlic *Alliaria petiolata* - pods - raw
Mustard, Hedge *Sisymbrium officinale* - flavoring
Mustard, White *Sinapis alba* - sprouted, flavoring
Nettle, Stinging *Urtica dioica* - sprouted
Oak *Quercus robur* - leached and cooked
Orache, Spear-leaved *Atriplex hastata* - cooked
Parsnip, Wild *Pastinaca sativa* - flavoring
Pea, Beach *Lathyrus japonicus* - cooked
Pennycress, Field *Thlaspi arvense* - flavoring, sprouted
Pepperweed, Broadleaved *Lepidium latifolium* - raw, flavoring
Pine Pinus spp - raw
Plantain, Narrowleaf *Plantago lanceolata* - cooked
Plum, Cherry *Prunus cerasifera* - raw, if not bitter
Plum, European *Prunus domestica* - raw, if not bitter
Pond-lily, Yellow *Nuphar advena* - raw
Poppy, Corn *Papaver rhoeas* - raw
Quackgrass *Elytrigia repens* - details unknown
Radish, Wild *Raphanus raphanistrum* - oil- young pods, raw
Rape *Brassica napus* - oil, flavoring

Redshank *Polygonum persicaria* - raw
Reed, Common *Phragmites australis* - raw
Rose, Dog *Rosa canina* - details unknown
Rush, Flowering *Butomus umbellatus* - details unknown
Ryegrass, Perennial *Lolium perenne* - flour
Salsify *Tragopogon porrifolius* - sprouted - safety unknown
Samphire, Rock *Crithmum maritimum* - pods - pickled
Sedge, Hanging *Carex pendula* - if free from ergot cooked, flour
Shepherd's Purse *Capsella bursa-pastoris* - raw
Sorrel, Garden *Rumex acetosa* - raw
Spear Saltbush *Atriplex patula* - cooked
Spruce Picea spp. - raw
Sweet Clover, Yellow *Melilotus officinalis* - pods - raw, flavoring
Swinecress, Greater *Coronopus squamatus* - sprouted
Tare, Tiny *Vicia hirsuta* - cooked
Thistle, Bull *Cirsium vulgare* - raw, sprouted
Thistle, Creeping *Cirsium arvense* - sprouted
Thistle, Marsh *Cirsium palustre* - sprouted
Thistle, (Blessed) Milk *Silybum marianum* - roasted, sprouted
Thistle, Prickly Russian *Salsola pestifer* - cooked, sprouted
Trefoil, Bird's-foot *Lotus corniculatus* - sprouted
Valerian, Garden *Valeriana officinalis* - details unknown
Vetch, Bird *Vicia cracca* - cooked
Vetch, Bush *Vicia sepium* - cooked
Vetch, Garden *Vicia sativa* - pods - cooked
Walnut, English *Juglans regia* - raw
Water-lily, White *Nymphaea alba* - cooked
Watercress *Nasturtium officinale* - flavoring, sprouted
Whitetop *Lepidium draba* (syn. *Cardaria draba*) flavoring, sprouted

Other Uses

This section includes some non-edible as well as common domestic and commercial plants with useful properties.

The plants are listed with only basic details but may be researched further or experimented with.

Names appear as they do in the main plant list. Plants which are not featured in detail in the main list include the botanical name where it is was given by the original author.

Animal Repellant

Army Worm

Dandelion (growing plant)

Insects

Bear Garlic (plant)
Bracken (fonds)
Chamomile, *Chamaeleum nobile* (plant, growing and dried)
Daisy, Lawn (leaf)
Elderberry, Black (leaf)
Nettle, Stinging (tea on plants, dried plant to deter flies)
Tansy
Walnut (leaf)
Yarrow (plant)

Moles

Bear Garlic (plant)

Moths

Bear Garlic (plant)
Bedstraw, Sweet-scented (plant)

Building

Insulation

Cattail (dry leaf and stem, female flower)
Reed, Common (plant)

Plaster lath

Blackberry (thorny canes)

Thatch

Bracken (dried plant)
Cattail (leaf)
Reed, Common (plant)

Cleansing

Soap

Plants high in saponins:
Chestnut, Horse

Plants of Goosefoot family

Bracken (root)
Campion species
Ivy *Hedera helix*

Shampoo

Bracken (concoction of root)
Chestnut, European (leaf, bark and seed husk)

Skin cleansing lotion

Cinquefoil, Silverweed (plant)

Companion Planting

- Root crops store better when grown near Foxglove
- Yarrow repels bad insects and attracts good, may also have healing effect on nearby sick plants

Disinfectant

Bear Garlic (plant)
Spoonwort
Thyme ssp.
Oregano species

Dye

Black

Oak (galls, with iron salt)
Walnut (ripe seed husk) if iron implement is used

Blue-purple

Elderberry, Black (fruit)

Brown

Bracken (fonds)
Dock (root)
Hop (leaf, flower)
Oak (galls with alum)
Plantain (leaf)
Walnut (leaf, ripe seed husk [no mordant needed])

Green

Blackthorn (leaf)
Dock (root)
Elderberry, Black (leaf with alum)
Nettle, Stinging (leaf, stem)
Reed, Common (flower)
Whortleberry (leaf)

Grey

Dock (root without mordant)
Plantain (root)

Grey-blue

Sorrel ssp. (leaf)

Grey-green

Bedstraw, Sweet-scented (leaf, stem)

Magenta-brown

Dandelion (root)

Red

Bedstraw, Sweet-scented (root)
Cleavers (root)

Tan

Bedstraw, Sweet-scented (leaf, stem)

Variable

Blackberry (fruit)
Raspberry, American Red (fruit) - purple to dull blue
Queen of the Meadow (root) - grey to black brown with copper mordant
Sorrel ssp. (root) - dark green to brown without mordant
Whortleberry (fruit) - blue or black
Yarrow (flower) yellow or green

Yellow

Blackthorn (bark) - boiled in an alkali
Clover, red (flower)
Currant, Cultivated (leaf)
Dock (root)
Jewelweed (plant)
Knotweed, Japanese (root)
Mustard, Garlic (plant)
Nettle, Stinging (root, boiled with alum)
Oak (galls with tin salt)
Queen of the Meadow (leaf)
Walnut (leaf, unripe seed husk [no mordant needed])

Fibre

Baskets and mats

Cattail (leaf)
Reed, Common (plant)

Cordage

Bindweed, Hedge (stem) - not strong - temporary use
Nettel, Stinging (stem)
Reed, Common (plant)

Continued ....

Paper
Nettel, Stinging (stem)
Raspberry, American Red (stem, after fruiting)
Reed, Common (plant)

Yarn
Hop (stem) - similar to Hemp, but weaker
Nettle, Stinging (stem)

Filter
Cleavers (stem)

Fuel
Alcohol
Reed, Common (plant)

Dry matter
Cattail (leaf)

Lighting
Cattail (oil-soaked pith of stem)
Jewelweed (oil from seed)
Nettle, Stinging (oil from seed)

Fungicide
Chamomile, Chamaeleum nobile
Elderberry, Black (leaf)
Garlic

Horsetail species:
Recipe 1 - boil stems for a few minutes, leave for a day, strain, dilute 1:2 with water
Recipe 2 - place 1 kg horsetail in 10 liters of water for 24 hours, boil 15-20 minutes, leave 12 hours, strain, dilute 1:5

Nettle, Stinging
Thyme species

Glue
Bracken (root)
Garlic

Hair Colorant
Walnut (ripe seed husk) - brown

Ink
Oak (galls with iron salt)
Whortleberry (berry) - blue or black

Insecticide
General
Elderberry, Black (leaf)
Walnut (leaf)

Mosquito larvae
Shepherd's Purse (seeds thrown in water where they breed)

Insect Shelter
Help nature and attract beneficial insects to your garden by providing them with shelters. Use hollow dead, dry broken stalks bundled into sheltering container and openings on vertical side. Create some shelters with small tubes and some with larger, but avoid bundling different sizes in one shelter to prevent insects of different species mixing. Place at different heights for insects with varying requirements.
Some suitable plants:
Angelica
Fireweed
Knotweed, Japanese

Litmus Testing
Elderberry, Black (sap of fruit) turns green in alkaline solutions and red in acid solutions

Paper
Burdock (stem)
Cattail (leaf, stem)

Pollution Cleaner
Search term: Phytoremediation

PCBs in Soil
Nightshade, Deadly - *Atropa belladonna* (growing plant)
Nightshade, Black - *Solanum nigrum* (growing plant)

Indoor chemical vapors (formaldehyde, benzene and ammonia)
Crysanthemum (growing plant)
Ivy *Hedera helix* (growing plant)

A number of plants may be useful in **absorbing radioactivity**. Grazing animals must be excluded and the biomass carefully disposed of. Cannabis *Cannabis sativa* has been used at Chernobyl and Sunflowers at Fukoshima to absorb some of the radiation after the nuclear plant accidents. Other plants which may be used are barley, alfalfa, fennel, sugar beets, spinach, lettuce and mustard. As Hop is a close relative to Cannabis it may also be useful.

Poultry Feed
Nettle, Stinging (seed) - increases egg laying

Preservative
For cut flowers
Foxglove *Digitalis purpurea* (infusion of plant in water of flowers)

Vegetables
Currant, Black (leaves) possibly by storing together

Rooting Hormone
Poplar species

Rubber
Canadian Goldenrod, *Solidago canadensis scabra*
Dandelion (root) - inferior quality
Dandelion, Russian or Rubber, *Taraxacum kok-sanghyz* (root) - quality comparable to the latex from Rubber Trees
Goldenrods - *Solidago* species. - latex of leaves - low quality
Sow Thistle *Sonchus oleraceus*

Scent
Linen scent
Bedstraw, Sweet-scented (plant)

Pot-pourri
Bedstraw, Sweet-scented (plant)
Queen of the Meadow (plant)

Scour, Polish
Pots scourer
paste of ash of hardwoods and water;
Plants containing silica:
Glasswort, Slender
Horsetail species
Continued ....

Wood sanding
Horsetail species

Metal polish
Horsetail species
Sorrel species (leaf)

Wood polish
Walnut (seed)

Sewage and Grey-water Treatment

Reed, Common (growing plant)

Soil and Plant Care

See also Pollution Cleaner

Braking dense, heavy soil
Dandelion (growing plant)

Compost
Bracken (plant) high in potash
Cattail (leaf, stem)
Dock (plant) roots and seeds must be well macerated in water to prevent spreading
Comfrey (leaf)
Nettle, Stinging
Reed, Common (plant)
Yarrow (plant)

Conditioning
Mustard, Hedge (growing plant) - sweetens acid soil

Desalinate
Shepherd's Purse (growing plant) possibly other members of the cabbage family, as well as from the goosefoot family

Liquid plant food (plant macerated in water)
Comfrey
Horsetail species
Nettle, Stinging
Quackgrass
Yarrow (plant)

Mulch
Bracken (fonds)

Nitrogen fixing
Clover and other legumes (growing plant)
Alder *Alnus glutinosa* (growing plant)

Potassium
Bracken (ash of burnt root) - collect in early summer for maximum potash content

Repair
Shepherd's Purse (growing plant)

Stain Removal and Bleaching

Plants high in oxalic acid - test first for fabric as juice may leave green stain instead.
Cuckoo pint (plant)
Dock (leaves)
Knotweed, Japanese (leaf, stem)
Wood-sorrel (leaf)

Stuffing

Buoyancy
Cattail (dry leaf and stem)

General
Cattail (female flower)
Fireweed (seed down)

Insulating
Cattail (female flower)

Nappy lining
Cattail (female flower)

Tanning

Blackthorn (bark)
Chestnut, European (leaf, bark and seed husk)
Oak (leaf, bark, galls);

Timber

Durable
Chestnut, European
Oak - heart wood

Furniture
Beech
Birch
Maple species
Walnut

Gun stocks
Walnut

Pea trellis
Filbert, Common (branched stems of first growth - regrowth is often straight)

Turnery, carving
Blackthorn
Maple ssp.

Tinder

Bracken (dried fibers from root)
Cattail (down of female seed head and pollen from female flower - highly flammable)
Fireweed (seed down)
Thistles (seed down)
Bracken (dry fonds)

Tubes

Flutes, blow pipes, casing
Elderberry, Black (branches) contains pith which needs to be hollowed out

Varnish, Paint Medium, Thinner

Pine species (resin and its distillates)
Spruce species (resin and its distillates)
Walnut (oil form seed) - non-yellowing paint medium

Wrapper and Bedding for Produce Storage

Bracken (fonds) also repel insects and prevent rot
Maple ssp. (leaf)

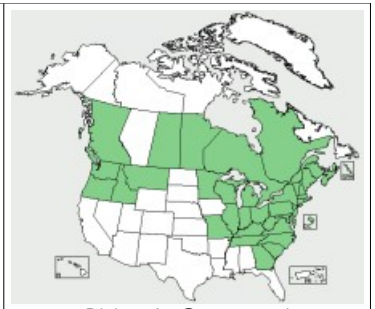
Distribution


Bedstraw, Sweetscented


Beech


Bindweed, Hedge


Birch, Downy


Bishop's Goutweed


Bittercress, Hairy


Blackberry, Shrubby


Blackthorn


Burdock, Lesser


Cattail, Broadleaf


Chestnut, European


Chickweed, Common


Cinquefoil, Silverweed


Cleavers


Clover, Red


Currant, Cultivated


Daisy, Lawn


Dandelion


Deadnettle, Purple


Dock, Curly


Elderberry, Black


Filbert, Comon

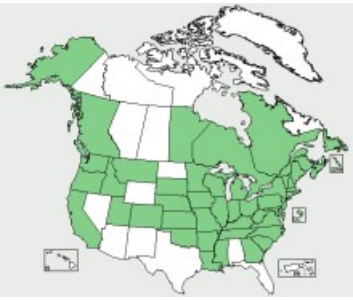

Fireweed


Hawthorn, Oneseed


Hop, Common


Horsetail, Field


Jewelweed

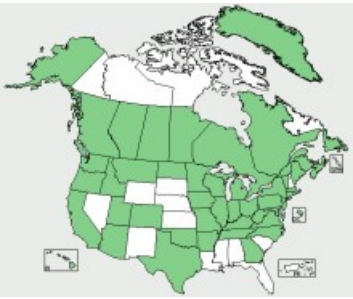

Knotweed, Japanese


Maple, Sycamore


Mustard, Garlic


Mustard, Hedge


Nettle, Stinging


Nipplewort


Oak


Plantain, Narrowleaf

 Quackgrass	 Queen of the Meadow	 Raspberry, American Red	 Reed, Common	 Rose, Dog
 Shepherd's Purse	 Sorrel, Garden	 Sorrel, Common Sheep	 Spoonwort	 Spruce
 Strawberry, Woodand	 Walnut, English	 Whortleberry	 Woodsorrel, Common	 Yarrow, Common

General Information

Harvesting

Law

The law about foraging can vary greatly, depending on your location. Search online for "foraging law" plus your location. Please note that special rules may apply to parks.

Code of Conduct

British Countryside Code (applies elsewhere too)

- Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people and wildlife

That tempting lush meadow full of wild flowers may be a hay or silage field. Walking through the tall vegetation will flatten it, and make it unavailable for harvest.

Ecological Considerations

Except in times of need

- pick only plants which grow in profusion or are considered weeds.
- avoid digging up roots which effectively destroys the plant.
- avoid picking flowers; they give little sustenance to humans but are food to many insects, and are needed by annuals to set seed for the plant's survival. Where this is not an issue, it may still be better to allow the flower to develop fruit or edible seeds, where this is of greater food value.
- avoid stripping a plant of leaves; pick a few from a larger number of plants
- leave some fruit or nuts for wildlife, especially close to the ground for mammals, or on higher branches for birds
- gather in moderation; there may also be others who forage in the same location
- avoid very small or young plants; many plants need to be gathered for a meal
- tread lightly, literally, to avoid damaging plants or the delicate mycelium of fungi
- bark should only be removed from trees which are to be felled; never ring-bark a living tree

The countryside is best enjoyed quietly, not just by people, but also by wildlife, especially during the breeding season.

Useful Tools

- scissors
- flat based basket
- paper bags
- belt pouch
- rubber or leather gloves for picking nettles
- hooked stick

Storage

Often wild plants are only available or at their best for short periods, when they may also be abundant. Just like their domesticated cousins they can be preserved in a number of ways to be available out of season. They may be dried, pickled or fermented like sauerkraut. Whilst detailed instructions and recipes are beyond this guide, I will give a few basic ones here. Read additional information in the Plant Parts section.

Drying

There are several methods for drying, however there are a few points which apply to all.

For best results

- pick just before flowering
- pick after the dew has evaporated and before the sun drives off some of the essential oils
- discard any dead or damaged leaves, and remove insects and debris
- avoid drying plants for consumption which contain coumarin (see safety notes - Toxins) as it becomes more potent when dried - however, the sweet smell will be enhanced and would make a pleasant potpourri.

You can find out how to store in vacuum jars with little cost in an article at www.judyofthewoods.net/diy/pump.html.

Bundle Drying

This is best suited for plants with smaller leaves and with a lower water content, especially aromatic herbs.

- cut stems up to about 20cm
- bundle about half to a dozen stems with twine
- hang in a dry, warm place with plenty of air flow for 2-3 weeks
- if dust is a problem, a gauze shelter can be constructed to protect the drying herbs - for small quantities a paper bag will also work, although it will disrupt the air flow somewhat, so allow plenty of room around the herbs inside the bag
- herbs will be ready when brittle
- remove leaves from stem
- crush with pestle and mortar, a herb mill or rolling pin
- store in airtight jars in a dark, cool place.

String Drying

This is best suited for plants with larger leaves and with a slightly higher water content, e.g. Ramson or Dock leaves. Also suitable for thin slices of roots. To reduce labour roots can me sliced length-ways. Although not featured in this publication, this method is also suitable for mushrooms (sliced).

- With a needle and a long piece of strong thread string the leaves onto the thread through the stem, leaving a small gap between each leaf to allow the air to flow freely
- Stretch threads in parallel horizontal rows onto a frame or on hooks/metal eyes on opposing walls in a dry, warm place with plenty of air flow until crispy dry - this may take only a few days in ideal conditions
- Keep dust off as in the above method

- Remove from thread
- These leaves may be slightly leathery and are best stored whole and processed in a herb mill or reconstituted in water when used in cooking
- Store in airtight jar in a cool, dark place.

Oven Drying

Oven drying is a quick and more reliable way to dry plant material and can dry parts with higher water content. However, the heat may destroy some nutrients and flavors. Some ovens may not have a setting low enough for drying. This method is suitable for all the plant material referred to above in both methods, as well as berries.

- Loosely lay out sprigs, leaves, slices or small whole fruit on a baking tray
- Heat oven to 50°C (120°F)
- Remove after about one hour, or when crisp
- Process and store as above.

Dehydrator Drying

If you have a food dehydrator, whether electric or solar, you will already have the required experience which can be applied to wild food.

Preparation

Some plants or parts of plants need to be prepared in special ways to make them either safe, palatable, or digestible, e.g. soaking or cooking to leach or destroy bitter or toxic substances or extracting the juice from plants with indigestible cellulose.

Refer to the warning notes for individual plants for more information. Follow advice to cook a plant or part of it, or leach some chemical, if it is indicated.

Leaching

Leaching is the process of soaking the plant or its parts in water to wash away some undesirable substances. This may be in cold or boiling, still or running water, depending on how easily the substance is removed. Where clean running water is not available several changes of water may accomplish the same. The more toxic the substance, the more thorough the method should be.

The process will be more thorough and fast if the plant material is chopped into small pieces or even ground or pulped. Fine material should be put into a cloth bag before suspending in running water or strained or filtered if leached in a container.

Leaching is an imprecise science and general instructions could be potentially dangerous or lead to a meal devoid of nutrients. How much leaching is enough? When do you know that you have removed the substance? Is it even worth doing? In tests which removed calcium oxalate crystals from Cuckoo Pint (*Arum Maculatum*) roots, starch, the nutrient for which it was prepared, was also removed. It will also remove other valuable nutrients, especially if one is to "err on the safe side" with copious rinsing and boiling. In a survival situation the effort may outweigh the benefit. In a non-survival situation is it worth playing Russian Roulette when there is plenty of safe food available?

This method is best reserved for plants or their parts which retain high nutrient levels after leaching and where the process gives distinct feedback. Acorns are such a candidate. Please refer to the plant profile for more information.

How best to eat wild plants

Use wild plants in the same way as similar cultivated plants, though wild plants are often less palatable. They are easier to eat when mixed in small quantities with other foods, or when dressed or mixed with other strong flavored condiments or foods. Add to stews, omelets, stir-fries, soups or casseroles, or eat raw in salads, as nibbles or in sandwiches. Consume as tea, fermented brew, juice or make a smoothy with wild plants.

Cooking and changing water can reduce bitterness with some plants, albeit with the loss of some minerals and vitamins.

Where wild foods have no domestic counterpart, general advice on preparation is given in the section on the relevant part, e.g. birch sap on the sap page.

Juicing

Juicing is a way of getting concentrated goodness from plant material, and can also make nutrients available from otherwise indigestible plants (e.g. grass). However, mild toxins may also be concentrated, therefore the same caution applies to juicing as to eating whole plant material - consume in moderation.

Even when the taste is unpleasant, juice can be quickly washed down or mixed with more pleasant tasting fruit juices.

Leaves and stems are best juiced in an auger/crushing type juicer (e.g. wheatgrass juicer) due to their fibrous nature. Most common domestic juicers are centrifugal with a grating action. The fine teeth quickly get clogged up and cannot open the cells adequately.
Some roots and fruit are best pulped with a very fine grating action, as used by common centrifugal juicers. Soft fruit should be juiced with a crushing action. Mealy fruit like haws are not suitable for juicing but may be used in smoothies after removing the seeds.

A stainless steel or plastic meat mincer may also produce a pulp, but the juice then needs to be pressed from the pulp. This can be done by placing the pulp in a fine-mesh fabric bag or piece of cloth, and putting this into a perforated container and pressing down on the contents with a piston-like object (e.g. a piece of food grade wood), collecting the juice in a larger outer container. The pressing is best done with a mechanical press.

In a survival situation use rocks to grind plants into a pulp, and strain the pulp with cloth.

Avoid the use of cast-iron implements as they will taint the juice.

It is best to juice fresh, moisture-rich plant material. Some water may be added to the pulp to wash out a little extra juice.

To prevent oxidation (browning) of some juice, squeeze a lemon or other acid fruit first and juice any other plant material into this liquid.

For ease of digestion, drink slowly to allow saliva to pre-digest the sugars and starches.

Lactofermentation

Lactofermentation is not only an excellent method to preserve food, but also a way to greatly improve the food's nutritional value. It is particularly suited to succulent leaves, stems and roots. The most familiar lactic ferment is sauerkraut, however, most plant material can be fermented. A lactic fermented food is a live food with the type of microorganisms found in yoghurt and a healthy colon, and which are essential to health.

Lactic fermentation may also destroy or reduce tannin, phytic acid, calcium oxalate and some other anti-nutrients which prevent the uptake of minerals. It may break down tough plant matter like cellulose and lignin, the substance forming woody cell walls. Lactobacillus plantarum has the relatively unique ability to do so. L. plantarum is ubiquitous and is likely to be one of the lactobacilli to quickly colonize the brined or salted food. It is also present in kefir culture (both milk and water kefir).

The bacteria partly digest the food and manufacture many vitamins, as well as enzymes, and make minerals more bio-available. They will also colonize your colon and continue their good work there. They create and are tolerant of acids and prevent spoilage bacteria from taking hold in the food.

The growth of beneficial bacteria can be encouraged by creating an environment which is too harsh for the bad guys or giving the good bacteria a head-start with a starter culture, or both. Salt, acid, high sugar content and exclusion of oxygen favors lactobacilli. If food is salted or sugar is added, the lactic bacilli can survive and as they go to work, they create the acidic environment which further discourages spoilage bacteria. If salt or sugar is not desirable or suitable, a starter culture containing an army of beneficial bacteria, and also yeasts when using water kefir, will quickly outnumber the spoilage organisms, and, again, they will create the acidic environment to stop undesirable ones. Except for yogurt, lactic fermentation takes place at room temperatures.

Lactic fermentation requires some care and understanding to ensure success. However, it is not too difficult, and it is worth acquiring the knowledge and skill.

The subject is beyond this publication, but there is excellent information freely available online. For the best information read posts on the Cooking Traditional Foods blog. Find all relevant articles in her "lactofermentation" search result on the blog (see Further Reading below).

The author, KerryAnn Foster, has done thorough research on the subject and has a number of relevant degrees. She covers all aspects of lactofermentation, including the right vessels to use, and explains essential technical information in layman's terms for more reliable fermentation. I highly recommend reading her articles and believe them to be some of the most accurate information.

It is also possible to make a fizzy lactic soda drink - a kind of root beer or variation on ginger ale. For a step-by-step recipe see the link for Blueberry Soda via the Further Reading link below. The recipe can be adapted with other fruit (or grass juice) and roots such as dandelion or burdock instead of ginger.

Further Reading:

To access links on articles about storage, lactofermentation and pooping (see next section on this page) you can manually copy the link below to your computer. The link takes you to the support page on judyofthewoods.net but is shortened to make it easier to copy manually.
http://bit.ly/12Mb1oi

Pooping

We have gone from harvest to storage, preserving and preparing food, so let's end with the final stage of digestion - pooping. You can make a significant difference to your health not only by what you eat but also by how you eliminate waste products. The healthiest way to poop is in the squatting position.

Jonathan Isbit has written detailed information on the many benefits of squatting and how to adapt western toilets, so I will give a link to this fascinating book which he generously shares free online, though a paper copy can also be purchased. For a link to the free book Health Benefits of the Natural Squatting Position please refer to Further Reading in previous section on this page.
Jonathan also sells a platform to convert standard sitting toilets for use in the squatting position, but if you wish to go the DIY route you will find enough inspiration from the photos to construct your own.

Bear Garlic *Allium ursinum*

Large plant with emerging flowers, with one fully unfolded flower head. Flower clusters grow on separate stalks. The plant has a faint smell of garlic or onion which easily distinguishes it from the poisonous Lili-of-the-Valley which has similar leaves.

Flower cluster

Bedstraw, Sweet-scented *Gallium odoratum*

Sweet-scented Bedstraw leaves are arranged in whirls around the stalk. They are easily distinguished from their close relative Cleavers by their sweet smell of fresh-mown hay, and not clinging to fabric and fur. Mature Cleaver stems are also considerably longer. Sweet-scented Bedstraw grows to about 20cm. It has a short season. It is in its prime from late April to May.

The plant usually forms dense patches and prefers alkaline soil. It is sometimes found in shady cottage gardens, especially derelict ones in the country side, where previous owners have discarded wood ashes.

Beech *Fagus sylvatica*

Top: Triangular seeds with shell.
Right: Prickly outer husk.
Bottom: Open outer husk. The lobes spread open when ripe to shed the seeds.

Young leaves.

Bindweed, Hedge *Calystegia sepium*

The stem of Bindweed winds itself around its supporting host. A snail hides in a leaf.

The flower has two wide bracts and 5 narrow sepals.

Birch, Downy *Betula pubescens*

Birch bark with characteristic thin, paper-like peeling sheets. The bark of Downy Birch is somewhat darker than Silver Birch, with red-brown patches.

The fine twigs have a downy, peach-like surface. The delicate young leaves of Birch make a fine addition to salads.

Bishop's Goutweed *Aegopodium podagraria*

Patch of Bishop's Goutweed.

Leaf stem

Bittercress, Hairy *Cardamine hirsuta*

Hairy Bittercress in flower. Leaves can also be dark purple-green.

Blackberry, Shrubby *Rubus fruticosus*

Flowers and developing berries can often be seen on the same branch, as they develop from tip towards root progressively.

Blackberries ripen from the end. The first berries to ripen are often sweeter. Later berries may not get enough sun and too much rain later in the year and often go moldy.

Berries grow on second year canes which are often red tinged.

Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*

Flowers grow on thorny short twigs.

Unripe sloes. Note leaves growing on large thorns.

Ripe sloes. Note the blue-white bloom.

Sloes can vary considerably in size, but are usually of similar size on the same tree. These sloes come from three different trees.

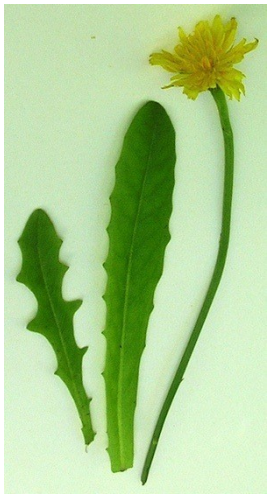
Burdock, Lesser *Arctium minus*

Flowering Burdock with large leaves. Stems are hollow in cross-section.

Globular flowers with burs which cling to fur or fabric.

Catsear, Common *Hypochoeris radicata*

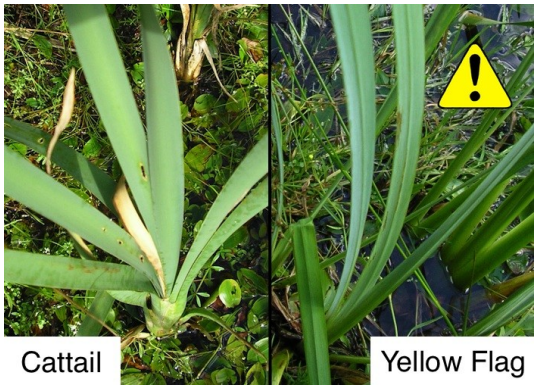
Catsear leaf rosette. Leaves have wavy edge - hairs are short and sparse.



Single flower on long stem emerges from center of leaf rosette. Leaves are variable.

Cattail, Broadleaf *Typha latifolia*

Flowering Cattail. Tail shaped male flower at top, female flower below on spike.



Cattail and poisonous Flag grow in a similar habitat and the young plants are easily confused when not in flower. The bluish, fleshy Cattail leaves fan out from the more compact base and have a rounded profile and a whitish bloom on the surface. Flag leaves are flatter, shinier, brighter green, and have a distinct ridge along the center of the leaf blade.

Chestnut, European *Castanea sativa*

Chestnut in prickly husk. In non-cultivars the husk contains 2-3 smaller nuts. Cultivars may contain one large seed. October to November.

Leaf may be up to 18cm long.

Chickweed, Common *Stellaria media*

Leaf stem.

Flower stem.

Cinquefoil, Silverweed *Potentilla anserina*

Distinct silvery underside of the downy leaf.

Cleavers *Galium aparine*

Young plant. Older plants may form tangled patches.

Clover, Red *Trifolium pratense*

Flowering Red clover. Note the light chevron or arrow on the center of the leaves.

Currant, Cultivated *Ribes rubrum*

The plant looks similar to Gooseberry, but lacks thorns. Fruit is arranged in small vine-like clusters.

Often found near water or in moist soil. Fruits around July to August.

Daisy, Lawn *Bellis perennis*

Daisy flower and leaf rosettes. Flower bud emerging from the bottom rosette. A tight, downy plant usually found in short grass.

Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale*

Dandelion plant. Leaves are arranged in rosettes. Flowers grow from the rosette on their own leafless stalk. Stalks are hollow with white milky sap in the walls of the stem.

Leaves are variable in shape, from deep to shallow toothed.

Deadnettle, Purple *Lamium purpureum*

Flowering Purple Deadnettle. Note the purple top leaves on the mature plant.

Dock, Curly *Rumex crispus*

Curly Dock and Bitter Dock are very similar in appearance and have similar properties, therefore the information can be applied to both and mistaken identity *between these two species* is not critical.

Young leaf clump. leaves are bright green and smooth. May be mistaken for Foxglove *Digitalis purpurea* leaves, which are more blue-green and very downy.

Flowering stem. Note that most leaves will have some insect or slug damage.

May be mistaken for Sorrel, which is in the same family. Sorrel has smaller heart-shaped leaves with a lemony taste. This is not critical, as Sorrel is also edible.

Elderberry, Black *Sambucus nigra*

Flat-headed flower clusters - "umbels". A tree may have flowers in various stages of development. Often the lower, sheltered branches will flower earlier.

The ripe berries are black and the cluster will droop down. Unripe berries should be avoided.

Filbert, Common *Corylus avellana*

Flat, fanned branches with downy leaves.

Fully grown, but unripe nuts in leafy cup. Nuts develop singly or in small clusters of 2-4 nuts. Ripe nuts turn light to mid brown. By that time the squirrels and Jays will have had most or all.

Fireweed *Chamerion angustifolium*

Flower spike with flowers developing progressively towards the top.
Fireweed requires light to germinate and therefore can only establish itself on bare ground, often after a fire, giving it its name Fireweed, but also in new conifer woodland clearings where no other plants and coarse debris shades the seed. Once established this perennial plant will grow new shoots every year from the creeping rhizomes which can spread the plant outward. It often grows in dense patches.

Hawthorn, Oneseed *Crataegus monogyna*

Hawthorn and Blackthorn have similar thorny stems and white flowers. Hawthorn flowers in May and June when in leaf, Blackthorn in April and May before the leaves emerge. Note that leaves are deeply lobed.

Branch with ripening haws.
Insert: haw cut open to show the mealy flesh and single large seed. Some Hawthorn species have more than one seed.

Hop *Humulus lupulus*

Flowering hop vine.

Ripening female cone-like flowers.

Horsetail, Field *Equisetum arvense*

The non-fertile segmented stem which appears after the brown, fertile cone-headed stem dies back.
May be confused with other horsetails. Field Horsetail has long branchlets which are not branched themselves. A hybrid with Water Horsetail may look similar but will have shorter branches. This specimen may be a hybrid or not fully developed stem.
Horsetails can be difficult to identify, especially when the fertile stem has died back, as in this example. The fertile stem of Water Horsetail is green.

Jewelweed *Impatiens glandulifera*

Flowers develop at varying times. They are often seen together with ripening seeds as in this image. The colour depth can vary from pale to deep pink.
The hollow stem is succulent and red and snaps easily. Leaves are often tinged red, especially along the edge and main arteries.

Knotweed, Japanese *Fallopia japonica* (syn. *Polygonum cuspidatum, P. japonicum*)

Young shoots and rhyzomes. Note the bright orange-yellow flesh.

Left: Young shoots emerging next to the dead stalks of last year's growth.
Right: Young plant with large, distinct shield-shaped leaves.

Maple, Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*

Leaves and paired keys. Sycamore Maple leaves are some of the earliest to emerge in spring.

Mustard, Garlic *Alliaria petiolata*

Garlic Mustard often grows in clumps.

Flowers have four petals. Leaves have a leather-like texture.

Nettle, Stinging *Urtica dioica*

Young nettle plant

Flowering plant in June.

Nipplewort *Lapsana communis*

Flowering plant. Leaves higher up the stalk may be lance-shaped. Small flowers grow on branched stalks.

Main leaf with distinct lobes and arrow-shaped terminal. The surface is slightly downy.

Oak *Quercus ssp.*

Ripe acorns with and without cap. Proportions of acorn to cap can vary. These acorns are very large for the size of the cap.

Young leaf - oak leaves have a slight olive tinge.

Plantain *Plantago spp.*

Flowering Narrowleaf Plantain *Plantago lanciolata* with long lance-shaped leaves.

Common Plantain *Plantago major* has broader, shorter leaves.

Queen of the Meadow *Filipendula ulmaria*

Sweet-smelling Queen of the Meadow flowers from June to September. Note the red stalk of flower and leaf and the pale underside of the laves.

Raspberry, American Red *Rubus idaeus*

The plant has light brown woody canes and sparse, short thorns, making it distinct from Blackberry. Juvenile leaves contain the antioxydant anthocyanins to protect them from UV rays.

The underside of the mature leaves is distinctly paler. Single or small clusters of raspberries develop at the end of stems or branchlets from July to September on second-year canes which branch out in their second year. First year canes are usually branchless. Occasionally fruit may develop on first year canes late in the season.

Reed, Common *Phragmites australis*

Flowering stems.

Common Reed grows in patches, often near water.

Rose *Rosa spp.*

Flowering Field Rose *Rosa arvensis*.

Flowering Dog Rose *Rosa canina*.

Shepherd's Purse *Capsella bursa-pastoris*

Top of plant with distinct heart-shaped seed capsules.

Lower part of plant.

Sorrel, Garden *Rumex acetosa*

Leaf clump of young plant.

Left: Flowering plants with stalkless stem leaves (close against main stalk).

Heart-shaped basal leaf with its own stalk.

Flowers along spike.

Spoonwort *Cochlearia officinalis*

Young plant. Leaves are fleshy and variable.

Flowering Scury-grass.

Spruce *Picea spp.*

Young, soft needle clusters developing in spring at the end of the branches. They are easily blown off by strong wind and can often be found as small tufts on the ground from where they are easily collected. The taste is tangy, and the needles are soft enough to eat raw and whole.

Bark of Norway Spruce.

Strawberry, Woodland *Fragaria vesca*

Woodland Strawberry plant with flower and unripe fruit. Note the flower petals are close together and have a small point. Leaves are bright green and glossy.

Barren Strawberry, *Potentilla sterilis*, is a non-fruiting cousin and easily mistaken for Wild Strawberry. It does however have some distinguishing features, making it easy to identify. Petals are more widely spaced and have a dent rather than a point. Laves are coarser with a blue green colour and generally smaller. The whole plant is more stout and hairy.

Walnut, English *Juglans regia*

Ripening walnuts. The familiar hard, crinkled nut case is enclosed in an outer fleshy fruit.

Whortleberry *Vaccinium myrtillus*

Typical fan-shaped plant (underside).

Flower close-up. Plant stem and branches are angular with a groove.

Berry close-up. Berries are often hidden under the leaves.

Woodsorrel, Common *Oxalis acetosella*

Leaves are similar to Shamrock and Clover. Woodsorrel leaves are delicate and have a distinct lemony flavour. They are bright green when young, darkening a little when maturing. The white flowers petals have pink stripes radiating from the center of the flower.

Yarrow, Common *Achillea millefolium*

Flower stem with umbel-shaped flower head. Young leaves have a downy texture. Base leaf on tight. Caution: The umbel-shaped flower can easily be mistaken with flowers in the carrot family, some of which are highly poisonous. Take great care in correctly identifying this plant.