

A FEW FORAGING TIPS:

The Allegheny Mountains and surrounding areas are home to diverse and abundant medicinal plant communities. Foraging is a practice that has long connected people to these communities as well as to the wellbeing of their ecological place and to their own health and wildness. Incorporating wild plants into our lives helps us to more clearly see the inherent connection between plants and people. It is important to be mindful of a few basic guiding principles when we go outside in search of wild edibles...

- Positive ID: Only eat a plant if you are 100 percent positive of the plant's identification and certain of which part of the plant to use and how to prepare it- Go out with experienced foragers whenever possible
- Avoid harvesting endangered plant species
- Harvest one third or less of available plant material and only in locations where the plant is abundant
- Harvest from clean areas, avoid roadsides or areas where animals have been grazing

A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE COMMON PLANTS...

DANDELION (root, leaves, and flowers) Harvest young leaves, roots, and flowers in the spring. Harvest roots again in the fall once temperatures begin to drop. Roots will be sweeter and less bitter in the spring but more medicinal in the fall as their inulin level are higher and fructose levels are lower.

RAMPS (root and leaves) Harvest the whole bulb typically from mid-april to early may.

NETTLE (leaves) Harvest leaves in the spring before the plant flowers. The more you harvest, the longer it will continue to produce leaves without flowers.

RED CLOVER (flower and leaves) Flowers are ready to harvest one to two weeks after first bloom.

COLTSFOOT (leaves and flowers) Harvest flowers and stems at peak bloom in early spring. Leaves are harvested later in the spring.

RASPBERRY (leaves) Harvest the young and healthy leaves before plant blooms.

LAMB'S QUARTER (leaves) Harvest the young leaves before plant blooms.

ST. JOHN'S WORT (leaves and flowers) Harvest flowers in the spring. There are many varieties native to this region, some more medicinal than others.

JEWELWEED (leaves and juice from stem) Harvest in the summer and use for stings and burns- often grows near nettle and other stinging plants in the wild.

AUTUMN OLIVE (berries) Harvest berries in late summer when they are red and juicy.

GOLDENROD (flowers) Harvest in late summer once the flowers bloom. There are many varieties of goldenrod and it is often confused with ragweed, so get a positive ID.

WILD CHICORY (root) Dig up the root in the fall. You can often find chicory on road sides and other damaged terrain.