**Cascadia Cares Presents:**

**Eat Your Yard**

**Food sovereignty is more than gardens. There are a variety of local wild and edible plants just waiting to be explored.**

**We hope this list piques your curiosity and invite you to enjoy the pleasure and health found when you Eat Your Yard!**

[www.cascadiacares.org](http://www.cascadiacares.org)

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**Donations of time and money are tax deductible.**

**Wild Green Salad**

**Wood Sorel:** These clover-like leaves add a tangy-cool flavor and mixes will with bitter greens. These plants are best in spring but available in Lewis/Thurston county through the fall. Choose smaller more tender leaves as the season progresses.

**Dead Nettle:** The flowers of this plant are edible and they are prolific in the Pacific Northwest. They are found in disturbed soil and even mowed grasses. They taste best when blanched or marinated overnight. They are a member of the mint family and have a square stem. They are sometimes confused with All-heal, but both are edible.

**Dandelion:** The bright yellow flowers of the dandelion are highly recognizable. Consider picking the greens from plants that have not yet bloomed.

**Cat Tail Shoots:** These add a crisp and juicy texture to the salad and have an almost cucumber like flavor. The cattail, like dandelion, is highly recognizable. Make sure to collect plants far away from any possible polluted water source.

**Wild Green Onion:** I’m not sure if these are feral or wild but I find them in grassy meadows. They are mild and have small bulbs. Use the greens to add a spicy and savory flavor to any salad.

**Siberian Miner’s Lettuce:** This trail-side snack is edible raw and as pot-herb. The flowers and leaves bring a pretty effect to any salad they top. These are found abundantly carpeting moist and cool forests for most of the year.

**Wild Carrot Greens:** These greens are the new stems of the wild carrot plant and carry a strong carrot-like flavor. These stems should be hairy and one should be careful to distinguish these plants from the poisonous Hemlock. Look for wild carrots in sunny and well drained areas (Hemlock prefers shady wetlands). I peel the stems and chop them raw into salads.

**Clover:** can be added to salad but should be soaked in salt water to reduce bloating. All clover are edible and make a pretty addition to any salad.

**Fireweed:** Grows prolifically in the Pacific Northwest and it’s leaves and flowers are edible adding a pepper taste to wild dishes. Look for it in disturbed soil and find it’s bright pink flowers dotting the prairie landscape. The leaves are best before this plant blooms.

**Plantain:** is a common garden “weed” and can be added to salad. It is high in vitamin C and in calcium. Its bitter leaves should be picked young and used in moderation.

**Mushrooms**

**Oyster Mushrooms:** have been found year-round in the pacific northwest. In the summer seek ones that have dried on the trees. Be careful to check that they have sundried without molding.

Oyster Mushroom Jerky  
4 Cups Oyster Mushrooms  
½ Cup Cooking oil of Choice  
Brags Amino Acid to taste

Sautee mushrooms with oil and spices of choice for 5 minutes on high. Remove and spread on cookie sheet. Bake at 180 for around 3 hours-checking frequently as cooking times may vary based on size.

This makes a delicious vegan jerky that is healthy and easy to make!

**Morel Mushrooms:** are found in the spring in disturbed soil or burn areas. They are easy to identify once you know how to distinguish them from Verpas or “false morels”. One easy distinction is that stem from the morel is hollow and opens into the cap with the same membrane lining both.

Morel mushrooms, like oysters, must be cooked. These mushrooms have a meaty texture and can be added to soups, stir-fries, or even stuffed!

**Chantelle Mushrooms**: are found in the late summer through early winter in shady pine forests. They have a chicken-like texture and are a great meat substitute in pasta dishes, tacos, casseroles and more!

**Tubers and Roots**

**Wild Carrot**: The roots of the wild carrot are edible raw and cooked but are best in the early spring before they become older and woodier. They can be roasted and become very crispy. The roasted crisp bits make great toppings for casseroles, soups, or salads

**Jerusalem Artichoke:** The roots of the Jerusalem artichoke are edible and have a nutty flavor when roasted. Look for the yellow flowers of this tasty plant on hillsides and prairies.

**Other Notable Plants**

**Oregon Grape:** The new shoots, flowers, and berries (after cooking) are all edible on this plant. This plant grows prolifically in the pacific northwest. It’s tangy lemon-flavored flowers are a refreshing trail snack. Its berries can be made into tasty jellies.

**Thimbleberry:** These are some of the first berries to ripen in the spring. They are sweet and pleasant tasting when ripe but do not hold up to packaging or travel. It is best to eat these in the field or plan on making jelly.

**Pineapple Weed:** This fragrant “false Chamomile” grows in rocks, gravel, and even between cracks in the sidewalk. The leaves and flowers are edible and smell like pineapple when crushed. The flowers make an excellent and calming tea.

**Wild Ginger:** this plant is not actually related to ginger but contains many of the same phytochemicals. Its scent and uses are similar. Use the leaves and leave the roots of this slow-growing and shade loving plant

**Big Leaf Maple:** The fronds of this native-deciduous tree are edible and one of the first spring foraging foods. Look for them after a storm has blown branches from the tree and use the like broccoli in your favorite recipes.

There are so many more wild and edible plants in the Pacific Northwest. Follow us on Facebook for more recipes and facilitated plant walks!

Resources:

1. (Andrew) MacKinnon, Pojar, J., & Paul B. Alaback. (2004). *Plants of the Pacific Northwest coast: Washington, Oregon, British Columbia & Alaska* (Rev.). Vancouver: Lone Pine Pub.
2. Mushrooms of the Pacific Northwest (A Timber Press Field Guide): Joe Ammirati, Steve Trudell: 9780881929355: Amazon.com: Books. (n.d.). Retrieved June 9, 2017, from <https://www.amazon.com/Mushrooms-Pacific-Northwest-Timber-Press/dp/0881929352>