

Wild Edible Plants

Guideline

- Only eat what you know
- Harvest small amounts
- Don't harvest near roads or other places pesticides could be sprayed

Acorns

- <http://honest-food.net/2010/01/14/acorn-pasta-and-the-mechanics-of-eating-acorns/>



Bear Grass

- Xerophyllum tenax
- rhizomes are thick and tuberous, and edible when roasted or boiled.
- found on dry slopes/ridges or forest clearings.
- Woven into baskets



Cattail

- Typha spp.
- tender, white inner part of shoots/plants is edible raw.
- cattail pollen is bright yellow and can be gathered by shaking a pollen-laden spike into a bag, which yields about one tablespoon of powder.
- pollen can be used as flour, suitable for pancakes, etc.
- pollen is available to gather before the plant develops its long, brown cylinder resembling a hotdog on a stick.
- green flower spikes can be cooked and eaten like corn on cob.
- starchy white core of rhizome can be eaten raw.
- white core can be boiled, baked, or dried and ground into flour, or boiled into syrup.
- roots can be peeled and crushed under water, the fibers strained out and the starch washed in several changes of water.
- fluff from the brown-cylinder can be burned to separate and parch the seeds, which are edible.
- look for cattails growing on the shores of lakes and ponds, in flooded areas and in ditches.
- warning: do not confuse young cattail shoots with members of the iris family such as **Western blue flag** (*Iris missouriensis*). Mature plants are different enough to avoid confusion.



Dandelion

- Taraxacum officinale
- all parts of plant are edible raw.
- young leaves or those growing where there is less/no sunlight are the least bitter.
- older leaves are best when boiled in 2 changes of water and/or with midveins removed.
- roots are best when collected in spring/autumn, peeled, sliced and cooked in 2 changes of water with pinch of baking soda.
- roots can be roasted as coffee substitute.
- unopened flower buds can be eaten raw or used in cooking.
- seeds with the parachute removed can be eaten or ground into flour.
- a serving of dandelion greens contains the same amount of calcium as half a cup of milk.
- is a good source of potassium, vitamin A, and vitamin C.
- grows in a wide range of terrain, look for dandelion in disturbed/cultivated soil areas.



Stinging Nettle

- Urtica dioica
- young leaves are edible raw, though they will sting in the mouth for a short time.
- young shoots and young plants are edible when steamed/cooked.
- roots are edible when cooked.
- roots are best when collected in spring/autumn.
- grows in moist soil and disturbed areas in plains, foothills, and montane regions.
- warning: wear gloves when collecting to avoid stings.



Indian Plum

- Edible berries



Wild Blueberry

- Berries are edible



Wild Huckleberry

- Vaccinium parvifolium
- raw berry has a sweet/tart taste.
- berry is high in vitamin C.
- berry can be mashed and spread out for drying, either in the sun or using smoke. After storage, berries can be reconstituted in boiling water.
- berry can be stored in grease or oil.
- berry was traditionally used as fish bait.
- plant is a deciduous shrub.
- grows in forests in lowland and montane areas, frequently on nurse logs and rotting stumps.



Salal

- Gaultheria shallon
- berries are mildly sweet with good flavour.
- berries can be dried into cakes.
- plant grows in coastal areas and forms deep thickets.



Salsify

- Tragopogon spp.
- roots are edible raw.
- roots can be dried and ground.
- roots can be roasted as coffee substitute.
- young leaves can be eaten raw.
- young stalks and root crowns can be simmered.
- varieties in the Pacific Northwest are **Common salsify** (Tragopogon porrifolius), **Yellow salsify** (Tragopogon dubius), **Meadow salsify** (Tragopogon pratensis).
- grows in dry, disturbed areas.



Wild Rose

- The rose hip is high in Vitamin C.



Salmonberry

- Berries are edible



Oregon Grape

- Mahonia aquifolium
- Berries are edible



Watercress

- Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum
- plants are edible raw.
- tastes like peppery lettuce or radishes.
- can be dried for storage.
- grows in calm water.
- warning: do not eat plants from sites with polluted water.

