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# Living a Wild Life: An introduction to foraging in wild and not so wild places.

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1. Who am I?
2. Why do I forage?
3. Where do I forage?
4. What do I forage?
5. Why is foraging important?
6. Who is interested in foraging?
7. How to promote foraging?





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# 1. Who am I?

Wild Food Specialist

Amateur Herbalist

Led my first Wild Food Walk  
in 2007





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## 2. Why do I forage?

The 'Jam Incident'

The "Silent Hunt"





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3. Where do I forage?





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4. What do I forage?





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# Spring....

Eat Shoots and Leaves!



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## Wild garlic (*Allium ursinum*)

- Loves damp woods & shady hedgerows.
- Pick leaves and flowers while young and tender in March.
- Torn leaves can be eaten in salads or cooked in soups and sauces.
- The flowers can be added to soups or salads or deep fried in a tempura batter.

**Where to find it:** Woodlands, road verges, gardens and by the edges of water







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## Nettles (*Urtica dioica*)

- Wear rubber gloves & pick the young sprouts and tender tops until about mid-May.
- Leaves are nutritional powerhouse
- Never pick leaves once in flower
- Excellent spinach substitute
- Seeds are an adaptogen

Where to find it: Pretty much anywhere!





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## Wood sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*)

- Grows throughout Britain in woods and shady places.
- Have a flavour like unripe raspberries
- Its lime-green leaves contain oxalic acid
- Eat in moderation
- Best in the spring.

**Where to find it:** Mossy banks  
under trees in woodlands





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## Dandelions

- A perennial herb, abundant through the British Isles.
- Flowers profusely in April but the leaves can be found at any time of the year.
- Young leaves can be eaten as a salad
- Serve as a vegetable, cooked as spinach or in a soup.
- Root can be used to make Dandelion Coffee
- Flowers can be used in preserves or added to salads
- Amazing body tonic & diuretic

Where to find it: Well.....Anywhere!





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# Summer...

Blooming Wonderful!



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## Elder (*Sambucus nigra*)

- Flower in June & July depending on how far north it's growing.
- Pick the flowers early in the morning when fragrant and fresh.
- Cook with fruit or infuse into custards and syrups.
- Wonderful with gooseberries.
- Great for colds & flu

**Where To find it:** Keep an eye out when walking or driving along and you are likely to spot it.





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## Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*)

- Widespread.
- Flowers from June to October.
- Contains Salicylic Acid
- Makes divine cordials and syrups
- Excellent at warding off colds and flu, for IBS and acid reflux

**Where to find it:** It likes damp, wet pastureland. It is also common on the banks of streams or ponds





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## Lime or Linden trees (*Tilia europaea*)

- Flower in June and July.
- Their clusters of creamy flowers are heavily scented and make a delicious tea if dried.
- Pick just above the wing-like bract, spread out to dry on trays and leave for 2-3 weeks
- Good for combating depression & anxiety, calming children, aiding sleep & acid reflux



**Where to find it:** In parks – councils like to plant it for its pretty blossom.



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## Ground Elder (*Aegopodium podagraria*)

- This is an excellent substitute for parsley & celery
- Excellent sautéed in butter as a side vegetable or in soups
- Beginners should wait until flowers come out to pick it
- The leaves tend to be in sets of 5 or 7 and are slightly serrated and in pairs with one at the tip.

### Where to find it:

It likes disturbed ground & is quite common along the sides of paths & in local woodlands.







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## Clover (*Trifolium*)

- Has three stalkless, egg-shaped leaflets.
- Leaflets are smooth with small teeth along the margins, a slight notch at the tip & usually a whitish V-shaped watermark.
- The tasty part is the flower which is best if you remove the individual petals
- Great addition to salads or sandwiches.

Where to find it: In grassy banks and fields.





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# Autumn...

Berry nice!



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## Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*)

- fruit is best picked in August and September
- Eat the best berries fresh in summer puddings, ice cream, pavlova & fruit crumbles
- Makes excellent jellies and cordials
- Good source of antioxidants and Vit C.

**Where to find it:** Waste ground or on the edges of fields





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## Elderberries (*Sambucus nigra*)

- Fruit in August and September.
- Its purple berries can be turned into wonderful jellies & cordials that taste similar to port or served with game.
- Has Anti-catarrhal action & helps to support the immune system.

**Caution:** raw elderberries are poisonous as are the root & thick stems of elder





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5. Why is foraging so important?

Local

Sustainable

Healthy

Fresh

Gateway



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6. Who is interested in foraging?





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## 7. How to promote foraging?

Planting Edible Gardens

Education!





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## How can you find out more?

- Join your local mycological society group
- Book onto a Wild Food Walk
- Have a look at my website [www.msitu.co.uk](http://www.msitu.co.uk)