

The Foraging Companion Home Guide



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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 its 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** (Balsaminaceae): some or all contain **calcium oxalate** in some parts. Seeds may be safe.
- **Barberry** (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 Woodruff 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): Bog Myrtle *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 *Sinapis arvensis* (may be mildly toxic when seed pods form.
- Hoary Cress *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.

- Wintercress *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 Hogweed *H. sphondylium*.

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 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): 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.
- Chamomile *Chamaemelum nobile*, Pineapple 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 Greater (Prickly) Lettuce *Lactuca virosa* may be toxic and narcotic if consumed in quantity. Contains **oxalic acid**
- Mugwort *Artemisia vulgaris* contains **thujone**. Contact with the plant may cause dermatitis in sensitive individuals.
- 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 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** (Gentianaceae): 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 Couch-grass *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. 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 equisetin 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. 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.
- Gorse *Ulex europaeus* has dense thorns.
- Black Medick *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 Primrose *Primula veris* may cause allergic 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. Meadowsweet *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 Biting Stonecrop *Sedum acre* may cause irritation. Can cause gastric upset if eaten in quantity. May be toxic.
 - Reflexed Stonecrop *Sedum reflexum* can cause gastric upset if eaten in quantity. May be toxic.
- **Teasel** (Dipsacaceae): no information on hazards
- **Valerian** (Valerianaceae): 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** (Nymphaeaceae): 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**. Wood-sorrel *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 Sweet Woodruff *Galium odoratum*, Sweet Vernal Grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, Black Medick *Melilotus officinalis*, Meadowsweet *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 Meadowsweet *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 cause itching or blistering. In the mouth it causes a burning sensation, and ingested causes gastric upset, headache, dizziness, spasms, paralysis or circulatory failure. Protoanemonin 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* - Ramson. 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*, Fat Hen, 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 Fat Hen, and you know it grows in your area.

The Botanical Family Translator at the end of this section 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 - Sycamore
Acer spp. - Maple
Achillea millefolium - Yarrow
Acorus calamus - Sweet Flag
Adiantum capillus-veneris - Maidenhair Fern
Aegopodium podagraria - Ground Elder

Aesculus hippocastanum - Chestnut, Horse
Aethusa cynapium - Parsley, Fool's
Agrimonia eupatoria - Agrimony
Ajuga reptans - Bugle
Alaria esculenta - Dabberlocks
Alcea rosea - Hollyhock
Alchemilla vulgaris - Lady's Mantle
Alisma plantago-aquatica - Plantain, Common Water
Alliaria petiolata - Mustard, Garlic
Allium ampeloprasum - Leek, Wild
Allium macropetalum - Largeflower Wild Onion
Allium schoenoprasum - Chives
Allium scorodoprasum - Leek, Sand
Allium triquetrum - Leek, Three-cornered
Allium ursinum - Ramson
Althaea officinalis - Mallow, Marsh
Amelanchier lamarckii - Juneberry
Amelanchier intermedia (syn.) - Juneberry
Anacamptis pyramidalis X - Orchid, Pyramidal
Anagallis arvensis - Pimpernel, Scarlet
Angelica archangelica - Angelica
Angelica sylvestris - Angelica, Wild
Anthemis arvensis - Chamomile, Corn
Anthemis cotula - Chamomile, Stinking
Anthriscus sylvestris - Parsley, Cow
Anthyllis vulneraria - Vetch, Kidney
Apergula arvensis - Spurrey, Corn
Aphanes arvensis - Parsley Piert
Apium graveolens - Celery, Wild
Arbutus unedo - Strawberry Tree
Arctium lappa - Burdock, Great
Arctium minus - Burdock, Lesser
Argentina anserina - Silverweed
Armeria maritima - Thrift
Armoracia rusticana - Horseradish
Artemisia vulgaris - Mugwort
Arum maculatum - Lords and Ladies
Asparagus officinalis - Asparagus
Aster tripolium (syn.) - Aster, Sea
Astragalus glycyphyllos - Liquorice, Wild
Atriplex patula - Orache, Common
Atriplex portulacoides - Purslane, Sea

Atriplex prostrata - Orache, Spear-leaved

B

Barbarea vulgaris - Wintercress
Bellis perennis - Daisy
Berberis vulgaris - Barberry
Beta vulgaris maritima - Beet, Sea
Betula pendula - Birch, Silver
Betula pubescens - Birch, Downy
Bidens tripartita - Bur Marigold, Trifid
Borago officinalis - Borage
Brassica napus - Rape
Brassica nigra - Mustard, Black
Brassica oleracea - Cabbage, Wild
Brassica rapa - Turnip, Wild
Butomus umbellatus - Rush, Flowering

C

Calamintha ascendens (syn.) - Calamint, Common
Calla palustris - Arum, Bog
Calluna vulgaris - Heather
Caltha palustris - Marigold, Marsh
Calystegia sepium - Bindweed, Hedge
Campanula latifolia - Bellflower, Giant
Campanula rapunculoides - Bellflower, Creeping
Campanula rapunculus - Bellflower, Rampion
Campanula rotundifolia - Harebell
Capsella bursa-pastoris - Shepherd's Purse
Cardamine hirsuta - Bittercress, Hairly
Cardamine pratensis - Cuckoo Flower
Cardaria draba (syn.) - Cress, Hoary
Carex pendula - Sedge, Pendulous
Carpobrotus edulis - Fig, Hottentot
Castanea sativa - Chestnut, Sweet
Centaurea nigra - Knapweed, Common
Centaurium erythraea - Centaury, Common
Centranthus ruber - Valerian, Red
Cerastium fontanum - Mouse-ear, Common
Cerastium glomeratum - Mouse-ear, Sticky
Cerastium viscosum (syn.) - Mouse-ear, Sticky
Cetraria islandica - Iceland Moss
Chaerophyllum bulbosum - Chervil, Turnip-rooted
Chamaemelum nobile - Chamomile

Chamerion angustifolium - **Willowherb, Rosebay**
Chamomilla suaveolens (syn.) - **Mayweed, Pineapple**
Chelidonium majus - **Celandine, Greater**
Chenopodium album - **Fat Hen**
Chenopodium bonus-henricus - **Good King Henry**
Chenopodium rubrum - **Goosefoot, Red**
Chondrus crispus - **Carraghen**
Chrysanthemum leucanthemum - **Daisy, Ox-eye**
Chrysanthemum segetum (syn.) - **Marigold, Corn**
Chrysosplenium oppositifolium - **Saxifrage, Opp-lvd Golden**
Cichorium intybus - **Chicory**
Cirsium arvense - **Thistle, Creeping**
Cirsium oleraceum - **Thistle, Cabbage**
Cirsium palustre - **Thistle, Marsh**
Cirsium vulgare - **Thistle, Spear**
Claytonia perfoliata - **Spring Beauty**
Clematis vitalba - **Traveller's Joy**
Clinopodium vulgare - **Basil, Wild**
Cochlearia officinalis - **Scurvy-grass, Common**
Conopodium majus - **Pignut**
Convulvulus arvensis - **Bindweed, Field**
Coriandrum sativum - **Coriander**
Cornus mas - **Cherry, Cornelian**
Cornus sanguinea - **Dogwood**
Cornus suecica - **Cornel, Dwarf**
Coronopus squamatus - **Cress, Swine**
Corylus avellana - **Hazel**
Crambe maritima - **Sea Kale**
Crataegus monogyna - **Hawthorn,**
Crepsis tectorum - **Hawk's Beard**
Crithmum maritimum - **Samphire, Rock**
Cymbalaria muralis - **Toadflax, Ivy-leaved**
Cyperus longus - **Galingale**
Cytisus scoparius - **Broom**

D

Daucus carota - **Carrot, Wild**
Descurainia sophia - **Flixweed**
Draba muralis - **Whitlow Grass, Wall**

E

Echium vulgare - **Bugloss, Viper's**
Elytrigia repens - **Couchgrass**

Empetrum nigrum - **Crowberry**
Epilobium hirsutum - **Willowherb, Great**
Equisetum arvense - **Horsetail, Field**
Erodium cicutarium - **Stork's-bill, Common**
Eryngium maritimum - **Sea Holly**

F

Fagopyrum esculentum - **Buckwheat**
Fagus sylvatica - **Beech**
Fallopia convulvulus - **Bindweed, Black**
Fallopia japonica - **Knotweed, Japanese**
Filipendula ulmaria - **Meadowsweet**
Filipendula vulgaris - **Dropwort**
Foeniculum vulgare - **Fennel**
Fragaria vesca - **Strawberry, Wild**
Fraxinus excelsior - **Ash**
Fucus vesiculosus - **Bladder Wrack**
Fumaria officinalis - **Fumitory**

G

Galinsoga parviflora - **Gallant Soldier**
Galium aparine - **Cleavers**
Galium mollugo - **Bedstraw, Hedge**
Galium odoratum - **Woodruff, Sweet**
Galium verum - **Bedstraw, Lady's**
Geranium dissectum - **Cranesbill, Cut-leaved**
Geum rivale - **Avens, Water**
Geum urbanum - **Avens, Wood**
Glaucium flavum - **Horned-poppy, Yellow**
Glebionis segetum - **Marigold, Corn**
Glechoma hederacea - **Ground Ivy**
Graminae spp. - **Grass**

H

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

I

Impatiens capsensis - **Jewelweed**
Impatiens glandulifera - **Balsam, Himalayan**
Iris pseudacorus - **Flag, Yellow**

J

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

L

Lactuca virosa - **Lettuce, Greater (Prickly)**
Lamiastrum galeobdolon - **Archangel, Yellow**
Laminaria digitata - **Kelp**
Laminaria saccharina - **Sweet Oar Weed**
Lamium album - **Deadnettle, White**
Lamium amplexicaule - **Deadnettle, Henbit**
Lamium purpureum - **Deadnettle, Red**
Lapsana communis - **Nipplewort**
Lathyrus japonicus - **Pea, Sea**
Lathyrus montanus - **Vetch, Bitter**
Laurencia pinnatifida - **Pepper Dulse**
Lemna minor - **Duckweed**
Leontodon hispidus - **Hawkbit, Rough**
Lepidium draba - **Cress, Hoary**
Lepidium latifolium - **Dittander**
Ligusticum scoticum - **Lovage, Scots**
Linaria vulgaris - **Toadflax**
Lolium perenne - **Ryegrass, Perennial**
Lonicera periclymenum - **Honeysuckle**
Lotus corniculatus - **Trefoil, Bird's-foot**
Lycium barbarum - **Duke of Argyll's Tea-tree**
Lycopus europaeus - **Gipsywort**
Lysimachia nummularia - **Creeping Jenny**
Lysimachia vulgaris - **Loosestrife, Yellow**
Lythrum portula - **Purslane, Water**
Lythrum salicaria - **Loosestrife, Purple**

M

Mahonia aquifolium - **Oregon Grape**
Malus sylvestris - **Apple, Crab**
Malva moschata - **Mallow, Musk**

Malva sylvestris - **Mallow, Common**
Matricaria discoidea - **Mayweed, Pineapple**
Matricaria matricarioides (syn.) - **Mayweed, Pineapple**
Matricaria recutita - **Mayweed, Scented**
Medicago lupulina - **Medick, Black**
Melilotus altissimus - **Melilot, Tall**
Melilotus officinalis - **Melilot**
Mentha aquatica - **Mint, Water**
Mentha arvensis - **Mint, Corn**
Mentha citrata - **Mint, Eau-de-Cologne**
Mentha longifolia - **Mint, Horse**
Mentha piperita - **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**
Meum athamanticum - **Spignel**
Mimulus guttatus - **Monkey Flower**
Morus spp. - **Mulberry**
Mycelis muralis - **Lettuce, Wall**
Myrica gale - **Myrtle, Bog**
Myrrhis odorata - **Cicely, Sweet**

N

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

O

Oenothera biennis - **Evening Primrose**
Oenothera glazioviana - **Evening Primrose, Large-flowered**
Ononis repens - **Rest-harrow**
Orchis mascula - **Orchid, Early Purple**
Origanum vulgare - **Marjoram, Wild**
Ornithogalum pyrenaicum - **Star of Bethlehem, Spiked**
Ornithogalum umbellatum - **Star of Bethlehem**
Oxalis acetosella - **Wood-sorrel**
Oxalis corniculata - **Oxalis, Yellow**

P

Palmaria palmata - **Dulse**
Papaver rhoeas - **Poppy, Common**
Pastinaca sativa - **Parsnip, Wild**
Persicaria lapathifolia - **Persicaria, Pale**
Phragmites australis - **Reed, Common**
Picea spp. - **Spruce**
Picris echioides - **Oxtongue, Bristly**
Pinus spp. - **Pine**
Plantago coronopus - **Plantain, Buck's Horn**
Plantago lanceolata - **Plantain, Ribwort**
Plantago major - **Plantain, Greater**
Polygala vulgaris - **Milkwort, Common**
Polygonum aviculare - **Knotgrass**
Polygonum bistorta - **Bistort**
Polygonum japonicum (syn.) - **Knotweed, Japanese**
Polygonum lapathifolium (syn.) - **Persicaria, Pale**
Polygonum persicaria - **Redshank**
Porphyra umbiliculis - **Laver**
Potentilla anserina (syn.) - **Silverweed**
Potentilla erecta - **Tormentil**
Potentilla reptans - **Cinquefoil, Creeping**
Primula veris - **Cowslip**
Primula vulgaris - **Primrose**
Prunella vulgaris - **Self-heal**
Prunus avium - **Cherry, Wild**
Prunus cerasifera - **Plum, Cherry**
Prunus cerasus - **Cherry, Dwarf**
Prunus domestica ssp. - **Plum, Wild**
Prunus domestica ssp. insitita - **Bullace**
Prunus padus - **Cherry, Bird**
Prunus spinosa - **Blackthorn**
Pteridium aquilium - **Bracken**
Pulmonaria officinalis - **Lungwort, Common**
Pyrola minor - **Wintergreen**
Pyrus communis - **Pear**

Q

Quercus robur. - **Oak, Pendunculate**
Quercus petraea - **Oak, Sessile**

R

Ranunculus acris - **Buttercup, Meadow**
Ranunculus bulbosus - **Buttercup, Bulbous**
Ranunculus ficaria - **Celandine, Lesser**
Ranunculus repens - **Buttercup, Creeping**
Ranunculus sceleratus - **Buttercup, Celery-leaved**
Raphanus raphanistrum - **Radish, Wild**
Reseda lutea - **Mignonette, Wild**
Rhus typhina - **Sumach, Stag's Horn**
Ribes nigrum - **Currant, Black**
Ribes rubrum - **Currant, Red**
Ribes uva-crispa - **Gooseberry**
Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum (syn.) - **Watercress**
Rosa arvensis - **Rose, Field**
Rosa canina - **Rose, Dog**
Rubus caesius - **Dewberry**
Rubus chamaemorus - **Cloudberry**
Rubus fruticosus - **Bramble**
Rubus idaeus - **Raspberry,**
Rumex acetosa - **Sorrel, Common**
Rumex acetosella - **Sorrel, Sheep's**
Rumex alpinus - **Rhubarb, Monk's**
Rumex crispus - **Dock, Curled**
Rumex obtusifolius - **Dock, Broad-leaved**
Rumex patientia - **Dock, Patience**
Ruscus aculeatus - **Broom, Butcher's**

S

Sagittaria sagittifolia - **Arrowhead**
Salicornia europaea - **Samphire, Marsh**
Salsola pestifer - **Thistle, Prickly Russian**
Salvia verbenaca - **Clary, Wild**
Sambucus nigra - **Elder**
Sambucus racemosa - **Elder, Red-berried**
Sanguisorba minor - **Burnet, Salad**
Sanguisorba officinalis - **Burnet, Great**
Scirpus lacustris - **Clubrush, Common**
Scirpus maritimus - **Clubrush**
Scrophularia nodosa - **Figwort, Common**
Sedum acre - **Stonecrop, Biting**
Sedum reflexum - **Stonecrop, Reflexed**
Sedum telephium (syn.) - **Orpine**

Senecio vulgaris - **Groundsel**
Silene vulgaris - **Campion, Bladder**
Silybum marianum - **Thistle, Milk**
Sinapis alba - **Mustard, White**
Sinapis arvensis - **Charlock**
Sisymbrium officinale - **Mustard, Hedge**
Smyrniolum olusatrum - **Alexanders**
Solidago virgaurea - **Goldenrod**
Sonchus arvensis - **Sow-thistle, Perennial**
Sonchus asper - **Sow Thistle, Prickly**
Sonchus oleraceus - **Sow-thistle, Smooth**
Sorbus aria - **Whitebeam**
Sorbus aucuparia - **Rowan**
Sorbus torminalis - **French Hales**
Sorbus torminalis - **Service Tree, Wild**
Sparganium erectum - **Bur-reed, Branched**
Stachys officinalis - **Betony**
Stachys palustris - **Woundwort, Marsh**
Stellaria media - **Chickweed, Common**
Succisa pratensis - **Scabious, Devilsbit**
Symphoricarpos albus - **Snowberry**
Symphytum officinale - **Comfrey**

T

Tamus communis - **Bryony, Black**
Tanacetum parthenium - **Feverfew**
Tanacetum vulgare - **Tansy**
Taraxacum officinale - **Dandelion**
Teucrium scorodonia - **Sage, Wood**
Thlaspi arvense - **Pennycress, Field**
Thymus polytrichus - **Thyme, Wild**
Tilia x vulgaris - **Lime, Common**
Tragopogon porrifolius - **Salsify**
Tragopogon pratensis - **Goatsbeard**
Trifolium pratense - **Clover, Red**
Trifolium repens - **Clover, White**
Trigonella ornithopodioides - **Fenugreek**
Tripolium pannonicum - **Aster, Sea**
Tussilago farfara - **Coltsfoot**
Typha angustifolia - **Bulrush, Lesser**
Typha latifolia - **Bulrush**

U

Ulex europaeus - **Gorse**
Umbilicus rupestris - **Navelwort**
Ulva lactuca - **Sea Lettuce**
Urtica dioica - **Nettle, Stinging**
Urtica urens - **Nettle, Annual**

V

Vaccinium myrtillus - **Bilberry**
Vaccinium oxycoccus - **Cranberry**
Vaccinium uliginosum - **Bilberry, Northern**
Vaccinium vitis-idaea - **Cowberry**
Valeriana officinalis - **Valerian, Common**
Valerianella locusta - **Cornsalad**
Veronica beccabunga - **Brooklime**
Veronica chamaedrys - **Speedwell, Germander**
Viburnum opulus - **Rose, Guelder**
Vicia cracca - **Vetch, Tufted**
Vicia hirsuta - **Tare, Hairy**
Vicia sativa - **Vetch, Common**
Vicia sepium - **Vetch, Bush**
Viola odorata - **Violet, Sweet**
Viola riviniana - **Violet, Common Dog**

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
Balsaminaceae - Balsam
Berberidaceae - Barberry
Betulaceae - Birch
Boraginaceae - Borage
Brassicaceae - 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 Brassicaceae
Cupressaceae - Cypress
Cyperaceae - Sedge
Dioscoreaceae - Yam
Dipsacaceae - Teasel
Eleagnaceae - Oleaster
Empetraceae - Crowberry
Equisetaceae - Horsetail
Ericaceae - Heath
Euphorbiaceae - Spurge
Fagaceae - Beech
Fumariaceae - Fumitory
Gentianaceae - Gentian
Geraniaceae - Cranesbill

Graminae - Grass
Grossulariaceae - Currant
Hippocastanaceae - Horse Chestnut
Iridaceae - Iris
Juglandaceae - Walnut
Labiales - 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
Nymphaeaceae - 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
Valerianaceae - 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 normalises 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 ionised 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/oxytotic**: 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 - Bilberry; Bramble; Bulrush; Chestnut, Sweet; Cleavers; Couchgrass; Daisy; Dandelion; Dock; Hazel; Hop; Meadowsweet; Nettle, Stinging; Oak; Ramson; Raspberry; Rose, Dog; Silverweed; Strawberry; Willowherb, Rosebay; Woodruff
Stimulant - Angelica *Angelica archangelica*; Dandelion; Ground Ivy *Glechoma hederacea* (aerial parts); Horseradish *Armoracia rusticana* (tap root); Peppermint *Mentha piperita* (aerial parts); Ramson; Raspberry; Scurvy-grass; Shepherd's Purse; Yarrow

Detox

see also: Kidney, Bladder; Liver, Gallbladder, Spleen
Depurative - Blackthorn; Bramble; **Burdock**; Chickweed; **Cleavers**; **Clover**; **Red**; Couchgrass; Daisy; **Dandelion**;
Dock; **Figwort**, **Common** *Scrophularia nodosa* (aerial parts); Knotweed, Japanese; Meadowsweet; **Nettle**, **Stinging**; Plantain; Ramson; Reed, Common; Rose, Dog; Shepherd's Purse; Sorrel; Strawberry
Diaphoretic - Birch; Blackthorn; Burdock; Cleavers; Deadnettle, Purple; **Elder**; Hazel; Meadowsweet; Mustard, Garlic; Ramson; Woodruff; **Yarrow**

Blockages

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

Blood

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

Cholesterol

Anticholesterolemic - Ramson
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]): Fat Hen *Chenopodium album*; Good King Henry *Chenopodium bonus-henricus*; Goosefoot, Red *Chenopodium rubrum*

Cleansing

see General Health and Wellbeing – Detox

Reduce Bleeding

Astringent - Bilberry; Birch; Blackthorn; Bramble; Bulrush; Chestnut, Sweet; Chickweed, Common; Cleavers; Deadnettle, Purple; Dock; Hazel; Horsetail, Field; **Meadowsweet**; **Nettle**, **Stinging**; **Oak**; Plantain; Ramson; Raspberry; Reed, Common; Rose, Dog; Shepherd's Purse;

Silverweed; Sorrel; Strawberry; Sycamore; Willowherb, Rosebay; Wood-sorrel; **Yarrow**
Haemostatic - Bulrush; Horsetail, Field; Nettle, Stinging; Oak; Plantain; Shepherd's Purse; Silverweed; Yarrow

Sugar Level

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

Thinning

Anticoagulant - Bulrush; Woodruff

Cancer

see also: Gut, Bowel - Gut Flora
Anticancer - Bulrush; Cleavers; Clover, Red; Daisy; Dandelion; Knotweed, Japanese.; Shepherd's Purse
Resveratrol - Knotweed, Japanese
Rutin - Elder; Hawthorn; Hop

Cardiovascular System

see also: Blood
General - Meadowsweet; Nettle, Stinging; Yarrow
Anthocyanin - Bilberry; Currant, Black; Bramble; Elder
Anthocyanosides - Bilberry; Currant, Black; Bramble; Cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccus* (berries); Raspberry
Cardiac - Hawthorn; Raspberry; Woodruff
Resveratrol - Knotweed, Japanese
Rutin - Elder; Hawthorn; Hop
Vasodilator - Bilberry; Burdock; Hawthorn; Ramson; Shepherd's Purse; Yarrow
Vasoconstrictor - Shepherd's purse

Arteriosclerosis

Dandelion; Hawthorn; Meadowsweet; Shepherd's Purse

High Blood Pressure

Hypotensive - Nettle, Stinging; Ramson; Shepherd's purse

Continued

Vasodilator - Bilberry; Burdock; Hawthorn; Ramson; Shepherd's Purse; Yarrow

Varicose Veins

Bilberry; Shepherd's Purse; Woodruff

Chilblains

Strawberry

Cramps

Antispasmodic - Daisy; Hawthorn; Hop; Mustard, Hedge; Ramson; Silverweed; **Valerian, Common** *Valeriana officinalis* (root); Willowherb, Rosebay; Woodruff; Yarrow

Digestive Tract

see also: Gut, Bowel; Liver; Gallbladder; Spleen

General - Plantain

Appetite, Digestion

Bitter - Birch; Yarrow

Sialagogue - Currant, Red

Stomachic - Blackthorn; Burdock; Dandelion; Hazel; Hop; Knotweed, Japanese; Meadowsweet; Mustard, Hedge

Digestive - Nettle, Stinging; Yarrow

Indigestion - Ramson; Silverweed

Gastritis

Rose, Dog

Nausea

Antiemetic - Reed, Common; Meadowsweet

Eyes

Ophthalmic - Chickweed, Common; Daisy; Plantain; Raspberry; Rose

also - Elder; Plantain; Raspberry; Sycamore

Night Vision

Anthocyanin - Bilberry; Currant, Black; Bramble; Elder (berries)

Anthocyanosides - Bilberry; Currant, Black; Bramble; Cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccus*

Fever, Heat

Febrifuge - Beech; Bindweed, Hedge; Blackthorn; Cleavers; **Elder**; Hazel; Hop; Knotweed, Japanese; Ramson; Reed, Common; Sorrel; Wood-sorrel

Refrigerant - Bulrush; 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; Couchgrass; Currant, Red; Scurvy-grass

Laxative - Bilberry; Birch; Blackthorn; Chickweed, Common; Daisy; **Dandelion**; **Dock**; Knotweed, Japanese; Mustard, Hedge; Plantain; Rose, Dog; Sorrel; Strawberry; Willowherb, Rosebay

Purgative - Bindweed, Hedge; Daisy; Deadnettle, Purple; Elder

Diarrhoea

Anti-diarrhoea - Hop; Nettle, Stinging

Astringent - Bilberry; Birch; Blackthorn; Bramble; Bulrush; Chestnut, Sweet; Chickweed, Common; Cleavers; Deadnettle, Purple; Dock; Hazel; Horsetail, Field; **Meadowsweet**; **Nettle, Stinging**; **Oak**; Plantain; Ramson; Raspberry; Reed, Common; Rose, Dog; Shepherd's Purse;

Silverweed; Sorrel; Strawberry; Sycamore; Willowherb, Rosebay; Wood-sorrel; **Yarrow**

Flatulence

Carminative - Burdock; Chickweed; Horsetail, Field; Ramson; Rose, Dog; Yarrow

Gut Flora

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

Haemorrhoids

Bilberry; Dock; Nettle, Stinging; Oak; Shepherd's Purse; Silverweed

Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Willowherb, Rosebay

Worms and other Parasites

Anthelmintic - Hazel; Mugwort *Artemisia vulgaris*;

Ramson; Sorrel; Tansy *Tanacetum vulgare* (aerial parts)

Vermifuge - Couchgrass; Hop; Mustard, Garlic; Plantain; Ramson; Rose, Dog

Gynaecological

Aid Childbirth

Oxytoxic - Raspberry; Shepherd's Purse

Candida

Bramble; Chickweed; Dandelion; Horsetail, Field; Willowherb, Rosebay

Milk Flow

Galactagogue - Bulrush; Chickweed; Elder; Horsetail, Field; Nettle, Stinging

Prevent Pregnancy

anti-fertility - Shepherd's Purse

Menopause

Clover, Red

Continued

Menstruation

Emmenagogue - Bulrush; Chickweed; Daisy; Nettle, Stinging; Raspberry; Shepherd's Purse; Silverweed; Wood-sorrel; Yarrow

Vaginitis

Bulrush; Oak

Headache, Stress

see also: Pain

General - Nettle, Stinging; Woodruff

Nervine - Hop

Sedative - Bulrush; Clover; Red; Cowslip *Primula veris* (root, petals); Ground Elder; Hawthorn; **Hop**; Reed, Common; Silverweed; Spruce; St. John's Wort *Hypericum perforatum* (aerial parts); Woodruff; **Valerian, Common** *Valeriana officinalis* (root)

Infections

General - Burdock; Rose, Dog

Antibacterial - Bilberry; Burdock; Dandelions

Anti-fungal - Burdock; Nettle, Stinging

Antimicrobial - Couchgrass

Antiseptic - Beech; Bilberry; Hop; Horsetail, Field; Meadowsweet; Mustard, Garlic; Oak; Plantain; Ramson; Spruce; Yarrow

Detergent - Clover; Red

Colds, Influenza

Rose, Dog; Yarrow

Inflammation

see also: Infections; Rheumatic Conditions; Wounds

Anti-inflammatory - Bramble; Bulrush; Burdock; Chestnut, Sweet; Cleavers; Couchgrass; Hop; Meadowsweet; Mustard, Garlic; Nettle, Stinging; Raspberry; Silverweed; **St. John's Wort** *Hypericum perforatum* (aerial parts); Willowherb, Rosebay; Woodruff; Yarrow

Demulcent - Bindweed, Hedge; Chickweed; Couchgrass;

Daisy; Mallow, Marsh *Althaea officinalis* (leaves, flowers); Plantain; Willowherb, Rosebay;

Emollient - **Chickweed, Common**; **Comfrey** *Symphytum officinale* (leaves, root); Couchgrass; Daisy; Knotweed, Japanese; **Mallow, Marsh** *Althaea officinalis* (leaves, flowers); Willowherb, Rosebay;

Quercetin - Hawthorn

Resveratrol - Knotweed, Japanese

Insomnia

see also: Headache, Stress

General - Cleavers; Hawthorn; Hop; Meadowsweet; Woodruff

Hypnotic - Hop; Valerian, Common *Valeriana officinalis* (root)

Joints, Muscles, Bones

see also: Rheumatic Conditions; Inflammations

Chestnut, Sweet; Currant, Red; Daisy; Elder; Ground Elder

Kidney, Bladder

General - Couchgrass; Daisy; Plantain; Shepherd's Purse; Yarrow

Diuretic - Bilberry; Bindweed, Hedge; Birch; Blackthorn; Bramble; Bulrush; Burdock; Chickweed, Common;

Cleavers; **Couchgrass**; **Dandelion**; Deadnettle, Purple; Elder; Ground Elder; Hawthorn; Hop; Horsetail, Field; Knotweed, Japanese; Meadowsweet; Mustard, Hedge; Nettle, Stinging; Plantain; Ramson; Raspberry; Reed, Common; Rose, Dog; Scurvy-grass; Shepherd's Purse; Silverweed; Sorrel; Strawberry; Wood-sorrel; **Yarrow** **Lithontripic** - Birch; Bulrush; Couchgrass; Meadowsweet; Nettle, Stinging; **Parsley Piert** *Aphanes arvensis* (aerial parts); Reed, Common

Cystitis

Birch; Blackthorn; Bramble; Bulrush; Cleavers; Couchgrass; Cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccus* (fruit); Hop; Horsetail, Field; Meadowsweet; Nettle, Stinging

Bedwetting

Horsetail, Field; Nettle, Stinging

Liver, Gall bladder, Spleen

General - Couchgrass; Daisy; Strawberry

Bitter - Birch; Yarrow

Cholagogue - Burdock; **Dandelion**; Dock; Ramson; Yarrow

Hepatic - Cleavers; **Dandelion**; Dock; Hop; Sorrel, Common; Woodruff; **Yarrow**

Lymphatic System

Chickweed, Common

Memory, Concentration

see also: Cardiovascular System - vasodilator

Anthocyanin - Bilberry; Currant, Black; Bramble; Elder (berries)

Mouth

Toothache

see also: Pain

Odontalgic - Beech; Goldenrod *Solidago virgaurea* (root); Reed, Common; Silverweed; Yarrow

Ulcers

Bilberry; Daisy; Willowherb, Rosebay

Pain

Analgesic - Meadowsweet; Silverweed; St. John's Wort *Hypericum perforatum* (aerial parts)

Anodyne - Daisy; Horsetail, Field; Hop; Wood-sorrel

Poisoning

Antidote - Reed, Common

Continued

Emetic - Elder

Prostate Gland

Horsetail, Field; Nettle, Stinging; Willowherb, Rosebay

Respiratory System and Voice

see also: Infections – Colds, Influenza

Pectoral - Catsear; **Elder**

Asthma

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

Bronchitis

Mustard, Garlic; Ramson; Reed, Common

Cough

see also: Blockages

General - Bramble; Burdock; Chestnut, Sweet; Clover; Red; Hop; Horsetail, Field

Antitussive - Beech; Coltsfoot *Tussilago farfara* (leaves); Daisy; Reed, Common

Demulcent - Bindweed, Hedge; Chickweed, Common; Couchgrass; Daisy; **Mallow, Marsh** *Althaea officinalis* (leaves, flowers); Plantain; Willowherb, Rosebay;

Expectorant - Beech; Chestnut, Sweet; Chickweed, Common; Daisy; **Elder**; Mustard, Hedge; Ramson; Silverweed; Spruce; Wood-sorrel; **Yarrow**

Throat Infections

Cleavers; Silverweed

Voice

Antiaphonic - Bramble; Horsetail, Field; Mustard, Hedge

Rheumatic Conditions

see also: Inflammation; Kidney, Bladder; Joints, Muscles, Bones

Anti-rheumatic - Birch; Blackthorn; Chestnut, Sweet; Currant, Red; Daisy; Dandelion; Elder; Ground Elder; Hawthorn; Hop; Horsetail, Field; Meadowsweet; Nettle, Stinging; Strawberry

Rubefacient - **Horseradish** *Armoracia rusticana*; Nettle, Stinging; Peppermint *Mentha piperita* (aerial parts); Ramson;

Skin

see also: Inflammation; Wounds, Burns; Warts

General - Beech; Birch; Cleavers; Clover; Red; Dandelion; Dock; Hawthorn; Horsetail, Field; Mustard, Garlic; Nettle, Stinging; Oak; Sorrel, Common; Sycamore; Yarrow

Bites, Stings, Rashes

General - Dock; Ground Elder; Plantain

Antihistamine - Plantain

Emollient - Chickweed; Comfrey *Symphytum officinale* (leaves, root); Couchgrass; Daisy; Knotweed, Japanese;

Mallow, Marsh *Althaea officinalis* (leaves, flowers); Willowherb, Rosebay;

Boils, Splinters

Bilberry; Bindweed, Hedge; Bulrush; Burdock; Couchgrass; Daisy; Hawthorn; Sorrel, Common; Spruce; Wood-sorrel

Psoriasis

General - sunshine; Cleavers; Dock

Fumaric acid - Fumitory *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 - Beech; Bilberry; Hop; Horsetail, Field; Meadowsweet; Mustard, Garlic; Oak; Plantain; Ramson; Spruce; Yarrow

Astringent - Bilberry; Birch; Blackthorn; Bramble; Bulrush; Chestnut, Sweet; Chickweed, Common; Cleavers; Deadnettle, Purple; Dock; Hazel; Horsetail, Field;

Meadowsweet; **Nettle, Stinging**; **Oak**; Plantain; Ramson; Raspberry; Reed, Common; Rose, Dog; Shepherd's Purse; Silverweed; Sorrel; Strawberry; Sycamore; Willowherb, Rosebay; Wood-sorrel; **Yarrow**

Detergent - Clover; Red

Emollient - Chickweed; Comfrey *Symphytum officinale* (leaves, root); Couchgrass; Daisy; Knotweed, Japanese;

Mallow, Marsh *Althaea officinalis* (leaves, flowers); Navelwort; Willowherb, Rosebay;

Vulnerable - Bramble; Bulrush; Burdock; **Chickweed**;

Cleavers; **Elder**; Ground Elder; Horsetail, Field; Knotweed, Japanese; **Mallow, Marsh** *Althaea officinalis* (leaves, flowers); Mustard, Garlic; **Plantain**; Shepherd's Purse; **St. John's Wort** *Hypericum perforatum* (aerial parts); Sycamore; **Yarrow**

Ulcers

Scurvy-grass, 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.

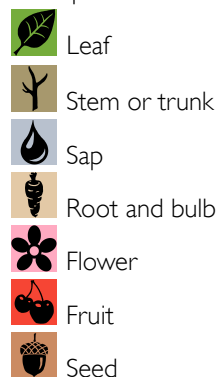
This list of plants was compiled from several sources which have claimed edibility of these plants or some of their parts. The information was cross-referenced with information from herbal medicine books and databases of poisonous plants. Some of it is contradictory. Every effort has been made to bring 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:



Other:



Agrimony

Botanical name: *Agrimonia eupatoria*

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: tea



: cooked

Safety unknown

Alexanders

Botanical name: *Smyrniolum 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



: flavouring

Contains **furanocoumarin**, especially the root, and when damaged or attacked by mould. **Eat sparingly.**

Angelica, Wild *Angelica sylvestris* - see Angelica above

Apple, Crab

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.

Archangel, Yellow

Botanical name: *Lamium galeobdolon*

Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



(shoot) : cooked

Safety unknown

Arrowhead

Botanical name: *Sagittaria sagittifolia*

Family: Water-plantain (Alismataceae)

Perennial

Collectability: rare - avoid

Edible parts and how to consume:



(shoot)



(peeled) : cooked

Safety unknown

Arum, Bog

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.

Ash

Botanical name: *Fraxinus excelsior*

Family: Olive (Oleaceae)

Deciduous tree

Collectability: plentiful, common

Contact with plant may cause dermatitis in sensitive individuals.

Main Benefit:



: longevity

Use - Overview



Continued

Features and Identification

Habitat

Type: open woods, hedges
Distribution: throughout northern hemisphere

General

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

Leaf

Shape: **pinnate**
Arrangement: opposite pairs of leaflets
Edge: finely toothed

Trunk

Colour: grey-green
Texture: smooth when young, turning more rugged when mature

Flower

Arrangement: pairs
When: April to May with leaves

Colour: 

Seed

Shape: oval
Size: 30mm with casing
Casing: one-winged key, long, pointed oval, slight twist


Culinary Use

Flavour - Rating and Description


 ★★☆☆ pungent

How to Consume:

 : tea; leaf curd

 : oil; pickled like capers (unripe)

Special preparation

 boil in 3-4 changes of water to remove bitterness


Used as ...


 : food

 : condiment

Medicinal Use

Action:

 **astringent, cathartic, diaphoretic, diuretic, laxative, purgative**


 (bark) : **anti-periodic, astringent, bitter, febrifuge**

 (including wings) **carminative, diuretic**

May treat:

 gout, rheumatism (eliminates urates)

Other Use

 green dye

 (trunk) timber; (bark) tannin

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

 : dry to store

Note

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

Glossary

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


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

Avens, Water

Botanical name: *Geum rivale*

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : flavouring, tea

Avens, Wood Bennet

Botanical name: *Geum urbanum*

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat

Edible parts and how to consume:

  : flavouring, tea

Balsam, Himalayan

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

Colour: 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

Colour:  depth varies
Continued...

Seed

Colour: black

Size: 2-3mm

Casing: fluted capsule, swollen centre with pointed ends

Other: ripe pods burst open when touched

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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

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

Barberry

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.

Barley, Mouse

Botanical name: *Hordeum murinum*

Family: Grass (Graminae)

Annual

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: flour

Safety unknown

Basil, Wild

Botanical name: *Clinopodium vulgare*

Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw, flavouring

Safety unknown

Bedstraw, Hedge

Botanical name: *Galium mollugo*

Family: Bedstraw (Rubiaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw

Safety unknown

Bedstraw, Lady's

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

Colour: pale grey

Texture: smooth

Flower

Arrangement: pairs

When: April to May with leaves

Colour: 

Seed

Shape: three-sided

Colour: red-brown

Size: small

Casing: prickly husk, four lobes open when ripe

Other: not every year, 3-8 year cycle

Continued


Culinary Use

Flavour - Rating and Description

 ★★★ bland


 ★★★★★ 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 most 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, Creeping

Botanical name: *Campanula rapunculoides*

Family: Bellflower (Campanulaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

  (shoot)  : 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 rapunculus*

Family: Bellflower (Campanulaceae)

Biennial/perennial

Collectability: rare and of little value as food

Edible parts and how to consume:

  : raw

Safety unknown

Betony

Botanical name: *Stachys officinalis*

Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

  : tea

 : raw

Safety unknown


Bilberry

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

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

Colour: 

Fruit

Shape: round

Colour: blue-black

Size: up to 10 mm

Other: purplish bloom

Culinary Use

Flavour - Rating and Description

 ★★★ mildly sweet-sour

How to Consume:

 : tea

 : raw, dried

Continued

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.

Bilberry, Northern

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

Bindweed, Black

Botanical name: *Fallopia convulvulus*


Family: Dock (Polygonaceae)

Annual

Collectability: weed

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : flour

 Fruit may be mildly toxic if consumed in large quantities.
Contains **oxalic acid**.

Bindweed, Field

Botanical name: *Convolvulus arvensis*

Family: Bindweed (Convolvulaceae)

Perennial climber

Collectability: common, plentiful, weed

Edible parts and how to consume:

Plant : **flavouring**

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

Colour:

Culinary Use

How to Consume:

   : cooked

Nutrition


 : starch, sugar

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

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

Colour: rusty brown, later with white patches

Texture: papery, peeling

Flower

Shape: catkins

Arrangement: male: hanging; female: erect

When: April to May

Other: with leaves

Colour: 


Seed

Size: tiny


Culinary Use


Flavour - 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/litre, 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, Silver *Betula pendula* - see Downy Birch above

Bistort

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, 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

Colour: 

Seed

Casing: long erect pods

Culinary Use

Flavour - Rating and Description



peppery Continued

How to Consume:

  : raw

 : sprouted

Used as ...

   : food

Glossary

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

Blackberry *Rubus fruticosus* - see Bramble


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

Leaf

Shape: pointed oval

Arrangement: alternate

Edge: finely toothed

Other: small

Trunk

Colour: dark brown

Texture: large spines throughout

Flower

Diameter: 10 mm

Arrangement: on spines

When: before leaves

Colour:

Fruit

Shape: round


Colour: blue-black

Size: up to 15 mm


Other: called "sloe", bloom on fruit

Culinary Use


Flavour - Rating and Description

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


How to Consume:

 : raw, jelly, syrup, flavouring, spirits

Special preparation



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

Used as ...

 : food, flavouring


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

Bogbean

Botanical name: *Menyanthes trifoliata*


Family: Bogbean (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

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 aquilum*

Perennial

Collectability: famine food - unsafe but potentially nutritious with careful preparation
Invasive weed

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : cooked

 May contain carcinogens - avoid.
Contains **thiaminase**.

Bramble

Also known as Blackberry

Botanical name: *Rubus fruticosus*

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

Deciduous shrub



Continued

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



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

Colour: 

Fruit

Shape: round segments


Colour: blue-black

Size: up to 2 cm


Other: called "Blackberry", juicy

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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/litre, 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, flavouring

  : 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

Brooklime

Botanical name: *Veronica beccabunga*

Family: Figwort (Scrophulariaceae)
Perennial

Collectability: specialised habitat - damp, aquatic

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

Safety unknown

Broom

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

Broom, Butcher's

Botanical name: *Ruscus aculeatus*

Family: Lily (Liliaceae)

Evergreen shrub

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



(shoots) : cooked



: roasted



Fruit can cause gastric upset.

Contains **saponins**.

Bryony, Black

Botanical name: *Tamus communis*

Family: Yam (Dioscoreaceae)

Perennial climber

Collectability: poisonous and of little value as food

Edible parts and how to consume:



(shoots) : cooked



: roasted



Consumption may cause irritation.

Contains **saponins** and **calcium oxalate** - avoid

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

Botanical name: *Ajuga reptans*

Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: poisonous and of little value as food



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

Bugloss, 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**

Bullace

Botanical name: *Prunus domestica ssp insititia*

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

Deciduous tree

Collectability: plentiful, specialised habitat

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw



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

Bulrush

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

Colour:

Culinary Use

Flavour - Rating and Description

★★★ cucumber-like

immature: sweet corn like


: roasted: nutty

How to Consume:

young base immature spike, pollen: raw

: raw, flour

Continued

 : 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, galactagogue, 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

Bulrush, Lesser *Typha angustifolia* - see Bulrush above

Bur Marigold, Trifid


Botanical name: *Bidens tripartita*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Annual

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

 (young) : cooked

Safety unknown

Bur-reed, Branched

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

Colour: dark

Size: big

Flower

Shape: egg

Diameter: up to 30mm

Petals/sepals: hooked **bracts**

Arrangement: short-stalked spikes

Colour: 

Culinary Use


Flavour - Rating and Description


 mucilaginous


How to Consume:

 young: raw

 : raw

 (best young): raw, roasted, lactic soda

 young: raw

 : sprouted

Continued

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, Great

Botanical name: *Sanguisorba officinalis*

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



(shoot) : raw

Safety unknown

Burnet, Salad

Botanical name: *Sanguisorba minor*

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



(shoot) : raw

Safety unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: cooked

Buttercup, Celery-leaved

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, 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, Meadow

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

Calamint, Common

Botanical name: *Calamintha ascendens*

(*syn. Clinopodium ascendens*)

Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: flavouring

Safety unknown

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

Continued

Collectability: specialized habitat - tidal waters

Carrot, Wild

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.

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

Colour:

Culinary Use

Flavour - Rating and Description



★★★ mild, course

How to Consume:



young : raw

Used as ...



: food

Medicinal Use

Action:



: **pectoral** ooo,

May treat:



: chest and lung complaints

Cat's-tail *Typha latifolia* - see Bulrush

Celandine, Greater

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.

Celandine, Lesser

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.

Celery, Wild

Botanical name: *Apium graveolens*

Family: Carrot (Apiaceae) ⚠️

Biennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw



: cooked



: flavouring



Contact with sap may cause irritation in sensitive people.

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

Centaury, Common

Botanical name: *Centaurium erythraea*

Family: Gentian (Gentianaceae)

Annual

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

Whole plant : flavouring

Safety unknown

Chamomile

Botanical name: *Chamaemelum nobile*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



(shoot) : flavouring, tea



Contains **coumarin**.

Chamomile, Corn

Botanical name: *Anthemis arvensis*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Annual/biennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

Medicinal

Safety unknown

Chamomile, Stinking

Also known as Mayweed

Botanical name: *Anthemis cotula*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Annual/biennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: flavouring



Contact and consumption may cause allergies in sensitive people.

Charlock

Botanical name: *Sinapis arvensis*

Continued

Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Annual
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw



: cooked



: sprouted, flavouring



May be toxic when pods form

Cherry, 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, Cornelian

Botanical name: *Cornus mas*
Family: Dogwood (Cornaceae)
Deciduous shrub

Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw



: roasted

Safety unknown

Cherry, Dwarf

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, Wild

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 *Anthriscus sylvestris* - see Parsley, Cow

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.

Chestnut, Sweet

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

Colour: grey-brown

Texture: smooth when young, turning more rugged when mature

Flower

Shape: catkin

When: July

Colour:

Seed

Shape: roundish

Colour: dark brown

Size: 3cm

Casing: spiky husk

Other: 2-3 in case

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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

Continued

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

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

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

Colour:

Seed

Casing: capsule

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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.

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

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

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, flavouring

 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 may 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

Colour:

Seed

Shape: round

Colour: green

Size: 4mm

Other: tiny, clingy bristles on surface

Culinary Use

Flavour - Rating and Description



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.

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

Cloudberry

Botanical name: *Rubus chamaemorus*

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

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

Continued ...

 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


Colour: 


Culinary Use


Flavour - Rating and Description


 ★★☆☆ delicate vanilla flavour

How to Consume:

 young: raw, cooked (best)

 : cooked

 young: raw

 : raw, cooked, sprouted;
pods: cooked

Used as ...


 : food, flavouring

  : 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


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.

Clubrush

Also known as Bulrush

Botanical name: *Scirpus lacustris*

Family: Sedge (Cyperaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

  : flour

Safety unknown

Clubrush, Common

Botanical name: *Scirpus maritimus*

Family: Sedge (Cyperaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root

Edible parts and how to consume:

 (shoot)  : raw

 (pollen)  : flour

Safety unknown

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

 : flavouring

 Contains traces of **pyrrolizidine alkaloids**.


Comfrey

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, flavouring

 Narcotic if consumed in quantity.
Leaves contain **oxalic acid**.

Cornel, Dwarf

Botanical name: *Cornus suecica*

Family: Dogwood (Cornaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw

Safety unknown

Cornsalad

Botanical name: *Valerianella locusta*

Family: Valerian (Valerianaceae)

Annual

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw

Safety unknown

Couchgrass

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

Leaf

Shape: long narrow blades

Root

Type: creeping rhizome

Flower

Arrangement: spikes

When: June to September

Colour:

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

Cowberry

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

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

Cranberry

Botanical name: *Vaccinium oxycoccus*

Family: Heath (Ericaceae)

Evergreen shrub

Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat

Edible parts and how to consume:



: tea



: raw

Cranesbill, Cut-leaved

Botanical name: *Geranium dissectum*

Family: Cranesbill (Geraniaceae)

Annual/perennial

Collectability: weed

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw



: cooked

Safety unknown

Creeping Jenny

Botanical name: *Lysimachia nummularia*

Family: Primrose (Primulaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: tea

Safety unknown

Cress, Hoary

Botanical name: *Lepidium draba* (syn. *Cardaria draba*)

Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: weed

Edible parts and how to consume:



: flavouring



: sprouted



May be toxic

Cress, Swine

Botanical name: *Coronopus squamatus*

Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)

Annual/biennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: cooked



: sprouted

Safety unknown

Crowberry

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

Edible parts and how to consume:



(shoot)



(bud) : raw (Vit C)

Safety unknown

Currant, Black

Botanical name: *Ribes nigrum*

Family: Currant (Grossulariaceae)

Deciduous shrub

Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat

Edible parts and how to consume:



: cooked



: raw

Safety unknown

Currant, Red

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

Colour:

Fruit

Shape: round

Colour: red

Size: 5-7mm

Other: shiny, translucent

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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

Botanical name: *Bellis perennis*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Perennial

Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, weed

Continued

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

Colour:

Culinary Use

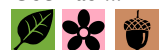
How to Consume:

young: raw

: raw

: sprouted

Used as ...



: food

Medicinal Use

Action:



anodyne, antispasmodic, antitussive, astringent, demulcent, depurative, digestive, emollient, expectorant, laxative, ophthalmic, 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

Colour: cream

Depth: very deep

Flower

Diameter: 35-50mm

Arrangement: solitary, leafless stalk

Colour:

Seed

Shape: long, thin

Size: 2mm

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

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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

Continued ...


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, antiviral, 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



Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

 best when when plant is flowering, spring

 For less bitter flavour (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, Red

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

Colour: 

Culinary Use

How to Consume:



Used as ...



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

Dewberry

Botanical name: *Rubus caesius*

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

Deciduous shrub

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

 Sharp thorns

Dittander

Botanical name: *Lepidium latifolium*

Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: rare and of little value as food Continued

Edible parts and how to consume:

   : raw, flavouring

Dock, Broad-leaved *Rumex obtusifolius*
- see Dock, Curled below

Dock, Curled


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

Colour: 

Seed

Size: tiny

Culinary Use


Flavour - 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

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

Botanical name: *Lemna minor*

Family: Duckweed (Lemnaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : details unknown

Safety unknown

Duke of Argyll's Tea-tree

Botanical name: *Lycium barbarum*


Family: Nightshade (Solanaceae)


Shrub

Collectability: good, mostly coastal

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : tea

 : raw, sweeter when dried - berries are also known as wolf-berries or goji - very beneficial

 shrub has thorns

Dulse

Botanical name: *Palmaria palmata* - Seaweed

Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat - tidal waters

Dulse, Pepper

Botanical name: *Laurencia pinnatifida* - Seaweed

Collectability: specialized habitat - tidal waters

Elder

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

Colour:

Fruit

Shape: round

Colour: black

Size: 6mm

Other: ready when berries are black and bunch turns down

Culinary Use

Flavour - Rating and Description

🌸 ★★★ aromatic

🍒 ★★ bland

How to Consume:

🌸 : raw

🍒 : raw, syrup

Nutrition

🌸 : **Rutin**

🍒 : Vitamin A, B, C, antioxidant
anthocyanin

Used as ...

🌸 : flavouring, 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

Elder, Red-berried *Sambucus racemosa* - see Elder above

Evening Primrose

Botanical name: *Oenothera biennis*

Family: Willowherb (Onagraceae)
Biennial

Collectability: plentiful, worthwhile root, specialized habitat, weed

Edible parts and how to consume:

🌿 (shoot) : raw

🍷 : cooked

Continued ...



: cooked, oil



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

Evening Primrose, Large-flowered

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.

Fat Hen

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.

Fennel

Botanical name: *Foeniculum vulgare*

Family: Carrot (Apiaceae) 

Biennial/perennial

Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw



: flavouring, sprouted



: cooked



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

Fenugreek

Botanical name: *Trigonella ornithopodioides*

Family: Pea (Leguminosae)

Annual/perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw

Safety unknown

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:



: flavouring



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, Common

Botanical name: *Scrophularia nodosa*

Family: Figwort (Scrophulariaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: cooked



Avoid with rapid heart rate

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**.

Flixweed

Botanical name: *Descurainia sophia*

Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)

Annual

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



(shoot) : cooked



: raw, sprouted

Safety unknown

French Hales

Botanical name: *Sorbus latifolia*

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

Deciduous tree

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



(when nearly rotten)



The fruit causes gastric upset when eaten in quantity.

The bark and seeds contain or produce **hydrogen cyanide**.

Fumitory, Drug

Botanical name: *Fumaria officinalis*

Family: Fumitory (Fumariaceae)

Annual

Collectability: availability unknown, weed

Edible parts and how to consume:



: curdling agent

Safety unknown

Galingale

Botanical name: *Cyperus longus*


Family: Sedge (Cyperaceae)

Continued ...

Perennial

Collectability: rare and of little value as food

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : flavouring

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
Ramson

Gipsywort

Botanical name: *Lycopus europaeus*

Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

Safety unknown

Glasswort *Salicornia maritima* - see
Samphire, Marsh

Goatsbeard

Botanical name: *Tragopogon pratensis*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Annual/perennial

Collectability: availability unknown,
worthwhile root

Edible parts and how to consume:

 (shoot)   : raw

Safety unknown

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

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


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 Elder

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

Continued

Other: invasive, patch forming

General

Growth type: herb

Cycle: perennial

Height: up to 60cm

Other: hairless

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

Colour:

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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

Ground Ivy

Botanical name: *Glechoma hederacea*

Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown, weed

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw

Groundsel

Botanical name: *Senecio vulgaris*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Annual

Collectability: poisonous and of little value as food



Contains pyrrolizidine alkaloids.

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.

Harebell

Botanical name: *Campanula rotundifolia*

Family: Bellflower (Campanulaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw

Safety unknown

Hawkbit, Rough

Botanical name: *Leontodon hispidus*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown, weed

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw



: roasted, beverage

Safety unknown

Hawk's Beard

Botanical name: *Crepis tectorum*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Annual

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



(young) : cooked

Safety unknown

Hawthorn

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

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

Continued

Arrangement: small clusters

When: May to June

Colour:

Fruit

Shape: oval

Colour: red

Size: 10mm

Other: called "haw"

Seed


Casing: fruit

Other: one or more, depending on which species


Culinary Use


Flavour - Rating and Description

 ★★★ bland

 ★★★ bland, similar to mealy apple

How to Consume:

 : raw, tea, leaf curd

 : tea, spirits

 : raw, dried (fruit leather)

 : roasted

Nutrition

 Vitamin B, C, flavonoids (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 rosacea (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.

Hazel

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

Colour: silver-grey

Texture: metallic sheen

Flower

Shape: catkin

Arrangement: female: erect, male: hanging

When: December to April before leaves

Colour:

Seed

Shape: oval, slight ridge

Colour: pale to mid brown

Size: 10-25mm


Casing: hard shell, leaf cup

Culinary Use


Flavour - 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 flavour 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.

Heather

Botanical name: *Calluna vulgaris*

Family: Heath (Ericaceae)

Shrub

Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat

Edible parts and how to consume:



(shoot) : tea

Herb Bennet *Geum urbanum* - see

Avens, Wood

Hogweed

Botanical name: *Heracleum sphondylium*

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.

Hollyhock

Botanical name: *Alcea rosea*

Family: Mallow (Malvaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



(inner)

: raw



: starch

Safety unknown

Honeysuckle

Botanical name: *Lonicera periclymenum*

Family: Honeysuckle (Caprifoliaceae)

Deciduous woody climber

Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw



The berries contain **saponins**

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

Colour:

Culinary Use

How to Consume:



young: raw



young shoots: raw



: cooked



: tea

Nutrition



Rutin

Used as ...



: food



cones (dry): beverage, flavouring, 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.

Continued

Glossary

palmate: having lobes or leaflets like spread fingers

Horned-poppy, 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



: flavouring



: 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 equisetin 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



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

Colour: brown

Texture: segmented, succulent

Other: oval spore-bearing tip, precedes barren stem

Barren Stem

Colour: 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*

Juneberry

Botanical name: *Amelanchier lamarckii* (syn. *A. intermedia*)

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

Sgrub

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw

Safety unknown

Juniper

Botanical name: *Juniperus communis*

Family: Cypress (Cupressaceae)

Evergreen shrub

Collectability: rare and of little value as food

Edible parts and how to consume:



: tea



: flavouring, 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

Knapweed, Common

Botanical name: *Centaurea nigra*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



(petals) : raw

Safety unknown

Knotgrass

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, 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

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

Colour:

Seed

Size: tiny

Other: needs long, hot summer to mature

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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

Botanical name: *Alchemilla vulgaris*

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw



: cooked

Safety unknown

Lady's Smock *Cardamine pratensis* - see Cuckoo Flower

Largeflower Wild Onion

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

Laver

Botanical name: *Porphyra umbiliculis* - Seaweed

Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat - tidal waters

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

Leek, 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

Lettuce, Greater (Prickly)

Botanical name: *Lactuca virosa*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Biennial

Collectability: availability unknown


Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw



: oil

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

Lettuce, Wall

Botanical name: *Mycelis muralis*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Perennial

Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw

Lime, Common

Botanical name: *Tilia vulgaris*

Family: Lime (Tiliaceae)

Deciduous tree

Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw



: flavouring

Liquorice, Wild

Botanical name: *Astragalus glycyphyllos*

Family: Pea (Leguminosae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw, condensed juice

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, Yellow

Botanical name: *Lysimachia vulgaris*

Family: Primrose (Primulaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



(young) : details unknown

Safety unknown

Lords and Ladies

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**.

Lovage, Scots

Botanical name: *Ligusticum scoticum*

Family: Carrot (Apiaceae) 

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



(shoot)



: raw,

flavouring

Lungwort

Botanical name: *Pulmonaria officinalis*

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 Fern


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**.

Mallow, Common

Botanical name: *Malva sylvestris*

Family: Mallow (Malvaceae)

Annual/perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

   : raw

 Can concentrate **nitrates**.

Mallow, Marsh

Botanical name: *Althaea officinalis*

Family: Mallow (Malvaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: Rare and protected.

Edible parts and how to consume:

  : raw

Safety unknown

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

Marigold, 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.

Marigold, 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.

Marjoram, Wild


Botanical name: *Origanum vulgare*

Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : flavouring

Safety unknown

Mayweed *Anthemis cotula* - see Chamomile, Stinking

Mayweed, Pineapple

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.

Mayweed, Scented

Botanical name: *Matricaria recutita*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Annual/biennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

 (shoot)  : tea
Safety unknown


Meadowsweet

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



Continued

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

Colour: may be dark red

Texture: hairless

Flower

Diameter: 2-5 mm

Petals/sepals: 5-6

Arrangement: frothy clusters

Other: scent of fresh hay

Colour: 

Culinary Use



Flavour - Rating and Description

 ★★☆☆ hint of vanilla

How to Consume:

   : cooked, tea

Special preparation

  Infusion: 40-50 g per litre. Should not be heated above 90° C, as boiling will drive off the salicylic acid.


Used as ...


  : flavouring, 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**


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

Medick, Black

Botanical name: *Medicago lupulina*

Family: Pea (Leguminosae)

Annual

Collectability: availability unknown, weed

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : cooked

 : sprouted

 Contains **trypsin inhibitor**.

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



Botanical name: *Melilotus officinalis*


Family: Pea (Leguminosae)

Biennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

  (pods) : raw, flavouring

 (shoot) : cooked

 : details unknown

 Contains **coumarin**, especially when dried.

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, Wild

Botanical name: *Reseda lutea*

Family: Mignonette (Resedaceae)

Biennial/perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

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:



: flavouring



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

Mint, Corn *Mentha arvensis* - see Apple Mint above

Mint, Corsican *Mentha requienii* - see Apple Mint above

Mint, Eau-de-Cologne *Mentha citrata* - see Apple Mint above

Mint, Horse *Mentha longifolia* - see Apple Mint above

Mint, Water *Mentha aquatica* - 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 *Sorbus aucuparia* - see Rowan

Mouse-ear, Common

Botanical name: *Cerastium fontanum*

Family: Pink (Caryophyllaceae)

Annual/perennial

Collectability: availability unknown, weed

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw



(young) : cooked
Safety unknown

Mouse-ear, 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

Mugwort

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**.

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, flavouring



May be toxic

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

Colour:

Seed

Casing: long erect pods

Other: often moldy before mature

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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

Continued

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

Colour:

Seed

Casing: 6-20mm long pods

Other: erect, close to stem

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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, flavouring, 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, flavouring



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

Myrtle, Bog

Botanical name: *Myrica gale*

Family: Bog Myrtle (Myricaceae)

Deciduous shrub

Collectability: rare and of little value as food

Edible parts and how to consume:



: flavouring



May cause abortion

Navelwort

Botanical name: *Umbilicus rupestris*

Family: Stonecrop (Crassulaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: plentiful, specialised habitat

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw

Nettle, Annual (Small) *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

Continued

adrenal glands and the immune, endocrine, nervous, urinary and digestive system. May protect neighboring plants from fungal attack. Good wildlife plant.

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

Colour: yellow

Depth: very deep

Flower

Diameter: tiny

Arrangement: drooping spikes

When: May to October


Colour: 


Culinary Use

Flavour - 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 repellent, 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


Colour: 

Culinary Use

Flavour - Rating and Description

 ★★★ bitter, radish-like

How to Consume:

 : raw, leaf curd

Used as ...

 : food

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection

Best before flowering

Oak


The two main Oak species are Pendunculate *Quercus robur* and Sessile *Quercus petraea*

Botanical name: *Quercus L.*

Family: Beech (Fagaceae)

Deciduous tree

Collectability: plentiful, common

 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

Colour: grey-brown

Texture: rugged

Flower

Shape: catkin

When: April to May with leaves

Colour: 

Seed

Shape: oval

Colour: mid brown when ripe

Size: 20mm

Casing: hard, smooth, with scaly cap

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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

Orache, Common

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 **nitrites**.

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

Orache, Spear-leaved

Botanical name: *Atriplex prostrata*

Family: Goosefoot (Chenopodiaceae)

Annual

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

  : cooked

 Can concentrate **nitrites**.

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

Orchid, Early Purple

Botanical name: *Orchis mascula*

Family: Orchid (Orchidaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: famine food - rare but nutritious



: cooked

Note: Many orchids are protected and none grow in great profusion - avoid

Orchid, Pyramidal *Anacamptis pyramidalis* - see Orchid, Early Purple above

Oregon Grape

Also known as Hollyleaved Barberry

Botanical name: *Mahonia aquifolium*

Family: Barberry (Berberidaceae)

Evergreen shrub

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw

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

Oxalis, Yellow

Botanical name: *Oxalis corniculata*

Family: Wood-sorrel (Oxalidaceae)

Annual/perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Safety unknown

see Wood-sorrel

Oxtongue, 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, Cow

Botanical name: *Anthriscus sylvestris*

Family: Carrot (Apiaceae) ⚠

Perennial

Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, weed

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw



: cooked



May be toxic.
See note on carrot family.

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

Botanical name: *Aphanes arvensis*

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

Annual

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw

Safety unknown

Parsnip, Wild

Botanical name: *Pastinaca sativa*

Family: Carrot (Apiaceae) ⚠

Biennial

Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root

Edible parts and how to consume:



: cooked



: raw



: flavouring



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

Pea, Sea

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

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

Continued

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw



: flavouring, sprouted

Safety unknown

Pennyroyal

Botanical name: *Mentha pulegium*

Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: rare, protected and of little value as food

Edible parts and how to consume:



: flavouring

⚠ 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.

Pennywort *Umbilicus rupestris* - see Navelwort

Peppermint

Botanical name: *Mentha piperita*

Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: flavouring

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

Persicaria, Pale

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**.

Pignut

Botanical name: *Conopodium majus*

Family: Carrot (Apiaceae) ⚠

Collectability: good, specialised habitat

Main Benefit:



: source of carbohydrates

Use - Overview



Features and Identification

Habitat

Type: open woods, shady grassy areas, often near water courses

Other: not on chalk

General

Growth type: herb

Cycle: perennial

Height: up to 30 cm

Other: delicate plant

Leaf

Shape: **pinnate**, upper almost thread like

Texture: parallel ribs

Arrangement: basal rosette

Edge: smooth

Root

Type: tuberous

Colour: dark brown papery skin, cream coloured inside

Size: 1-5 cm

Depth: 5 or more cm

Flower

Arrangement: **umbel**

When: May to June

Colour:

Culinary Use

Flavour - Rating and Description



★★★ sweet, nutty, carrot-like

How to Consume:



: raw

Special preparation



: remove skin

Nutrition



: starch, sugar

Used as ...



: food

Collection, Storing, Notes

Collection



Each plant has one round or lobed tuber which may be at some depth, and possibly to the side of the plant. Follow the root which may easily break if not handled with care. It is best to collect from plants growing in loose soil.

Note

Please read notes on collecting roots on the Root page.

Glossary

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

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 Water

Botanical name: *Alisma plantago-aquatica*

Family: Water-plantain (Alismataceae)


Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Continued

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, Greater *Plantago major* - see Ribwort Plantain below

Plantain, Ribwort

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


Colour: 

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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, ophthalmic, 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


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, Wild

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.

Poppy, Common

Botanical name: *Papaver rhoeas*

Family: Poppy (Papaveraceae)


Annual

Collectability: availability unknown, weed

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw (before 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

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.

Purslane, Water

Botanical name: *Lythrum portula*

Family: Loosestrife (Lythraceae)

Annual

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw

Safety unknown

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

Ramson

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

Colour:

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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/arthritis joints (stimulation to local circulation)

Other Use

Whole plant: insect (including moth) and mole repellent, 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 litre

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

Rape

Botanical name: *Brassica napus*

Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)

Annual/biennial

Collectability: suspect source information, caution advised

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw



: oil, flavouring



The oil of the seeds is toxic, except in some cultivars.

Raspberry

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

Colour: light brown

Texture: woody, small thorns

Other: whip-like, erect or leaning

Flower

Diameter: 9-11 mm

Arrangement: clusters

When: April to August

Colour:

Fruit

Shape: round segments

Colour: dull red

Size: 10-20mm

Other: juicy

Culinary Use

Flavour - Rating and Description



★★★ sweet, fruity, juicy

How to Consume:



: tea



: raw, juice, syrup

Nutrition



: Vitamin C, **ellagic acid**

Used as ...



: tea



: food, flavouring

Medicinal Use

Action:



: **anti-inflammatory, astringent**, birthing aid (taken last three months of pregnancy, not earlier), **cardiac, decongestant, ophthalmic, ophthalmic, 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

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

Continued

Arrangement: alternate, clasping stem

Other: grey-green

Stem Trunk

Cross Section: round, hollow

Flower


Arrangement: feathery clusters at top of stem


Colour: 

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 litre

Reedmace, Great *Typha latifolia* - see Bulrush

Reedmace, Small *Typha angustifolia* - see Bulrush, Lesser

Rest-harrow

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

Rock Tripe

Botanical name: *Umblicaria pistulata*

Safety unknown

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

Colour: green

Texture: smooth with sparse curved thorns


Other: trailing, whip-like

Continued

Flower

Diameter: 45-50mm

Other: scented

Colour: 

Fruit

Shape: oval

Colour: red

Size: 20mm

Other: called "hip"

Seed

Shape: oval, hairy


Colour: cream

Size: 3mm with casing

Casing: fruit


Culinary Use

Flavour - 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, flavonoids and essential fatty acids

 : Vitamin E, essential fatty acids

Used as ...


 : beverage


 : food, beverage, flavouring


 : 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

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

Also known as Mountain Ash

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**.

Rush, Flowering

Botanical name: *Butomus umbellatus*

Family: Flowering Rush (Butomaceae)
Perennial

Collectability: rare and of little value as food

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

Continued

Edible parts and how to consume:

 (shoot)   : raw

 : sprouted
Safety unknown

Samphire, Marsh


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.

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, Opposite-leaved 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*

Scabious, Devilsbit

Botanical name: *Succisa pratensis*

Family: Teasel (Dipsacaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

 (shoot) : raw

Safety unknown


Scurvy-grass, Common

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


Colour:

Seed

Casing: near-round pods

Culinary Use


Flavour - 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**

May treat:



external: ulcers

Collection, Storing, Notes

Drying


Best used fresh for the Vitamin C content, but can be dried to store.

Scurvy-grass, Early *Cochlearia danica* - see Common Scurvy-grass above

Scurvy-grass, English *Cochlearia anglica* - see Common Scurvy-grass above

Sea Holly

Botanical name: *Eryngium maritimum*

Family: Carrot (Apiaceae) 

Perennial

Collectability: rare and of little value as food

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw

Sea Kale

Botanical name: *Crambe maritima*

Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)

Continued ...

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

Sedge, Pendulous

Botanical name: *Carex pendula*

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



(if free from ergot) : cooked, flour

Safety unknown

Self-heal

Botanical name: *Prunella vulgaris*

Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw

Safety unknown

Service Tree, Wild

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**.

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

Colour:

Seed

Size: tiny

Casing: heart-shaped pods

Culinary Use

Flavour - Rating and Description

Plant: spicy cabbage

How to Consume:

Plant: raw

Nutrition



: iron, calcium, cholin, Vitamin C



: 35% fatty oil

Unspecified part: **fumaric acid**

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 loses potency when dried.

Silverweed

Botanical name: *Argentina anserina*

Formerly classified as: *Potentilla anserina*

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: plentiful, common, widespread, good, weed

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

Continued

Arrangement: basal rosette

Edge: toothed

Other: silvery underside

Stem

Colour: 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

Colour: 


Culinary Use


Flavour - 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

Snowberry

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


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

Colour: 

Seed

Size: tiny

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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 mashed (poultice): brings boils and abscesses to a head; itchy skin and ringworm (juice mixed with fumitory)

 : jaundice, gravel, kidney stones

Continued ...

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

Sorrel, Sheep's *Rumex acetosella* - see Sorrel, Common above

Sow-thistle, Perennial

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, Prickly

Botanical name: *Sonchus asper*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Annual

Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw



: cooked



Remove prickles

Sow-thistle, Smooth

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

Spatterdock, Common

Botanical name: *Nuphar advena*

Family: Water-lily (Nymphaeaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw

Safety unknown

Spearmint

Botanical name: *Mentha spicata*

Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: flavouring



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

Speedwell, Germander

Botanical name: *Veronica chamaedrys*

Family: Figwort (Scrophulariaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: tea

Safety unknown

Spiguel

Botanical name: *Meum athamanticum*

Family: Carrot (Apiaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: rare and of little value as food

Edible parts and how to consume:



: cooked, flavouring



: cooked

Spring Beauty

Botanical name: *Claytonia perfoliata*

Family: Dock (Portulacaceae)

Annual

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:



: raw

Safety unknown

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

Continued ...

Trunk

Colour: purple-brown

Texture: rough

Flower

Shape: male: catkin; female: cone

Colour: 

Seed


Casing: cone

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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.

Spurrey, Corn

Botanical name: *Apergula arvensis*

Family: Pink (Caryophyllaceae)

Annual

Collectability: availability unknown, weed

Edible parts and how to consume:

  : details unknown

 The leaves and seeds contain

saponins

St. John's Wort, Perforate

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.

Star of Bethlehem


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.

Star of Bethlehem, Spiked

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

Stonecrop, Biting

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, Reflexed

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, Common

Botanical name: *Erodium cicutarium*

Family: Cranesbill (Geraniaceae)

Annual/biennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

Safety unknown

Strawberry, Wild


Botanical name: *Fragaria vesca*

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: common, widespread, good

Main Benefit:

 : blood building, rheumatic conditions, contains **ellagic acid**

Use - Overview



Continued ...



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: 1.5mm
 Petals/sepals: 5, pointed, close together
 Arrangement: solitary
 When: April to July

Colour:

Fruit

Shape: heart
 Colour: red

Seed

Size: tiny
 Casing: fruit
 Other: the seeds sit in dimples on the surface of the fruit

Culinary Use

Flavour - Rating and Description

★★☆☆ sweet-sour, like cultivated, but stronger flavour

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 litre.
 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

Sumach, Stag's Horn

Botanical name: *Rhus typhina*

Family: Cashew (Anacardiaceae)

Deciduous shrub

Collectability: garden shrub

Edible parts and how to consume:

: raw, can be used as lemon substitute, high in Vitamin C

may cause allergic reactions in some individuals

Sweet Flag

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.

Sweet Oar Weed or Sugar Kelp

Botanical name: *Laminaria saccharina* - Seaweed

Collectability: specialized habitat - tidal waters

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

Use - Overview



Features and Identification

Habitat

Type: woods, hedges
 Distribution: Europe, North America

General

Growth type: tree
 Cycle: deciduous
 Continued

Height: up to 30 meters
Other: casts dense shade

Leaf

Shape: **palmate**

Arrangement: opposite on long stalks

Edge: toothed

Trunk

Colour: reddish-brown

Texture: smooth when young, flaking when old

Flower

Diameter: small

Petals/sepals: 5

Arrangement: hanging clusters

When: April to June

Colour: 

Seed

Shape: round

Size: 8mm

Casing: 30mm winged key, mirrored pairs in clusters

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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 litre)

Used as ...



food (see note below)



: sweetener; beverage (see note below)

Medicinal Use

Action:



inner bark: **astrigent, 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

Tansy

Botanical name: *Tanacetum vulgare*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Perennial

Collectability: suspect source information, caution advised

Edible parts and how to consume:



: flavouring



Contains **thujone**.

Does not contain **pyrrolizidine alkaloids**, which are present in some of Tansy's close relatives.

Tare, Hairy

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.

Thistle, Cabbage

Botanical name: *Cirsium oleraceum*

Family: Daisy (Asteraceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root

Edible parts and how to consume:



: cooked



: sprouted



Remove prickles

Thistle, Creeping

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, 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, 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



Thistle, Spear
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


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




Thyme, Wild
Botanical name: *Thymus polytrichus*
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)
Evergreen shrub
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
 : flavouring
Safety unknown

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

Toadflax, Ivy-leaved
Botanical name: *Cymbalaria muralis*
Family: Figwort (Scrophulariaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
 : raw
 May be mildly toxic



Tormentil
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



Traveller's Joy
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.

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, Wild
Botanical name: *Brassica rapa*
Family: Cabbage (Brassicaceae)
Annual/biennial

Collectability: availability unknown, worthwhile root
Edible parts and how to consume:
  : raw


Valerian, Common
Botanical name: *Valeriana officinalis*
Family: Valerian (Valerianaceae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Edible parts and how to consume:
 : flavouring
 : 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, Bitter
Botanical name: *Lathyrus montanus*
Family: Pea (Leguminosae)
Perennial
Collectability: availability unknown
Continued

Edible parts and how to consume:

  : 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

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

Vetch, Common

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, Kidney

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.

Vetch, Tufted

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.

Violet, Common Dog *Viola riviniana* -
see Sweet Violet below

Violet, Sweet

Botanical name: *Viola odorata*

Family: Violet (Violaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

  : raw

Safety unknown


Walnut

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

Colour: 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

Colour: 

Fruit

Shape: oval

Colour: green, brown when fully ripe

Size: up to 40 mm

Other: thin flesh layer over large seed

Seed

Shape: convoluted, brain-like appearance

Colour: cream-coloured flesh with brown papery skin

Size: 30mm

Casing: woody, crinkled, light brown

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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 Continued ...

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 litre 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 litre 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 and flavour 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, lithontriptic, 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



: flavouring, sprouted



Avoid water courses going through pasture. Wash well and cook to destroy water-borne parasites.

Whitebeam

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**.

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

Willowherb, Great



Botanical name: *Epilobium hirsutum*

Family: Willowherb (Onagraceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : details unknown
 May be toxic

Willowherb, Rosebay

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

Colour: 

Seed

Shape: with down

Size: tiny




Casing: long, pod-like tubes

Culinary Use

Flavour - 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 antimalarial

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

Wintercress

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.

Wintergreen

Botanical name: *Pyrola minor*


Family: Dock (Pyrolaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: availability unknown

Edible parts and how to consume:

 : raw

 : details unknown

Safety unknown

Woodruff, Sweet


Botanical name: *Galium odoratum*

Family: Bedstraw (Rubiaceae)

Perennial

Collectability: plentiful, specialized habitat

Continued

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

Main Benefit:

 : circulatory system, flavour

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

Colour:

Culinary Use

Flavour - Rating and Description

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

How to Consume:


 : raw, tea

Used as ...


 : beverage, flavouring

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

Wood-sorrel


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

Colour:

Culinary Use

Flavour - Rating and Description

 ★★★ lemony

How to Consume:

  : raw

Nutrition

 : Vitamin C

Continued

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

Woundwort, 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

Yarrow

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

Colour:  (may be either)

Culinary Use

Flavour - Rating and Description



☆☆☆ bitter



☆☆☆ aromatic

How to Consume:



young: raw, tea



: tea

Used as ...



: food, beverage



: beverage, flavouring

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 safety section and full description in the plant profile.


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
Ash					 	 	 	  	 	 	 	 
Balsam, Himalayan												
Beech				 	 				 	 		
Bilberry									 			
Bindweed, Hedge			  	   	   	   	   	   	  	 	 	 
Birch, Downy			 	 	 	 	 	 	 			
Bittercress, Hairy		 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	
Blackthorn				 	 				 	 	 	
Bramble			  	   	   	  	  	 	 	 	 	 
Bulrush	 	 	 	   	   	   	   	   	  	  	  	  
Burdock, Lesser					 	  	   	   	   	  	  	  
Catsear, Common												
Chestnut, Sweet						 	 			 	 	 
Chickweed	   	   	   	   	   	   	   	   	   	   	   	   

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cleavers			 	 	 	 	 	 				
Clover, Red												
Couchgrass												
Currant, Red												
Daisy						 	 	 				
Dandelion	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 
Deadnettle, Red	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 
Dock, Curled			 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	
Elder				 	 	 	 	 	 	 		
Ground Elder												
Hawthorn				 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 
Hazel												
Hop		 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	
Horsetail, Field			 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 		
Knotweed, Japanese			 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 		
Meadowsweet			 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 		
Mustard, Garlic		 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	
Mustard, Hedge			 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 		
Navelwort												
Nettle, Stinging		 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nipplewort												
Oak					 	 	 					
Pignut												
Plantain, Ribwort			 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 		
Ramson			 	 		 						
Raspberry					 	 	 	 	 	 		
Reed, Common				 	  	   	   	   	   	  	 	
Rose, Dog								 	 	 	 	
Scurvy-grass, Common												
Shepherd's Purse	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 
Silverweed			  	  	  	  	  	  	 			
Sorrel, Common			 	 	 	  	  	  	  	  	 	 
Spruce	  	  	  	  	   	   	   	   	   	   	   	   
Strawberry, Wild			 	 	 	  	  	  	  	  	  	  
Sycamore			 	  	 	  	  	 	 	 	 	 
Walnut		 	 			  	  	 	 	 	 	 
Willowherb, Rosebay			  	  	  	   	    	    	    	  	 	 
Woodruff, Sweet				 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 	 
Wood-sorrel			 	 	 	 	 					
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 *Agrimonia eupatoria* - tea

Alexanders *Smyrniolum olusatrum* - raw

Angelica *Angelica archangelica* - raw

Archangel, Yellow *Lamiasstrum galeobdolon* - cooked

Arrowhead *Sagittaria sagittifolia* - raw

Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* - tea

Aster, Sea *Aster tripolium* - cooked

Avens, Water *Geum rivale* - flavoring, tea

Avens, Wood *Geum urbanum* - flavoring, tea

Barberry, Common *Berberis vulgaris* - raw

Basil, Wild *Clinopodium vulgare* - raw, flavoring

Bedstraw, Hedge *Galium mollugo* - raw

Bedstraw, Lady's *Galium verum* - raw

Beech *Fagus sylvatica* - raw

Beet, Sea *Beta vulgaris maritima* - raw

Bellflower, Creeping *Campanula rapunculoides* - raw

Bellflower, Giant *Campanula latifolia* - raw

Bellflower, Rampion *Campanula rapunculus* - raw

Betony *Stachys officinalis* - tea

Bilberry *Vaccinium myrtillus* - tea

Bilberry, Northern *Vaccinium uliginosum* - tea

Bindweed, Hedge *Calystegia sepium* - cooked

Birch, Downy *Betula pubescens* - raw

Bistort, Meadow *Polygonum bistorta* - raw

Bittercress, Hairy *Cardamine hirsuta* - raw

Blueberry, Bog *Vaccinium uliginosum* - tea

Borage *Borago officinalis* - raw

Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* - raw, young buds

Brooklime *Veronica beccabunga* - raw

Broom *Cytisus scoparius* - raw

Buckwheat *Fagopyrum esculentum* - raw

Bugle *Ajuga reptans* - raw

Bugloss, Viper's *Echium vulgare* - raw

Bulrush *Typha latifolia* - raw

Bur Marigold, Trifid *Bidens tripartita* - young - cooked

Burdock, Great *Arctium lappa* - raw

Burnet, Small *Sanguisorba minor* - raw

Burnet, Great *Sanguisorba officinalis* - raw
Buttercup, Bulbous *Ranunculus bulbosus* - cooked
Buttercup, Celery-leaved *Ranunculus sceleratus* - cooked
Buttercup, Creeping *Ranunculus repens* - cooked
Buttercup, Meadow *Ranunculus acris* - cooked
Cabbage, Wild *Brassica oleracea* - raw
Calamint, Common *Calamintha ascendens* - flavoring
Campion, Bladder *Silene vulgaris* - raw
Catsear, Common *Hypochoeris radicata* - raw
Celandine, Greater *Chelidonium majus* - leached, cooked
Celandine, Lesser *Ranunculus ficaria* - before flowering, raw
Celery, Wild *Apium graveolens* - raw
Chamomile, Stinking *Anthemis cotula* - flavoring
Charlock *Sinapis arvensis* - raw
Chickweed, Common *Stellaria media* - raw
Chicory *Cichorium intybus* - raw
Chives *Allium schoenoprasum* - raw
Cicely, Sweet *Myrrhis odorata* - raw
Cinquefoil, Creeping *Potentilla reptans* - raw
Clary, Wild *Salvia horminoides* - raw - rare plant
Cleavers *Galium aparine* - juiced, cooked -
Clover, Red *Trifolium pratense* - raw
Clover, White *Trifolium repens* - young - raw
Coltsfoot *Tussilago farfara* - young - raw
Coriander *Coriandrum sativum* - raw
Cornsalad *Valerianella locusta* - raw
Couchgrass *Elytrigia repens* - leaf curd, juiced
Cowberry *Vaccinium vitis-idaea* - tea
Cowslip *Primula veris* - raw
Cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccus* - tea
Cranesbill, Cut-leaved *Geranium dissectum* - raw
Cress, Hoary *Lepidium draba* (syn. *Cardaria draba*) - flavoring

Cress, Swine *Coronopus squamatus* - cooked
Cuckoo Flower *Cardamine pratensis* - raw
Currant, Black *Ribes nigrum* - cooked
Daisy *Bellis perennis* - raw
Daisy, Ox-eye *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum* - raw
Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* - raw
Deadnettle, Henbit *Lamium amplexicaule* - raw
Deadnettle, Red *Lamium purpureum* - raw
Deadnettle, White *Lamium album* - raw
Dittander *Lepidium latifolium* - raw, flavoring
Dock, Curled *Rumex crispus* - raw -
Dock, Patience *Rumex patientia* - details unknown
Dropwort *Filipendula vulgaris* - raw
Duckweed *Lemna minor* - details unknown
Fat Hen *Chenopodium album* - cooked
Fennel, Sweet *Foeniculum vulgare* - raw
Fenugreek *Trigonella ornithopodioides* - raw
Fig, Hottentot *Carpobrotus edulis* - raw
Flixweed *Descurainia sophia* - cooked
Fumitory *Fumaria officinalis* - curdling agent
Gallant Soldier *Galinsoga parviflora* - 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 Elder *Aegopodium podagraria* - raw
Ground Ivy *Glechoma hederacea* - raw
Groundsel *Senecio vulgaris* - raw
Harebell *Campanula rotundifolia* - raw
Hawkbit, Rough *Leontodon hispidus* - raw
Hawk's Beard *Crepis tectorum* - young - cooked
Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* - young - raw
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
Knotgrass *Polygonum aviculare* - raw
Knotweed, Japanese *Fallopia japonica* - cooked
Lady's Mantle *Alchemilla vulgaris* - raw
Largeflower Wild Onion *Allium macropetalum* - raw
Leek, Sand *Allium scorodoprasum* - raw
Leek, Three-cornered *Allium triquetrum* - raw
Leek, Wild *Allium ampeloprasum* - raw
Lettuce, Greater (Prickly) *Lactuca virosa* - raw
Lettuce, Wall *Mycelis muralis* - raw
Lime, Common *Tilia vulgaris* - raw
Loosestrife, Purple *Lythrum salicaria* - cooked
Loosestrife, Yellow *Lysimachia vulgaris* - young
Lords and Ladies *Arum maculatum* - cooked
Lovage, Scots *Ligusticum scoticum* - raw, flavoring
Lungwort, Common *Pulmonaria officinalis* - raw
Maidenhair Fern *Adiantum capillis-veneris* - cooked
Mallow, Musk *Malva moschata* - raw
Mallow, Common *Malva sylvestris* - raw
Mallow, Marsh *Althaea officinalis* - raw
Maple *Acer* spp. - details unknown
Marigold, Corn *Chrysanthemum segetum* - cooked
Marigold, Marsh *Caltha palustris* - young - cooked
Marjoram, Wild *Origanum vulgare* - flavoring
Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* - cooked, tea
Medick, Black *Medicago lupulina* - cooked
Melilot *Melilotus officinalis* - raw, flavoring
Melilot, Tall *Melilotus altissimus* - cooked
Mignonette, Wild *Reseda lutea* - raw
Milkwort, Common *Polygala vulgaris* - tea
Mint, Apple *Mentha rotundifolia* - flavoring
Mint, Corn *Mentha arvensis* - flavoring
Mint, Corsican *Mentha requienii* - flavoring

Mint, Eau-de-Cologne *Mentha citrata* - flavoring
Mint, Horse *Mentha longifolia* - flavoring
Mint, Water *Mentha aquatica* - flavoring
Monkey-flower *Mimulus guttatus* - raw
Mouse-ear, Common *Cerastium fontanum* - raw
Mouse-ear, Sticky *Cerastium glomeratum* - details unknown
Mugwort *Artemisia vulgaris* - raw
Mustard, Black *Brassica nigra* - raw
Mustard, Garlic *Alliaria petiolata* - raw
Mustard, Hedge *Sisymbrium officinale* - raw
Mustard, White *Sinapis alba* - raw
Myrtle, Bog *Myrica gale* - flavoring
Navelwort *Umbilicus rupestris* - raw
Nettle, Stinging *Urtica dioica* - cooked, leaf curd, juiced
Nipplewort *Lapsana communis* - raw
Orache, Common *Atriplex patula* - raw
Orache, Spear-leaved *Atriplex hastata* - cooked
Orpine *Hylotelephium telephium* - raw
Oxtongue, Bristly *Picris echioides* - raw
Oyster Plant *Mertensia maritima* - raw
Parsley, Cow *Anthriscus sylvestris* - raw
Parsley Piert *Aphanes arvensis* - raw
Parsnip, Wild *Pastinaca sativa* - cooked
Pea, Sea *Lathyrus japonicus* - raw
Pennycress, Field *Thlaspi arvense* - raw
Pennyroyal *Mentha pulegium* - flavoring
Peppermint *Mentha piperita* - flavoring
Persicaria, Pale *Persicaria lapathifolia* - raw
Pimpernel, Scarlet *Anagallis arvensis* - raw
Pine *Pinus* spp - tea
Plantain, Buck's Horn *Plantago coronopus* - raw
Plantain, Ribwort *Plantago lanceolata* - raw
Poppy, Common *Papaver rhoeas* - raw (before flowering)
Primrose *Primula vulgaris* - raw
Purslane, Sea *Atriplex portulacoides* - raw

Purslane, Water *Lythrum portula* - raw
Radish, Wild *Raphanus raphanistrum* - raw
Ramson *Allium ursinum* - raw
Rape *Brassica napus* - raw
Raspberry *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, Opposite-leaved Golden *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium* - raw
Scurvy-grass, Common *Cochlearia officinalis* - raw - high in Vitamin C
Sea Kale *Crambe maritima* - raw
Self-heal *Prunella vulgaris* - raw
Shepherd's Purse *Capsella bursa-pastoris* - raw
Silverweed *Argentina anserina* - raw
Sorrel, Common *Rumex acetosa* - raw
Sowthistle, Perennial *Sonchus arvensis* - raw
Sow Thistle, Prickly *Sonchus asper* - raw
Sowthistle, Smooth *Sonchus oleraceus* - raw
Spearmint *Mentha spicata* - flavoring
Speedwell, Germander *Veronica chamaedrys* - tea
Spignel *Meum athamanticum* - cooked, flavoring
Spring Beauty *Claytonia perfoliata* - raw
Spruce *Picea* spp. - raw
Spurrey, Corn *Apergula arvensis* - details unknown
Stonecrop, Biting *Sedum acre* - raw
Stonecrop, Reflexed *Sedum reflexum* - raw
Stork's-bill, Common *Erodium cicutarium* - raw
Strawberry, Wild *Fragaria vesca* - raw

Sweet Flag *Acorus calamus* - young - raw
Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* - details unknown
Tansy, Common *Tanacetum vulgare* - flavoring
Tare, Hairy *Vicia hirsuta* - cooked
Thistle, Cabbage *Cirsium oleraceum* - cooked
Thistle, Creeping *Cirsium arvense* - raw
Thistle, Marsh *Cirsium palustre* - raw
Thistle, Milk *Silybum marianum* - raw
Thistle, Prickly Russian *Salsola pestifer* - raw
Thistle, Spear *Cirsium vulgare* - cooked
Thrift *Armeria maritima* - cooked
Thyme, Wild *Thymus polytrichus* - flavoring
Toadflax, Ivy-leaved *Cymbalaria muralis* - raw
Turnip, Wild *Brassica rapa* - raw
Valerian, Common *Valeriana officinalis* - flavoring
Valerian, Red *Centranthus ruber* - raw
Vetch, Common *Vicia sativa* - cooked
Vetch, Tufted *Vicia cracca* - cooked
Violet, Common Dog *Viola riviniana* - raw
Violet, Sweet *Viola odorata* - raw
Water-lily, Yellow *Nuphar lutea* - cooked
Watercress *Nasturtium officinale* - raw
Whitlow-grass, Wall *Draba muralis* - raw - high in Vit. C
Willowherb, Great *Epilobium hirsutum* - details unknown
Willowherb, Rosebay *Chamerion angustifolium* - raw
Wintercress *Barbarea vulgaris* - raw
Wintergreen *Pyrola minor* - raw
Woodruff, Sweet *Galium odoratum* - raw, flavoring
Wood-sorrel *Oxalis acetosella* - 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 *Agrimonia eupatoria* - tea

Alexanders *Smyrniolus olusatrum* - raw

Angelica *Angelica archangelica* - raw

Archangel, Yellow *Lamium galeobdolon* - shoot - cooked

Arrowhead *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

Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* - raw, young, peeled

Broom, Butcher's *Ruscus aculeatus* - shoot, cooked

Bryony, Black *Tamus communis* - shoot, cooked

Bulrush *Typha latifolia* - shoot - raw

Bur-reed, Branched *Sparganium erectum* - base - cooked

Burdock, Great *Arctium lappa* - young - raw

Burnet, Salad *Sanguisorba minor* - young - raw

Burnet, Great *Sanguisorba officinalis* - young - raw

Campion, Bladder *Silene vulgaris* - shoot - raw

Chamomile *Chamaemelum nobile* - shoot - flavoring, tea

Charlock *Sinapis arvensis* - cooked

Chervil, Turnip-rooted *Chaerophyllum bulbosum* - shoot - raw

Chickweed, Common *Stellaria media* - raw

Clubrush, Common *Scirpus lacustris* - shoot - raw

Cuckoo Flower *Cardamine pratensis* - shoot - raw

Dock, Curled *Rumex crispus* - raw

Evening Primrose *Oenothera biennis* - shoot - raw

Evening Primrose, Large-flowered *Oenothera glazioviana* - shoot - raw

Fennel *Foeniculum vulgare* - raw

Flixweed *Descurainia sophia* - shoot - cooked

Fumitory *Fumaria officinalis* - curdling agent

Gallant Soldier *Galinsoga parviflora* - raw

Goatsbeard *Tragopogon pratensis* - shoot - raw

Gorse *Ulex europaeus* - shoot tips - tea

Heather *Calluna vulgaris* - shoots - tea

Hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium* - shoot - raw

Hollyhock *Alcea rosea* - inner - raw

Hop *Humulus lupulus* - shoot - cooked

Horsetail, Field *Equisetum arvense* - fertile - cooked

Knotweed, Japanese *Fallopia japonica* - shoot - cooked

Lovage, Scots *Ligusticum scoticum* - shoot - raw, flavoring

Marigold, Corn *Chrysanthemum segetum* - shoots - cooked

Mayweed, Scented *Matricaria recutita* - shoot

Melilot *Melilotus officinalis* - shoot - cooked

Melilot, Tall *Melilotus altissimus* - shoot - cooked

Mouse-ear, Common *Cerastium fontanum* - young - cooked

Mouse-ear, Sticky *Cerastium glomeratum* - shoot - details unknown

Mustard, Hedge *Sisymbrium officinale* - raw

Raspberry *Rubus idaeus* - young - cooked

Reed, Common *Phragmites australis* - shoot - raw

Salsify *Tragopogon porrifolius* - shoot - raw

Samphire, Marsh *Salicornia maritima* - shoot - cooked

Samphire, Rock *Crithmum maritimum* - shoot - raw

Scabious, Devilsbit *Succisa pratensis* - shoots - raw

Sea Kale *Crambe maritima* - shoots - raw

Silverweed *Argentina anserina* - young shoots - raw

Sow-thistle, Perennial *Sonchus arvensis* - shoots - cooked

Sow-thistle, Prickly *Sonchus asper* - raw

Sowthistle, Smooth *Sonchus oleraceus* - peeled - cooked

Spruce Picea spp. - inner bark - cooked

Star of Bethlehem, Spiked *Ornithogalum pyrenaicum* - shoots - cooked

Sweet Flag *Acorus calamus* - shoot - raw

Tare, Hairy *Vicia hirsuta* - shoot - cooked

Thistle, Creeping *Cirsium arvense* - peeled - cooked

Thistle, Marsh *Cirsium palustre* - raw

Thistle, Milk *Silybum marianum* - peeled - raw

Thistle, Prickly Russian *Salsola pestifer* - shoot - raw

Thistle, Spear *Cirsium vulgare* - cooked

Toadflax *Linaria vulgaris* - shoot - cooked

Traveller's Joy *Clematis vitalba* - shoot - cooked

Vetch, Common *Vicia sativa* - shoots - cooked

Vetch, Tufted *Vicia cracca* - shoots - cooked

Water-lily, Yellow *Nuphar lutea* - cooked

Willowherb, Rosebay *Chamerion angustifolium* - young shoots - raw, later - cooked

Woundwort, Marsh *Stachys palustris* - shoots - 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/19GL0PI> (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, *Phragmites australis*.

Important! Read the full description of the plant in the plant list.

Birch *Betula* spp. - raw

Larch spp.

Maple* *Acer* spp. - raw, syrup

Reed, Common *Phragmites australis* - raw

Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* - raw, syrup

Walnut* *Juglans regia* - raw, syrup

* 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 *Smyrniolum olusatrum* - cooked

Angelica *Angelica archangelica* - cooked

Arrowhead *Sagittaria sagittifolia* - avoid, rare

Arum, Bog *Calla palustris* - cooked

Avens, Water *Geum rivale* - flavoring, tea

Avens, Wood *Geum urbanum* - flavoring, tea

Beet, Sea *Beta vulgaris maritima* - raw

Bellflower, Creeping *Campanula rapunculoides* - raw

Bellflower, Giant *Campanula latifolia* - raw

Bellflower, Rampion *Campanula rapunculus* - raw

Betony *Stachys officinalis* - raw

Bindweed, Hedge *Calystegia sepium* - cooked, starch

Bistort *Polygonum bistorta* - raw

Bogbean *Menyanthes trifoliata* - cooked

Bracken *Pteridium aquilium* - cooked

Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* - cooked

Bulrush *Typha latifolia* - raw

Bur-reed, Branched *Sparganium erectum* - cooked

Burdock, Greater *Arctium lappa* - raw

Buttercup, Bulbous *Ranunculus bulbosus* - cooked

Buttercup, Creeping *Ranunculus repens* - cooked

Carrot, Wild *Daucus carota* - cooked

Celandine, Lesser *Ranunculus ficaria* - after plant has withered, cooked

Celery, Wild *Apium graveolens* - cooked

Chervil, Turnip-rooted *Chaerophyllum bulbosum* - raw

Chicory *Cichorium intybus* - cooked, roasted

Chives *Allium schoenoprasum* - raw

Cicely, Sweet *Myrrhis odorata* - raw

Clover, Red *Trifolium pratense* - cooked

Clover, White *Trifolium repens* - cooked

Clubrush *Scirpus maritimus* - flour

Clubrush, Common *Scirpus lacustris* - raw

Coltsfoot *Tussilago farfara* - raw

Coriander *Coriandrum sativum* - cooked, flavoring

Couchgrass *Elytrigia repens* - cooked

Cranesbill, Cut-leaved *Geranium dissectum* - cooked

Cress, Swine *Coronopus squamatus* - cooked

Daisy, Ox-eye *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum* - raw

Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* - raw

Dittander *Lepidium latifolium* - raw, flavoring

Dropwort *Filipendula vulgaris* - raw

Evening Primrose *Oenothera biennis* - cooked

Evening Primrose, Large-flowered *Oenothera glazioviana* - cooked

Fennel *Foeniculum vulgare* - cooked

Figwort, Common *Scrophularia nodosa* - cooked

Galingale *Cyperus longus* - flavoring - rare plant

Gipsywort *Lycopus europaeus* - raw

Goatsbeard *Tragopogon pratensis* - raw

Hawkbit, Rough *Leontodon hispidus* - roasted, beverage

Hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium* - cooked

Hollyhock *Alcea rosea* - starch

Hop, Common *Humulus lupulus* - details unknown

Horseradish *Armoracia rusticana* - flavoring

Horsetail, Field *Equisetum arvense* - cooked

Knotweed, Japanese *Fallopia japonica* - cooked

Lady's Mantle *Alchemilla vulgaris* - cooked

Largeflower Wild Onion *Allium macropetalum* - raw
Leek, Sand *Allium scorodoprasum* - raw
Leek, Three-cornered *Allium triquetrum* - raw
Leek, Wild *Allium ampeloprasum* - raw
Liquorice, Wild *Astragalus glycyphyllos* - raw, condensed
Loosestrife, Purple *Lythrum salicaria* - cooked
Lords and Ladies *Arum maculatum* - leached and cooked
Lovage, Scots *Ligusticum scoticum* - raw, flavoring
Mallow, Marsh *Marsh Althaea officinalis* - raw
Marigold, Marsh *Caltha palustris* - cooked
Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* - cooked
Mellilot *Melilotus officinalis* - details unknown
Orchid, Early Purple *Orchis mascula* - cooked
Orchid, Pyramidal *Anacamptis pyramidalis* - cooked
Orpine *Hylotelephium telephium* - cooked
Oyster Plant *Mertensia maritima* - details unknown
Parsley, Cow *Anthriscus sylvestris* - cooked-
Parsnip, Wild *Pastinaca sativa* - raw
Pignut *Conopodium majus* - raw
Plantain, Common Water *Alisma plantago-aquatica* -
 leached and cooked
Radish, Wild *Raphanus raphanistrum* - raw
Ramson *Allium ursinum* - bulb - raw
Raspberry *Rubus idaeus* - cooked
Reed, Common *Phragmites australis* - cooked
Rest-harrow *Ononis repens* - raw
Rose of Sharon *Hibiscus syriacus* - details unknown
Rush, Flowering *Butomus umbellatus* - cooked
Salsify *Tragopogon porrifolius* - raw - safety unknown
Sea Holly *Eryngium maritimum* - raw - rare plant
Sea Kale *Crambe maritima* - raw
Shepherd's Purse *Capsella bursa-pastoris* - raw
Silverweed *Argentina anserina* - raw, starch
Sorrel, Common *Rumex acetosa* - cooked
Sow-thistle, Perennial *Sonchus arvensis* - cooked, roasted
Sow Thistle, Prickly *Sonchus asper* - cooked
Sow-thistle, Smooth *Sonchus oleraceus* - cooked
Spatterdock, Common *Nuphar advena* - raw
Spignel *Meum athamanticum* - cooked, flavouring
Spring Beauty *Claytonia perfoliata* - raw
Star of Bethlehem *Ornithogalum umbellatum* - bulb - raw
Strawberry, Wild *Fragaria vesca* - cooked

Sweet Flag *Acorus calamus* - peeled - raw
Thistle, Cabbage *Cirsium oleraceum* - cooked
Thistle, Creeping *Cirsium arvense* - raw
Thistle, Marsh *Cirsium palustre* - young - cooked
Thistle, Milk *Silybum marianum* - raw
Thistle, Spear *Cirsium vulgare* - cooked
Thrift *Armeria maritima* - details unknown
Tormentil *Potentilla erecta* - leached and cooked
Turnip, Wild *Brassica rapa* - raw
Valerian, Red *Centranthus ruber* - cooked
Vetch, Bitter *Lathyrus montanus* - cooked
Water-lily, White *Nymphaea alba* - cooked
Water-lily, Yellow *Nuphar lutea* - cooked
Willowherb, Rosebay *Chamerion angustifolium* - raw
Woundwort, Marsh *Stachys palustris* - raw

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 *Agrimonia eupatoria* - tea
Alexanders *Smyrniolum olusatrum* - buds - raw
Bellflower, Giant *Campanula latifolia* - raw
Betony *Stachys officinalis* - tea
Birch, Downy *Betula pubescens* - raw
Bittercress, Hairy *Cardamine hirsuta* - raw
Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* - raw
Borage *Borago officinalis* - raw-
Bulrush *Typha latifolia* - immature, pollen - raw
Chamomile *Chamaemelum nobile* - flavoring, tea
Charlock *Sinapis arvensis* - cooked
Chicory *Cichorium intybus* - raw
Chives *Allium schoenoprasum* - raw
Clary, Wild *Salvia horminoides* - raw - rare plant
Clover, Red *Trifolium pratense* - raw
Clover, White *Trifolium repens* - raw
Clubrush, Common *Scirpus lacustris* - pollen - flour
Coltsfoot *Tussilago farfara* - flavoring
Cornsalad *Valerianella locusta* - raw
Cowslip *Primula veris* - raw
Creeping Jenny *Lysimachia nummularia* - tea
Cuckoo Flower *Cardamine pratensis* - bud - raw
Daisy *Bellis perennis* - raw
Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* - raw
Deadnettle, White *Lamium album* - raw
Elder *Sambucus nigra* - raw
Fennel *Foeniculum vulgare* - raw
Feverfew *Tanacetum parthenium* - flavoring
Gallant Soldier *Galinsoga parviflora* - raw

Goatsbeard *Tragopogon pratensis* - raw
Gorse *Ulex europaeus* - pickled
Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* - tea
Hollyhock *Alcea rosea* - raw
Hop, Common *Humulus lupulus* - female - details unknown
Knapweed, Lesser *Centaurea nigra* - petals - raw
Largeflower Wild Onion *Allium macropetalum* - raw
Leek, Sand *Allium scorodoprasum* - raw
Leek, Three-cornered *Allium triquetrum* - raw
Leek, Wild *Wild Allium ampeloprasum* - raw
Lime, Common *Tilia vulgaris* - flavouring, tea
Lovage, Scots *Ligusticum scoticum* - raw, flavoring
Mallow, Common *Malva sylvestris* - raw
Mallow, Musk *Malva moschata* - raw
Mayweed, Pineapple *Matricaria discoidea* - raw, tea
Mayweed, Scented *Matricaria recutita* - tea
Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* - flavoring, tea
Mustard, Black *Brassica nigra* - buds - cooked
Mustard, Garlic *Alliaria petiolata* - raw
Oregon Grape *Mahonia aquifolium* - raw
Oyster Plant *Mertensia maritima* - raw
Primrose *Primula L.* - raw
Radish, Wild *Raphanus raphanistrum* - raw
Ramson *Allium ursinum* - raw
Rose of Sharon *Hibiscus syriacus* - raw
Rose, Dog *Rosa canina* - raw
Salsify *Tragopogon porrifolius* - raw - safety unknown
Sea Kale *Crambe maritima* - bud - cooked
Sorrel, Common *Rumex acetosa* - cooked
Spring Beauty *Claytonia perfoliata* - raw
Spruce *Picea spp.* - male: raw, female: cooked
St. John's Wort, Perforate *Hypericum perforatum* - tea
Tansy *Tanacetum vulgare* - flavoring
Thistle, Milk *Silybum marianum* - bud - cooked
Thistle, Spear *Cirsium vulgare* - bud - cooked
Vetch, Kidney *Anthyllis vulneraria* - tea
Violet, Sweet *Viola odorata* - raw
Willowherb, Rosebay *Chamerion angustifolium* - buds - raw
Wintercress *Barbarea vulgaris* - buds - cooke
Wood-sorrel *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 therefore 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 flavonoids, 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.

Apple, Crab *Malus sylvestris* - raw

Arum, Bog *Calla palustris* - cooked

Barberry *Berberis vulgaris* - raw

Bilberry *Vaccinium myrtillus* - raw

Bilberry, Northern *Vaccinium uliginosum* - raw

Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* - raw, jelly, flavoring, syrup

Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* - raw

Buckthorn, Sea *Hippophae rhamnoides* - raw

Bullace *Prunus domestica* ssp *insititia* - raw

Cherry, Bird *Prunus padus* - raw

Cherry, Cornelian *Cornus mas* - raw

Cherry, Dwarf *Prunus cerasus* - raw

Cherry, Wild *Prunus avium* - raw

Cloudberry *Rubus chamaemorus* - raw

Cornel, Dwarf *Cornus suecica* - raw

Cowberry *Vaccinium vitis-idaea* - raw

Cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccus* - raw

Crowberry *Empetrum nigrum* - raw

Currant, Black *Ribes nigrum* - raw

Currant, Red *Ribes rubrum* - raw

Dewberry *Rubus caesius* - raw

Dogwood *Cornus sanguinea* - cooked

Elder *Sambucus nigra* - raw

Fig, Hottentot *Carpobrotus edulis* - raw

French Hales - *Sorbus latifolia* - when nearly rotten

Gooseberry *Ribes uva-crispa* - raw

Guelder Rose *Viburnum opulus* - raw

Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* - raw

Juneberry *Amelanchier lamarckii* - raw

Juniper, Common *Juniperus communis* - flavoring, tea - rare

Medlar *Mespilus germanica* - raw - when nearly rotten

Mulberry *Morus* ssp - raw

Myrtle, Bog *Myrica gale* - flavoring

Oregon Grape *Mahonia aquifolium* - raw

Pear *Pyrus communis* - nearly rotten, cooked

Plum, Cherry *Prunus cerasifera* - raw

Plum, Wild *Prunus domestica* - raw

Raspberry *Rubus idaeus* - raw

Rose, Dog *Rosa canina* - raw

Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia* - cooked, jelly

Service Tree, Wild *Sorbus torminalis* - raw - nearly rotten

Snowberry *Symphoricarpos albus* - raw

Strawberry Tree *Arbutus unedo* - raw

Strawberry, Wild *Fragaria vesca* - raw

Whitebeam *Sorbus aria* - raw - when nearly rotten

Wintergreen *Pyrola minor* - details unknown

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 *Agrimonia eupatoria* - cooked
Angelica *Angelica archangelica* - flavoring
Arum, Bog *Calla palustris* - cooked
Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* - pickled, oil
Balsam, Himalayan *Impatiens glandulifera* - raw
Barley, Mouse *Hordeum murinum* - flour
Bedstraw, Lady's *Galium verum* - details unknown
Beech *Fagus sylvatica* - raw, oil
Bindweed, Black *Fallopia convulvulus* - flour
Birch, Downy *Betula pubescens* - flour
Bistort *Polygonum bistorta* - raw
Bittercress, Hairy *Cardamine hirsuta* - sprouted, though small and fiddly
Broom *Cytisus scoparius* - roasted
Buckwheat *Fagopyrum esculentum* - raw, sprouted
Bulrush *Typha latifolia* - raw, flour
Celery, Wild *Apium graveolens* - flavoring
Charlock *Sinapis arvensis* - sprouted, flavoring
Cherry, Bird *Prunus padus* - raw, if not bitter
Cherry, Cornelian *Cornus mas* - roasted
Cherry, Dwarf *Prunus cerasus* - raw, if not bitter
Cherry, Wild *Prunus avium* - raw, if not bitter
Chestnut, Sweet *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
Clubrush *Scirpus maritimus* - flour
Clubrush, Common *Scirpus lacustris* - flour
Coriander *Coriandrum sativum* - cooked, flavoring
Couchgrass *Elytrigia repens* - details unknown
Cress, Hoary *Lepidium draba* (syn. *Cardaria draba*)
Cress, Swine *Coronopus squamatus* - sprouted
Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* - raw
Dittander *Lepidium latifolium* - raw, flavoring
Dock, Curled *Rumex crispus* - raw
Evening Primrose *Oenothera biennis* - cooked, oil

Evening Primrose, Large-flowered *Oenothera glazioviana* - raw
Fat Hen *Chenopodium album* - sprouted
Fennel, Sweet *Foeniculum vulgare* - flavouring, sprouted
Flag, Yellow *Iris pseudacorus* - cooked
Flixweed *Descurainia sophia* - raw, sprouted
Goosefoot, Red *Chenopodium rubrum* - sprouted
Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* - roasted
Hazel *Corylus avellana* - raw
Hop, Common *Humulus lupulus* - details unknown
Horned-poppy, Yellow *Glaucium flavum* - oil
Horseradish *Armoracia rusticana* - sprouted
Juniper *Juniperus communis* - roasted, beverage rare plant
Knotgrass *Polygonum aviculare* - raw
Knotweed, Japanese *Fallopia japonica* - raw
Lettuce, Greater (Prickly) *Lactuca virosa* - oil
Lovage, Scots *Ligusticum scoticum* - raw, flavoring
Mallow, Musk *Malva moschata* - raw-
Mallow, Common *Malva sylvestris* - raw
Maple *Acer* spp. - details unknown
Medick, Black *Medicago lupulina* - sprouted
Mellilot *Melilotus officinalis* - pods - raw, flavoring
Melilot, Tall *Melilotus altissimus* - pods - cooked
Mustard, Black *Brassica nigra* - raw, 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, Common *Atriplex patula* - cooked
Orache, Spear-leaved *Atriplex hastata* - cooked
Parsnip, Wild *Pastinaca sativa* - flavoring
Pea, Sea *Lathyrus japonicus* - cooked
Pennycress, Field *Thlaspi arvense* - flavoring, sprouted
Persicaria, Pale *Persicaria lapathifolia* - raw
Pine *Pinus* spp - raw
Plantain, Ribwort *Plantago lanceolata* - cooked
Plum, Cherry *Prunus cerasifera* - raw, if not bitter
Plum, Wild *Prunus domestica* - raw, if not bitter
Poppy, Common *Papaver rhoeas* - raw
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, Marsh *Salicornia maritima* - oil
Samphire, Rock *Crithmum maritimum* - pods - pickled
Sedge, Pendulous *Carex pendula* - if free from ergot
cooked, flour
Shepherd's Purse *Capsella bursa-pastoris* - raw
Sorrel, Common *Rumex acetosa* - raw
Spatterdock, Common *Nuphar advena* - raw
Spruce *Picea* spp. - raw
Spurrey, Corn *Apergula arvensis* - details unknown
Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* - details unknown
Tare, Hairy *Vicia hirsuta* - cooked
Thistle, Cabbage *Cirsium oleraceum* - sprouted
Thistle, Creeping *Cirsium arvense* - sprouted
Thistle, Marsh *Cirsium palustre* - sprouted
Thistle, Milk *Silybum marianum* - roasted, sprouted
Thistle, Prickly Russian *Salsola pestifer* - cooked, sprouted
Thistle, Spear *Cirsium vulgare* - raw, sprouted
Trefoil, Bird's-foot *Lotus corniculatus* - sprouted
Valerian, Common *Valeriana officinalis* - details unknown
Vetch, Bitter *Lathyrus montanus* - cooked
Vetch, Bush *Vicia sepium* - cooked
Vetch, Common *Vicia sativa* - pods - cooked
Vetch, Tufted *Vicia cracca* - cooked
Walnut, Juglans regia - raw
Water-lily, White *Nymphaea alba* - cooked
Watercress *Nasturtium officinale* - flavoring, sprouted
flavoring, sprouted
Woundwort, Marsh *Stachys palustris* - details unknown

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 was given by the original author.

Animal Repellent

Army Worm

Dandelion (growing plant)

Insects

Bracken (fonds)
Chamomile, *Chamaeleum nobile* (plant, growing and dried)
Daisy (leaf)
Elder (leaf)
Nettle, Stinging (tea on plants, dried plant to deter flies)
Ramson (plant)
Tansy
Walnut (leaf)
Yarrow (plant)

Moles

Ramson (plant)

Moths

Ramson (plant)
Woodruff, Sweet (plant)

Building

Insulation

Bulrush (dry leaf and stem, female flower)
Reed, Common (plant)

Plaster lath

Bramble (thorny canes)

Thatch

Bracken (dried plant)
Bulrush (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, Sweet (leaf, bark and seed husk)

Skin cleansing lotion

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

Oregano (Marjoram) species
Ramson (plant)
Scurvy-grass, Common
Thyme ssp.

Dye

Black

Oak (galls, with iron salt)
Walnut (ripe seed husk) if iron implement is used

Blue-purple

Elder (fruit)

Brown

Bracken (fonds)
Dock (root)
Hop (leaf, flower)
Oak (galls with alum)
Plantain (leaf)
Walnut (leaf, ripe seed husk [no mordant needed])

Green

Bilberry (leaf)
Blackthorn (leaf)
Dock (root)
Elder (leaf with alum)
Nettle, Stinging (leaf, stem)
Reed, Common (flower)

Grey

Dock (root without mordant)
Plantain (root)

Grey-blue

Sorrel ssp. (leaf)

Grey-green

Woodruff, Sweet (leaf, stem)

Magenta-brown

Dandelion (root)

Red

Woodruff, Sweet (root)
Cleavers (root)

Tan

Woodruff, Sweet (leaf, stem)

Variable

Bilberry (fruit) - blue or black
Bramble (fruit)
Meadowsweet (root) - grey to black brown with copper mordant
Raspberry (fruit) - purple to dull blue
Sorrel ssp. (root) - dark green to brown without mordant
Yarrow (flower) yellow or green

Yellow

Balsam, Himalayan (plant)
Blackthorn (bark) - boiled in an alkali
Clover, red (flower)
Currant, Red (leaf)
Dock (root)
Knotweed, Japanese (root)
Meadowsweet (leaf)
Mustard, Garlic (plant)
Nettle, Stinging (root, boiled with alum)
Oak (galls with tin salt)
Walnut (leaf, unripe seed husk [no mordant needed])

Fibre

Baskets and mats

Bulrush (leaf)
Reed, Common (plant)

Cordage

Bindweed, Hedge (stem) - not strong - temporary use
Nettle, Stinging (stem)
Reed, Common (plant)

Continued

Paper

Nettle, Stinging (stem)
Raspberry (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

Bulrush (leaf)

Lighting

Balsam, Himalayan (oil from seed)
Bulrush (oil-soaked pith of stem)
Nettle, Stinging (oil from seed)

Fungicide

Chamomile, *Chamaeleum nobile*
Elder (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

Bilberry (berry) - blue or black
Oak (galls with iron salt)

Insecticide

General

Elder (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
Knotweed, Japanese
Willowherb, Rosebay

Litmus Testing

Elder (sap of fruit) turns green in alkaline solutions and red in acid solutions

Paper

Burdock (stem)
Bulrush (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. Hemp *Cannabis sativa* has been used at Chernobyl and Sunflowers at Fukushima 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 Hemp 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, Smooth *Sonchus oleraceus*

Scent

Linen scent

Woodruff, Sweet (plant)

Potpourri

Meadowsweet (plant)
Woodruff, Sweet (plant)

Scour, Polish

Pots scourer

paste of ash of hardwoods and water;
Plants containing silica:
Horsetail species
Samphire, Marsh

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
Bulrush (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
Couchgrass

Horsetail species

Nettle, Stinging
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.
Dock (leaves)
Knotweed, Japanese (leaf, stem)
Lords and Ladies (plant)
Wood-sorrel (leaf)

Stuffing

Buoyancy

Bulrush (dry leaf and stem)

General

Bulrush (female flower)
Willowherb, Rosebay (seed down)

Insulating

Bulrush (female flower)

Nappy lining

Bulrush (female flower)

Tanning

Blackthorn (bark)
Chestnut, Sweet (leaf, bark and seed husk)
Oak (leaf, bark, galls);

Timber

Durable

Chestnut, Sweet
Oak - heart wood

Furniture

Beech
Birch
Maple species
Walnut

Gun stocks

Walnut

Pea trellis

Hazel (branched stems of first growth - regrowth is often straight)

Turnery, carving

Blackthorn
Maple ssp.

Tinder

Bracken (dried fibers from root, dry fonds)
Bulrush (down of female seed head and pollen from female flower - highly flammable)
Thistles species (seed down)
Willowherb, Rosebay (seed down)

Tubes

Flutes, blow pipes, casing

Elder (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)

General Information

Harvesting

Law

In England and Wales it is illegal to gather plants in whole or part:

- on land designated "open countryside" for the right to roam by the Countryside and Way Act 2000
- of any protected species
- It is also illegal to dig up roots without the permission of the land owner on any other land.
- A person may take away foliage, fruit or plants growing wild where it grows on public access land not designated "open countryside" (e.g. public rights of way across private land, highway verges etc.), unless it is done with the intention of selling them, or for other reward.
- Entering on private land without the owner's consent is trespass.

Code of Conduct

Countryside Code:

- 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 be 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 Lords and Ladies (*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.

Ash *Fraxinus Excelsior*



Ash branch with leaves, unripe and old keys. Note the twist in the wings.

Balsam, Himalayan *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.

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.

Bilberry *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.

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.

Bittercress, Hairy *Cardamine hirsuta*



Hairy Bittercress in flower. Leaves can also be dark purple-green.

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.

Bramble *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 mouldy.

Berries grow on second year canes which are often red tinged.

Bulrush *Typha latifolia*



Flowering Bulrush. Tail shaped male flower at top, female flower below on spike.



Bulrush and poisonous Flag grow in a similar habitat and the young plants are easily confused when not in flower. The bluish, fleshy Bulrush 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 centre of the leaf blade.

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 centre of leaf rosette. Leaves are variable.

Chestnut, Sweet *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.

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 centre of the leaves.

Currant, Red *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 *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, Red *Lamium purpureum*



Flowering Purple Deadnettle. Note the purple top leaves on the mature plant.

Dock, Curled *Rumex crispus*

Curled Dock and Broadleaved 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.

Elder *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.

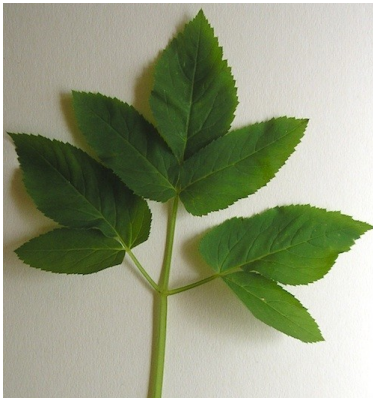


The ripe berries are black and the cluster will droop down. Unripe berries should be avoided.

Ground Elder *Aegopodium podagraria*



Patch of Ground Elder:



Leaf stem

Hawthorn *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 to show the mealy flesh and single large seed. Some Hawthorn species have more than one seed.

Hazel *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.

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.

Knotweed, Japanese *Fallopia japonica* (syn. *Polygonum cuspidatum*, *P. japonicum*)



Young shoots and rhizomes. 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.

Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*



Sweet-smelling Meadowsweet flowers from June to September. Note the red stalk of flower and leaf and the pale underside of the leaves.

Mustard, Garlic *Alliaria petiolata*



Garlic Mustard often grows in clumps.



Flowers have four petals. Leaves have a leather-like texture.

Navelwort *Umbilicus rupestris*



Young leaves. The stem attaches to the centre of the leaf underside. Leaves are fleshy.



Flowering Navelwort

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.

Pignut *Conopodium majus*



Main photo: Young plant, complete with tuber before flowering. Note the long thin root sections which run from the base of the leaf to the tuber. Tubers, the so-called "pig nut" can vary considerably in size and shape. It has a thin, brown, papery skin with white crunchy flesh inside. The texture and flavour is similar to carrot, which is a relative of this plant. The thin skin is partly removed from the smaller tuber. Tubers are best from a dormant or a young plant which aids in tracing the root. They may be deep and not directly below the plant.

Plantain *Plantago spp.*



Flowering Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata* with long lance-shaped leaves.



Common Plantain *Plantago major* has broader, shorter leaves.

Ramson *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

Raspberry *Rubus idaeus*



The plant has light brown woody canes and sparse, short thorns, making it distinct from Blackberry. Juvenile leaves contain the antioxidant 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*.

Scurvy-grass, Common *Cochlearia officinalis*



Young plant. Leaves are fleshy and variable.



Flowering Scurvy-grass.

Shepherd's Purse *Capsella bursa-pastoris*



Top of plant with distinct heart-shaped seed capsules.



Lower part of plant.

Silverweed *Potentilla anserina*



Distinct silvery underside of the downy leaf.

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.

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*



Wild 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.

Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*



Leaves and paired keys. Sycamore leaves are some of the earliest to emerge in spring.

Walnut *Juglans regia*



Ripening walnuts. The familiar hard, crinkled nut case is enclosed in an outer fleshy fruit.

Willowherb, Rosebay *Chamerion angustifolium*



Flower spike with flowers developing progressively towards the top.

Willowherb requires light to germinate, therefore can only establish itself on bare ground, often after a fire, giving it its other 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 from the creeping rhizomes which can spread the plant outward. It often grows in dense patches.

Woodruff, Sweet *Gallium odoratum*



Woodruff leaves are arranged in whorls 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. Woodruff 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.

Wood-sorrel *Oxalis acetosella*



Leaves are similar to Shamrock and Clover. Wood-sorrel 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 centre of the flower.

Yarrow *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.