Wild Edibles - Plants You Can Use When You're Out Of Food, Water And Medicine

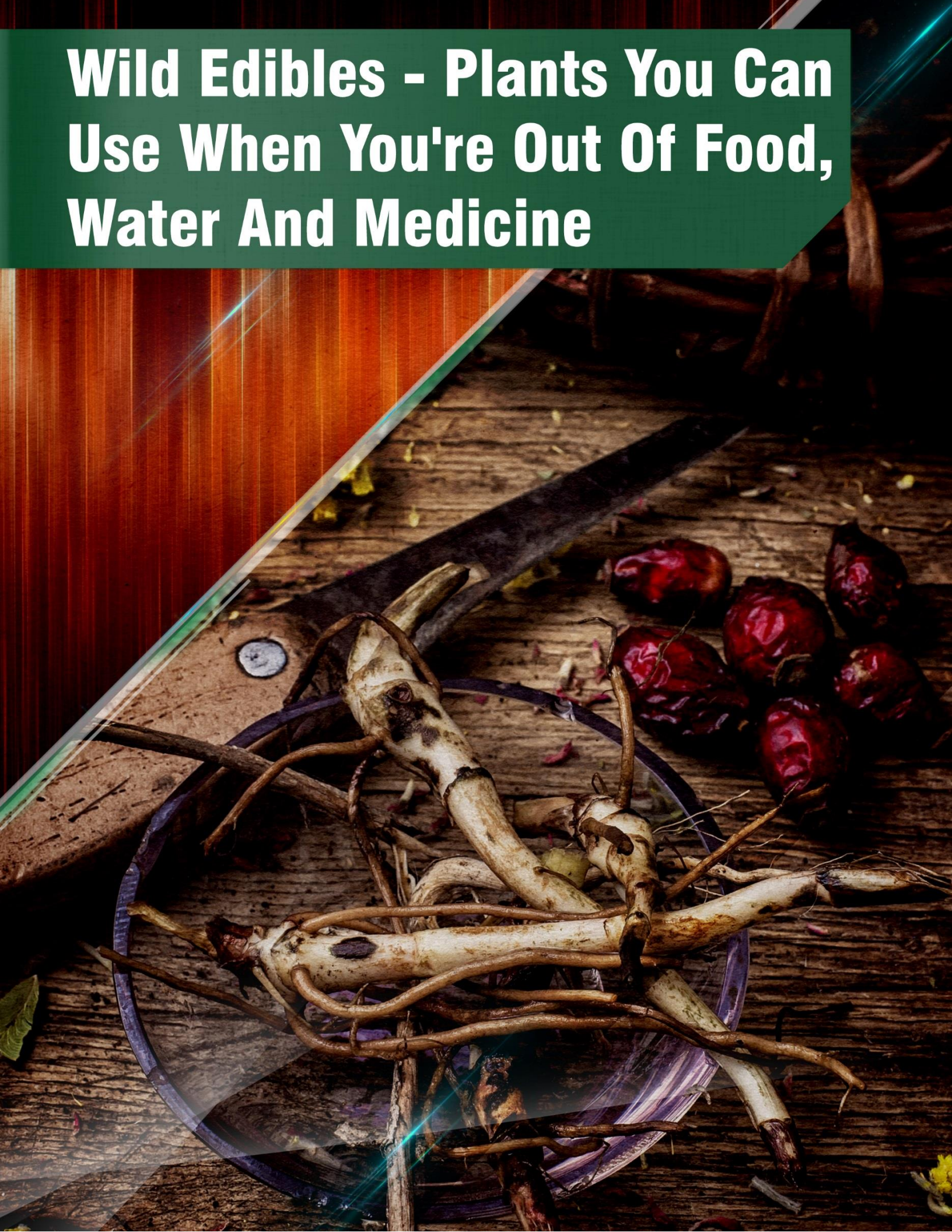

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DISCLAIMER

THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN **"WILD EDIBLES – Plants you Can Use When You're out Of Food, Water and Medicine"** IS MEANT TO SERVE AS A COMPREHENSIVE COLLECTION OF TIPS THAT THE AUTHORS OF THIS COURSE LEARN OVER THE YEARS RELATED TO SURVIVAL/PREPAREDNESS. SUMMARIES, STRATEGIES, TIPS AND TRICKS INCLUDED IN THIS E-BOOK ARE ONLY RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE AUTHORS, AND READING THIS E-BOOK DOES NOT GUARANTEE THAT ONE'S RESULTS WILL EXACTLY MIRROR OUR OWN RESULTS.

THE AUTHOR OF IN **"WILD EDIBLES – Plants you Can Use When You're out Of Food, Water and Medicine"** HAS MADE ALL REASONABLE EFFORTS TO PROVIDE CURRENT AND ACCURATE INFORMATION FOR THE READERS OF THIS COURSE. THE AUTHOR WILL NOT BE HELD LIABLE FOR ANY UNINTENTIONAL ERRORS OR OMISSIONS THAT MAY BE FOUND.

THE MATERIAL IN **"WILD EDIBLES – Plants you Can Use When You're out Of Food, Water and Medicine"** MAY INCLUDE INFORMATION, PRODUCTS, OR SERVICES BY THIRD PARTIES. THIRD PARTY MATERIALS COMPRISE OF THE PRODUCTS AND OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY THEIR OWNERS. AS SUCH, THE AUTHORS OF THIS GUIDE DO NOT ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY OR LIABILITY FOR ANY THIRD PARTY MATERIAL OR OPINIONS. THE PUBLICATION OF SUCH THIRD PARTY MATERIALS DOES NOT CONSTITUTE THE AUTHORS' GUARANTEE OF ANY INFORMATION, INSTRUCTION, OPINION, PRODUCTS OR SERVICE CONTAINED WITHIN THE THIRD PARTY MATERIAL.

WHETHER BECAUSE OF THE GENERAL EVOLUTION OF THE INTERNET, OR THE UNFORESEEN CHANGES IN COMPANY POLICY AND EDITORIAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES, WHAT IS STATED AS FACT AT THE TIME OF THIS WRITING, MAY BECOME OUTDATED OR SIMPLY INAPPLICABLE AT A LATER DATE. THIS MAY APPLY TO THE **"WILD EDIBLES – Plants you Can Use When You're out Of Food, Water and Medicine"** AS WELL AS THE VARIOUS SIMILAR COMPANIES THAT WE HAVE REFERENCED IN THIS EBOOK.

GREAT EFFORT HAS BEEN EXERTED TO SAFEGUARD THE ACCURACY OF THIS WRITING. OPINIONS REGARDING SIMILAR WEBSITE PLATFORMS HAVE BEEN FORMULATED AS A RESULT OF BOTH PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, AS WELL AS THE WELL DOCUMENTED EXPERIENCES OF OTHERS.

Wild Edibles to Use when You're Out of Food

Since you never know when you may be caught high and dry in the wilderness with little or nothing in the way of survival gear or emergency food, you need to arm yourself with some extra knowledge about common wild edibles.

Even though you may think you can recognize certain plants in the wild, poisonous ones can easily fool you in a crisis situation. This is especially important to consider if you are passing through a geographic region that features plants you may not be accustomed to.

How to Find and Test Edible Plants in the Wild

Before cooking or eating any plant, it is best to use the Universal Edibility Test first. Aside from helping you determine which plants are poisonous to humans, this test will also help you avoid consuming plants that you may be allergic to. Needless to say, even if a plant appears safe for you to consume, everyone in the group should do the same test after you in order to make sure they are not allergic to the plant in question.

No matter how traumatic a crisis situation may be, finding food is always going to be important. Regardless of where you happen to be, wild plants can be harvested during the fall season. While some may be easier to store than others, rest assured that they can easily help you live comfortably and well until other food sources can be grown or hunted.

When SHTF, even the most prepared of us may find themselves separated from their prepped stores, and out on their own. All of our planning can go south quickly, and we may find ourselves fleeing danger with little more than the clothes on our back. It can happen to anyone.

Depending on what you've managed to escape with, triaging your needs (once safe) must be the first priority. Food is on top 3 priorities, and for that reason looking for edible plants in the woods is one skill to learn for survival.

The Rule of Three's

When triaging needs, remember the "**rule of three's**."3 hours without protection from the cold, 3 days without water, 3 weeks without food". Most camping/wilderness deaths are caused by hypothermia: in a cold environment without the proper shelter or clothing to keep you warm, hypothermia can cause death in as little as 3 hours.

Remember, temperatures usually drop at night, often significantly. Just because it was warm during the day doesn't mean that it will stay that way out of doors at night. If you feel it getting cooler as the sun begins to set, or you know cold is coming, find some

warm clothes, a blanket, and make yourself some form of shelter to retain your body heat.

Once that's covered, next comes water. You can survive without water for up to 3 days. But your demand for water increases when you perspire, and during times of high stress. Water will be a high priority if you don't have enough.

The body can survive for up to 3 weeks without food (not true for diabetics). And although 3 weeks might sound like you have plenty of time to get by, and that you might not need to worry immediately, think again. If you're used to eating regularly, like most of us are, it won't take long before that hunger will impact your judgment.

24-48 hours without food, and you can expect to feel lightheaded, fatigued, and possibly even dizzy. It's not fun. So while your need for food might be the least immediate of the three, it is definitely a priority.

Warnings to Keep in Mind when Looking for Edible Plants

Many plants are poisonous, and eating a toxic plant can cause reactions within the body ranging from relatively mild, like vomiting, to the more severe — organ failure, coma, and eventually death. One of the safest methods to determine if a plant is safe to eat is to use the "Universal Edibility Test" developed by the U.S. Army.

But before we get into how to test a plant, there are a few general tips to consider first.

Don't even consider testing a plant that there isn't a lot of. You're taking a risk by testing and eating it, and you want to make sure you're not going through all this trouble (and potentially death) unless you can make several meals from it. If it's just one small outcropping, make a mental note of its location, and move on. Try to find a more abundant resource.

Never eat mushrooms or fungi. Period. I know some mushrooms are really tasty. But unless you REALLY know what you're doing, eating the wrong mushroom will cause you permanent, sometimes fatal, injury. And it's not possible to test mushrooms or fungi with the Universal Edibility Test because a toxic mushroom will affect your nervous

system. These effects won't show up for days, and by the time they do, there's no treatment. Just avoid all mushrooms.

Don't eat plants grown in polluted areas. Avoid roadside plants because car exhaust and other chemicals like antifreeze are more abundant at the roadside and could have contaminated the plants growing there.

Same goes for plants growing near a polluted water source. Do not eat anything that's growing in brackish, murky, stagnant, or smelly water or soil. When a plant grows in or near contaminated water, the plant itself becomes contaminated.

Basically, if it's growing someplace where you wouldn't want to step, or in something you wouldn't want to get on your face because of its smell, avoid it!

Say NO to anything that's rot, mold, soft. Anything that's rotting, moldy, or overly soft (like before rotting) is a definite avoid. Yes, blue cheese is mold, but mold in general is not your friend. Most biological weapons programs start with mold. If it's moldy or mildewed, stay away!

Some other general "avoid this" type of indicators are:

- Milky or discolored sap,
- Beans, bulbs, or seeds inside pods,
- Bitter or soapy taste,
- Spines, fine hairs, or thorns.

If you come across a plant that smells a little bit like almonds, it could contain cyanide. Avoid.

If the leaves are shiny, and/or grouped in three's, it's likely poison ivy, and you'll want to steer clear. Some folks will say certain colored berries are OK to try. But unless you're sure you're eating a blackberry, raspberry, or blueberry, I'd give these a pass.

Boiling can help remove some bitterness, but isn't very effective at removing toxins if the plant is poisonous. Don't think boiling a toxic plant will make it edible. It won't. And before you risk your health by testing an unknown plant, if there's meat available, stick to eating meat.

The Universal Edibility Test

You've found an abundant plant, away from the road and other sources of contamination, and you want to test it. The following is from The U.S. Army Survival Manual FM21-76. It's important to note that while this test comes from the U.S. Army, there are experts who don't believe this test is effective, because some plants can cause serious adverse reactions simply from skin contact.

And even this Army manual emphasizes the importance of knowing and being able to identify the edible plants in your area, and having a field manual to help do so, so as to not need to perform this test. But when SHTF, this is probably better than starving.

Use with caution, and use common sense. You'll need to fast for 8 hours before testing a plant. Remember to pick something abundant, so you're not potentially wasting your time (and risking your life) for a light snack.

Some parts of a plant can be poisonous, while others aren't. For example, a plant can have poisonous leaves, but the roots and stalks might be fine. So take the plant apart into its main components.

1. Skin Contact Test: Crush up the part of the plant you want to eat — only the one part, like the leaves OR the stalk, for example — and rub it on the inside of your wrist or elbow for 15 minutes. Once that's done, watch the area for the next 8 hours (during which time you can only drink water – no food). If there's any reaction like redness, bumps, burning, pain, itching, etc, you don't want it inside your stomach.

If after 8 hours your skin is still fine, then it's on to step 2. Hold the plant to your closed lips for 3 minutes. If you feel any tingling, burning, itchiness, really any unusual reaction, toss this part of the plant and start over with another part.

If there's no lip reaction, place the plant on your tongue for 15 minutes. Again you're looking for any weird sensations. Any tingling, burning, itching, etc. spit it out, rinse out your mouth, and move on to another part of the plant. Just because it tastes bad, or bitter, doesn't necessarily mean it's bad for you. You're looking for a reaction to know if it's safe to continue or not. When in doubt, spit it out. And move on.

2. The Chew Test: Now you can chew up this plant part in your mouth — but don't swallow. Hold the chewed up plant in your mouth for 15 minutes, looking for any of the earlier mentioned reactions.

If you react badly to it, spit it out, rinse your mouth out with water, and press on. If 15 minutes pass and you're still good, swallow what's in your mouth. If you feel nausea, or any ill effects, you need to make yourself vomit and then drink plenty of water. After you've swallowed, wait 8 hours to test it properly. You can have water during these next 8 hours, but no other food.

3. The Bigger Bite: If the plant passes the test over the next 8 hours, and you've had no ill effects, try eating about 1/4 cup of the plant part. Wait another 8 hours, drinking only water. Eat no other food. This is the final stage of the test. If you've made it to the end of the 8 hours and your fine, then the plant part (only the part you tested) is safe to eat.

You'll need to repeat the full test with every other part of the plant, if you want to eat it.

Other Things to Expect

Most wild edible plants will taste less bitter when they're young. The more mature the leaf, the more bitter it will generally taste. Boiling offers some relief from the bitterness. But some plants you might want to boil multiple times.

Many edible plants are rich with anti-oxidants, and have been a staple of many native diets for centuries. Being able to identify the plants in your area before there is the need, is the best preparation for finding edible plants.

Top Wild Edibles for Your Survival

Now that you know how to identify what plants won't harm you, we'll go over some of the most common wild edibles, what nutrition they contain and how to prepare them or which part(s) to eat.

1) Dandelions

Renowned as a weed and the bane of many a lawn-owner's existence, the common dandelion is actually one of the best wild edibles you could ever hope for.

Not only does dandelion grow practically everywhere, you also need practically no training to recognize it (especially when it is in flower) and it is absolutely loaded with nutrients.

The nutrients in dandelion include minerals and vitamins such as beta carotene, iron and calcium. Dandelion is also loaded with potassium, biotin, magnesium, phosphorous and zinc, as well as vitamins B1, B2, B5, B6, B12, C, E and vitamin D.

Both the green leaves and the yellow flowers are edible, though most people prefer to just eat the leaves; dandelion greens can be eaten in salads or boiled like spinach or added to soups.

They tend to be a more bitter green, so if you want to ease the bitterness try boiling them for a while with 2 – 3 changes of water.

2) Pine Trees

Pine trees might not seem like an obvious source of food, but they are actually a pretty nice, versatile food source.

Use pine needles to steep a zesty, refreshing tea that will also replenish your vitamin C levels – pine needle tea had 3 – 5 times as much vitamin C as orange juice. Pine nuts are also edible, highly nutritious and packed with protein; you can eat them raw, roasted, tossed into a salad or ground up into nut butter.

During spring and summer the new, soft green growth of pine needles is edible, too. In a truly tight spot, you can eat the inner bark of a pine tree as well. The inner bark is a good source of sugars and several different vitamins, and you can eat it raw or make it a little more palatable by boiling it. The inner bark can also be dried out and pulverized into flour.

3) Clover

Another plant known more as a weed and a pest in the garden than as a potential food source, you'd be surprised how tasty clover can actually be.

White and red clover are both edible, and can be chewed on and eaten raw, tossed in salads, or boiled in soups, stews or a tea.

Clover flowers are especially useful for making tea, with a naturally light sweet flavor. Many traditional recipes for hot teas and tonics include clover, as well.

4) Tulips

Okay, so these are often cultivated specifically for their lovely springtime blooms, but many tulips grow wild and they are an edible source of food.

Just ask the Dutch who, during WW2, resorted to eating tulips in the face of widespread famine. The edible parts of a tulip include the flower petals, which can be eaten raw, added to salads, boiled in soups or made into tea.

Tulip bulbs are also edible, although the center of the bulb should be removed and they must be cooked very thoroughly before being eaten due to their mild toxicity.

Peel tulip bulbs like an onion prior to boiling or cooking; you can also dry the bulbs and pound them into flour. Tulips aren't the tastiest edible ever, though, especially the bulbs.

5) Black Walnut

Walnuts are one of the easier wild nuts to identify, just look for the giant green ball, sometimes as large as a fist, hanging from the branches or turning gradually brown / black on the ground in autumn.

Black walnuts have a rough outer husk that will be green on the tree and then will turn black during autumn as the nuts sit on the ground; beneath the husk you'll find the inner chamber that you break open to get the nut.

Rich in healthy fats as well as protein, black walnuts also contain magnesium, phosphorous, manganese and copper.

The intrepid prepper is in luck with black walnuts, too, because most animals don't like chewing through the tough, bitter outer husk that protects the nut. That means you can find black walnuts still lying on the ground well into fall and winter.

5) Hazelnuts (Filberts)

Although these are a seasonal wild edible, hazelnuts are a fantastic, bountiful source of food when you can find them.

Packed with calories, healthy fats and protein, hazelnuts are also a good source of vitamin E, manganese, thiamine and copper.

Look for hazelnuts in the fall when they ripen within their little green husks.

Hazelnuts generally grow in dense clusters, and you'll know they are perfectly ripe when they practically fall out of their green husks.

6) Wild Asparagus

Quite similar to the kind you buy in store, wild asparagus has a much thinner stalk than its domesticated cousin, but it is equally edible and packed with nutrients.

Whether you eat it raw or boil it, you can prepare wild asparagus exactly as you would the normal variety and it's full of vitamin C, potassium, thiamine and vitamin B6.

7) Cattails

While they aren't the tastiest food ever, cattails provide a surprising source of emergency survival food in a pinch, and they beat eating beetles.

Younger cattail is softer and quite edible, but you can also eat the rootstalk of the plant (wash it very thoroughly) either raw or boiled. T

he leaves can also be boiled and eaten, and you can eat the inner portions of the stalk raw or boiled to soften them. In spring and early summer, when the female spike on the cattail is still young and developing you can break it off and eat it raw like corn on the cob.

8) Rose Hips

While rose hips were once a staple in many folk remedies, and a popular item for making tea, jams and preserves, many people overlook this great wild edible.

Sweet and tangy, these juicy red fruits grow in the summer and fall on wild roses after the petals have fallen from the flowers. There are many ways to eat rose hips, including steeped raw, steeped as a tea, in fruit salad and preserved as a jam. You can also make a light, sweet syrup from the juice of rose hips and they are a great source of calcium, vitamin C, vitamin E, vitamin K, vitamin A and manganese.

You can also use rose hips to make what is called rose water. Boil the rose hips in water and then strain the fruit out; when the rose water is cool you can drink it and apply

it topically as a tonic. Rose water has natural antiseptic and anti-inflammatory properties, so it's a great remedy to have on hand and it's easy to make, too.

9) Raspberries, Blackberries & Boysenberries

For anyone with a sweet tooth and those who love their fruits, you're in luck because in most areas wild raspberries, blackberries and even boysenberries tend to thrive.

You can find these easily identified plants in forests, meadows, along country roads and practically everywhere in between, but be careful not to eat berries from plants treated with herbicides or pesticides.

While it might not need saying, you can collect these berries from mid-summer on through fall. Eat them raw, on cereal, in jams, dry them, bake them in pies or make juice of them, there are tons of things you can do with these sweet, tart berries. They're also loaded with vitamin C, vitamin K and healthy sugars, so enjoy.

10) Mushrooms

In reality, this should probably be another list in and of itself, since there are many, many types of wild mushrooms that are edible, but mushrooms in general are worthy of note.

Whether you eat them raw, sauté them, grill them, boil them, make gravy of them or add them to soup or to eggs, wild mushrooms can add flavor and quite a bit of nutritional content to your meal.

When it comes to identifying mushrooms, however, you must be absolutely certain as there is no room for doubt; many edible mushrooms have poisonous relatives who look very similar and death by mushroom poisoning is a slow and painful process, so be careful.

For those who know what they are doing, though, the forest offers a bounty of edible mushrooms, including: oyster mushrooms, chanterelles (an orange, trumpet-shaped mushroom), portabella mushrooms, lobster mushrooms, edible boletus (known more commonly as porcino mushrooms) and many more.

There are at least another dozen of edibles plants that you can rely on if you find yourself stranded in the wild. Let's see a few other examples of wild edible plants that you should be able to recognize for food.

9 Wild Edibles To Find In The Desert

At first glance, the desert looks barren; it's dry, with very few plants and even fewer animals. However, at closer inspection, there are many ways to avoid starvation in a survival situation in the desert if you know what to look for. Finding wild edibles in the desert can be a tricky thing but with the proper knowledge, you won't starve.

The first thing you need to know is that not every plant or bug is edible. Some are even poisonous so it's crucial that you know the difference.

The primary desert in the US is the Sonoran Desert and there are more than 540 edible plants that natives have been using to survive and thrive for hundreds of years. You may not get fat from them but you will stay alive, which is all that matters in a survival situation. Though we can't hit all 540-plus edibles here, we're going to touch on some of the most common and easily accessible plants.

1. Prickly Pear Cactus

One of the first tips for finding foods in the desert for survival that you'll be happy to hear is that all cactus fruits are edible.

They may not all taste fabulous, but you can eat them and they are often good sources of water and nutrients. One of the more pleasant cacti to eat is the prickly pear cactus. It's about 85% water and has a high sugar and fiber content.

The light green, spiky leaves, often called pads, are often boiled or eaten raw in salads. The flowers are a beautiful dark pink color and are edible.

The fruits, oddly enough called tuna, are actually tasty. They're fruity tasting and are often dried and candied but they're good raw, and they have a decent water content so it's a good bang for your buck.

2. Saguaro Cactus

These are plentiful in the desert and can grow to be 45 feet tall and live to be 200+ years old!

They produce edible white flowers with yellow centers in the early spring – May or so – and bear edible large pink and red fruit during the next couple of months.

This cycle ends around June but even if you aren't fortunate enough to find a flowering, fruiting saguaro, you can still benefit from the spongy, fibrous interior that acts as a sponge for storing the water in the plant. You can eat it and extract the water from it to survive.

3. Desert Christmas Cactus

This little cactus looks like scrubby shrubs and grow to be about 2 feet tall.

They're often found alongside bushes and produce little red berries with spines on them, but you can scrape them off with a knife.

The berries taste a little like strawberries and are a good source of vitamins, including vitamins C and A.

4. Chia Sage

The seeds of this plant are extremely nutritious and provide good short-term energy.

Also known as golden chia or desert chia, this short plant with dark purplish spiky balls with periwinkle-colored tiny flowers and textured leaves can be eaten raw or used as seasoning for soups and stews.

The entire plant is edible. It's usually about 10 inches to 2 feet tall and looks like a bush, or in particularly dry areas, may grow as an individual flower.

5. Agave

Agave plants look sort of like aloe and vary in color from almost blue to bright or dark green.

The entire plant, including leaves, flowers, stalks and seeds are edible on many species though some are too dry to be eaten.

They've historically been used to make string, baskets, rope and shoes.

6. Pinyon Pine

There are actually two varieties of the pinyon pine and they look like a combination of a Christmas-type pine tree and a pine tree that grows in a bushy shape.

The seeds, known as pine nuts, are packed with nutrition and are also delicious. The pitch from these trees makes a great glue.

7. Mesquite

Mesquite trees produce pods that look sort of like beans.

You can dry them and grind them into a flour that can be mixed with water to be eaten raw or baked into a cake.

8. Cholla Cactus

Hikers hate these prickly plants but if you're trying to survive, chollas are your friend.

The flowers and seeds are edible and nutritious.

The plant is bushy and covered in spikes that can be quite painful to touch.

Be careful harvesting the flowers but don't pass them by just because they look intimidating!

9. Yucca

Yucca plants are made of many spiky leaves that fan into a round plant and they grow fruit in the summer time that's great grilled or can be eaten raw.

The leaves are oily and can be eaten by removing the outer skin and boiling the insides. You could eat it raw if you have to. The roots of the plant are edible, too.

If you do eat the roots, they contain saponin which can be toxic in large amounts. You can boil them to remove most of the saponin. Just FYI, there have been no reported deaths from eating raw yucca root but I wanted to let you know about it.

Other desert edibles include miner's lettuce, stinging nettle, bushmint and tepary beans. We know for a fact that we didn't come even close to listing all of the edibles in the desert. We'd love to hear more suggestions from you in the comments section below!

What Edibles to Preserve For Winter

Even though you may have worked to grow crops or hunt for food, shortages can still occur.

Fortunately, there are plenty of wild plants that are edible and capable of delivering an enormous harvest during the fall season. Here are 20 plants that should be part of your fall foraging and winter plans.

If you cannot find these in your local area, there are many others that may be suitable for you and your family to consume. Learning how to use and store these plants now can truly make living off the grid after a crisis much easier to manage.

20 Wild Edibles To Preserve For Winter

Plant Name	How to Use It	Best Ways to Preserve
Milkweed	Boil and then discard water for food consumption. Immature seed pods and flowers are edible.	Must be eaten after being harvested. Seed pods should only be used if the silk inside is white.
Wild Onion	Bulbs and leaves/stem can be used as food and also for medicinal purposes. Wild onion can be used to lower blood pressure, heal wounds (when applied directly to skin) and help fight colds.	Store bulbs in a cool, dry place. Onions can also be pressed for oil extracts and elixirs.
Blue Berries	Berries are edible	Can be made into jelly, jam, preserves, and wine.
Grapes	Edible fruit and leaves, plus grape seed can be used for reducing swelling	Grapes can be dried or made into wine, jelly, and other preserves. Seeds can be pressed to make oil. Leaves should be eaten fresh.
Cranberries	Berries are edible.	Same as blueberries.
Cattail	Roots are edible	Peel roots and let them dry. Pound with water to get at starch. Allow this mixture to dry and store in an airtight container. Best when consumed fresh. Cattail roots can also be peeled, roasted and consumed without converting into powder. Cattail root should not be consumed raw.
Wild Ginger	Herb root used for seasoning and medicinal needs. Can be used for chest congestion and getting rid of colds.	Dry for use as spice and in tea. Can also be made into oils by pressing root.

Wild Spearmint/Peppermint	Edible leaves can be used as garnishes or to make tea. Mint can also be used in oils for treating headaches, acid stomach, and as a rub for chest congestion.	Plants in the mint family can be dried, made into wines, or pressed for oil
Bull Thistle	Stalks, leaves, and roots are edible.	Remove spines from leaves and stalks. Can be consumed raw, steamed, or boiled. Best when consumed fresh.
Apples	Edible fruit	Preserve by storing apples in a cool, dry place. You can also make apple sauce, apple butter, cider, and apple juice. Leave apple juice or cider on a sunny window to make apple jack.
Black Walnuts	Nuts are edible, and can also be used for garment dyes	Preserve by storing unshelled nuts in a cool, dry place. Nuts can also be removed from shells, dry/salt roasted and stored in an airtight container. Walnuts can also be shelled, mashed up, boiled, and made into a nut paste when combined with oil.
Wild pecans	Nuts are edible	Same as black walnuts.
Acorns	Nuts are edible (must be ripe and brown)	Start by boiling shelled acorns to leach out bitterness. Continue leaching until water no longer turns brown. Dry or roast, and then store in an airtight container. Acorns can be ground up to make coffee, nut paste, and other edibles.
Maple Syrup	Sap from maple tree	After gathering sap, boil it down until it forms a thick liquid. Store maple syrup in air tight jugs and in a cool, dry place.
Hazelnuts	Nuts are edible	Store in shells in a cool dry place; or grind up and boil, then add oil to make paste. Hazelnuts can also be dried or roasted with salt then stored in an airtight container.
Peanuts	Nut roots are edible	Same as hazelnuts. Peanuts can also be roasted with honey for added sweetness.
Soybean or Endamame	Seeds are edible	Remove from pods and roast. Store in an airtight container. Soybeans can also be fermented and made into soy sauce. Soybeans are best consumed fresh; and can be used raw at that point. They can also be pressed to make oil.

Wild Corn/Maize	Seeds are edible	Corn can be frozen for long term storage, or kept in a cool dry place if husks are not removed. Corn and maize can also be ground up into flour and kept in an air tight container.
Plantain	Leaves and seeds are edible. You can also use mashed leaves for insect bites and small wounds	Can be cooked or consumed raw. Best when eaten fresh.
Prickly Pear	Fruit and leaves are edible	Remove needles by burning them off. Can be consumed cooked. Best when eaten fresh.

survivopedia.com

Wild Edibles to Use When You're Out of Water

Though most people think of water as the clear stuff that comes in a glass, there are other ways to get the hydration that you need if your water supply is suddenly cut off. You can survive by getting water from plants.

Many plants have a surprisingly high water content that you can use to hydrate. Like people, a plant is generally made up mostly of water but they're not all safe to consume. Nearly all grasses are edible but there are many plants and flowers that are poisonous so you want to be careful about what you eat in your attempt to get some moisture.

Watermelon

This delicious fruit is comprised almost entirely of water; thus the name. Eating watermelon is almost as hydrating as drinking a glass of water and also offers carbohydrates and nutrients.

This is definitely a fruit that you should have in your survival garden. Since you can grow smaller ones even in a vertical garden, it's doable for most people regardless of space.

Hens and Chicks

No, not the feathered kind – the plant kind! Hens and chicks, scientifically named Sempervivum, are those little succulents that look sort of like roses made from aloe leaves, or maybe a bit like a puffy artichoke.

In Latin, the name actually means "always alive" if that tells you anything about the hardiness of this plant.

It's found across the US growing in rocky crevices and people have taken to growing it as ground cover in the garden, though you have to be careful growing it because it will easily go feral.

The leaves of the plant are entirely edible and extremely hydrating. They taste sweet, crunchy and a bit astringent. This gives you the odd sensation of having a dry or puckered mouth while you're actually getting a ton of hydration. Though I've never tried

it, I'm told that it actually tastes good. In addition to being a hydrating plant, the juice is also good for soothing skin irritations such as bug bites or minor burns.

Berries

Berries of any sort, wild or domestic, are packed with water though some are poisonous, so do your research.

If they're edible, you can eat the leaves and stems as well as the berries, though make sure that you only eat fresh leaves; as they wilt, the chemical composition alters and wilted leaves may make you sick to your stomach.

Miner's Lettuce

This wild plant grows throughout most of the US and is extremely high in vitamin C as well as a good source of hydration.

It's an annual that starts growing in the spring and likes shady spots.

You can identify it by its light green leaves and the stem that grows right through the leaves. It grows from 6-12 inches in height. There can be 25 or more stems growing from a single root.

Miner's lettuce is described as delicious – it's sweet and juicy. You can eat the leaves, stems and flowers of the plant, which will be small and white or pink.

Mint

Mint is a hit with kids and picky people because it tastes…well, minty.

All members of the mint family have square stems and you can eat the entire plant. They're not hard to find – when they're near, you'll likely smell mint! The stems of mint are always square and the leaves are serrated.

They may also have pink or white flowers which are also edible.

They're a good source of water and also have significant nutritional value. Mint is rich in vitamins A and C, thiamin, folic acid, riboflavin, manganese, magnesium, copper, potassium, iron, calcium and zinc.

They're also great for soothing your stomach and treating morning sickness and IBS. Not only does mint grow in the wild, it's also a great addition to your herb garden!

Maple and Birch Sap

We've talked about making syrup from sap but if you read that article then you know that sap is mostly made of water. Though the sap really only runs in the early spring, it's a great source of water and it's relatively easy to tap in to. You also get a significant yield and there are essential minerals in the sap that are good for you.

Grow maple or birch trees on your property or look for them in the wild if you're on the run

because they are plants that are a great source of water in a survival situation. Taps are light so you may want to throw one in your bug-out bag.

If it isn't spring, you can still wring water out of the fiber of the trees themselves!

Cacti

Plants that have adapted by altering their physical structure so that they can survive in drought conditions are called xerophytes. These include all forms of cacti, including aloe and smaller cactus plants that you can easily grow in a little garden.

Prickly pears are particularly suited for this because they provide a ton of water, they're pretty and they taste good, too.

Prickly pears, or Opuntia cacti, grow both pads (leaves) and fruits that are edible and good sources of water. The fruits ripen in late September and are bright red with a bright orange center. Others are yellow on the outside and green on the inside and aren't quite as sweet as the red ones. You can eat them raw or make them into syrup, jellies and even liquor!

Vines of Any Sort

Vines that are at least an inch and a half in diameter are a good source of water but you need to know which ones are safe to consume. Safe vines give a clear fluid and poisonous ones yield a milky, sticky sap.

Even the vines that contain potable water can cause skin irritation if you touch the outside of the vine so let the liquid drip into your mouth instead of putting the vine in your mouth.

A container is even better. Vines look great in gardens as long as you don't let them invade your other plants.

Palm Trees

You can only grow palm trees outside if you live in tropical or sub-tropical climates but they yield quite a bit of water – up to a liter per day.

The buri, nipa and coconut palms are the best ones to use; simply bend one of the flowering stalks and cut its tip, then let the water drain from it. If you cut another thin slice off the stalk a couple of hours later, the flow will resume.

The nipa is the best palm to grow for this because the shoots start at ground level – no climbing required. Coconut palms are good to have but can't be grown inside because they're tall, but coconut water is extremely good for you.

Sphagnum Moss

Sphagnum moss, and many other mosses for that matter, are extremely spongy and hold lots of water. In the case of sphagnum moss, you can quite literally wring it out and drink the water that you get from it.

Since it's acidic, bacteria doesn't tend to grow in it. The only real risk you have is that there is an extremely small chance that there are halophiles in it. This is a salt-loving organism that can make you ill.

However, if you're in a survival situation, the odds of dying of dehydration most definitely outweigh the odds of finding halophiles in the moss. As a matter of fact, many

survivalists regularly use moss as a water source and I haven't heard of any that have ever had an issue.

Now that you know about a few plants that are good sources of water in a survival situation, plan to include some in your garden and do your research so that you can recognize them in the wild. You never can tell when knowing how to get water from plants will save your life one day.

Wild Edibles to Use when You Miss Your Pharmacy

When SHTF, it won't be long before modern medicines are hard to come by, so you need a back-up plan. That's OK though because there's a form of medicine that can be just as effective and has been in use for millennia: herbs and plants.

That's right. Eastern medicine, as well as Native Americans and many other cultures, used natural cures long before Western medicine even thought about a pill.

Since the beginning of time, flowers have been used medicinally by healers of all cultures. They've been used for healing and for harm, for seasoning foods and even as a primary source of sustenance. The folklore surrounding wildflowers is rich and varied but some of those tales are more than just lore – they're actually backed by science and

proven by time. You should know about which wildflowers are worth being in your medical kit in case you need them.

Since we're talking about plants found in North America, we should take some notes from the Native American tribes. They had herbology down to an art (or more accurately, a science) and many of the names of flowers even came from them.

Medicinal use probably started because plants were used for sustenance, then people noticed side effects of some of the plants. Maybe they got sick, or their headaches went away. At any rate, as they ate, they learned.

Top 39 Medicinal Plants to Learn For Survival

Scientists and botanists have studied many of these plants at length and discovered that healers knew what they were talking about; as much as 25 percent of modern medications, including morphine, codeine and quinine, are plant-based. Though morphine and codeine are made from the illegal opium poppy, there are many medicinal flowers that are perfectly legal. Let's get started!

Here's a list of medicinal plants to learn for survival.

1. **Agrimony.** Also known as cocklebur, church steeples, sticklewort and philanthropos, AGRIMONIA PARVIFLORA is often used to make a purifying tea to help recover from colds, fever and diarrhea. It also has astringent properties so it's good for sores and blemishes. Finally, it's called Xian He Cao in Chinese medicine and is used to stop bleeding. A word of caution when using agrimonia: it's an astringent. Don't use it if you're constipated or if you're pregnant without talking to a doctor.
2. **Althea.** Grows in well-drained soil in either sun or shade. Great for skin irritations, ulcers and sore throats.
3. **American Ginseng.** This root grows best in cool climates and is used to treat respiratory disorders and reduce fevers. It's used orally, often in a tea.

4. **Barberry.** This grows to as high as a whopping 9 feet tall! Use it to treat skin conditions and diarrhea.
5. **Belladonna.** Great to use as a sleep aid but be extremely careful; too much belladonna will kill.
6. **Billberry.** Grow these berries in full sun. Use them to ease diabetes pain, and to treat kidney disease and eye conditions. Eat the berries.
7. **Borage.** Grows well in full sun and moderate to moist soil. Helps with arthritis, joint pain and skin conditions such as eczema.
8. **Butterfly Weed.** Also known as pleurisy root, all of this plant is edible and the medicinal part lies in the roots. The flowers, pods, seeds and leaves are edible. The roots can be dried and carried in your survival medical kit. They have antispasmodic, diuretic, expectorant and vasodilation properties and are good to treat gas, dysentery, rheumatism and diarrhea. The plant seems to be particularly effective in the lungs, where it helps with spasms and other respiratory diseases. When drunk as a tea, it has a mild calming effect. You can also make a poultice from the root that's good for bruising, swelling and wound treatment.
9. **California Poppy.** This pretty little poppy doesn't have the opium of its bigger, badder sister but it does have some of the same benefits without the addictive qualities of the more potent opiate. The flowers, leaves and stems can be made into a tincture to use as a pain reliever, mood stabilizer and mild sedative. It's bitter, so be prepared, but it's worth it.
10. **Catnip.** Grows well in many soils. Treats cold symptoms, swelling and fever. It also helps stop bleeding when applied topically and soothes gas, migraines and stomach aches when infused.
11. **Cayenne Pepper.** Grows well in moderate to moist soil and full sun to partial shade. Can help prevent heart attacks and heal ulcers and hemorrhoids.
12. **Chickweed.** STELLARIA MEDIA is a plant that grows low to the ground and has little tiny white flowers. You can eat the greens and flowers in a salad because they're packed with nutrients. The whole plant is used medicinally as a laxative,

gas aid, diuretic, expectorant and astringent. It's also good to grind into a poultice to treat burns and rashes.

13. **Cranesbill.** This grows best in warm, semi-dry soil. It helps stop bleeding and diarrhea and is also good for canker sores.
14. **Echinacea.** Grows well in nearly any climate as long as you don't overwater it. Treats colds and the flu.
15. **Evening Primrose.** This list just wouldn't be complete without adding evening primrose. Each part of the plant has a medicinal use. The seeds are cultivated because they contain the essential fatty acid, GLA, that your body doesn't naturally produce. GLA helps prevent heart disease, cirrhosis of the liver, eczema, high blood pressure and atherosclerosis. It's also a good treatment for menopause, rheumatoid arthritis and PMS. Evening primrose also helps relieve pain and is an anti-inflammatory. It also interacts positively with uterine muscle contraction, the nervous system and even metabolism. The leaves and bark are astringent and can also be effective when treating whooping cough, asthma, skin conditions and GI disorders. Phew. That's a whole lot of uses for just one plant!
16. **Fo-Ti.** Grows in sun or shade but doesn't like extreme heat. Treats high cholesterol, erectile dysfunction, constipation and fatigue.
17. **Ginger.** Not only is it delicious, it's also great for migraines, nausea, motion sickness and circulation, including blood clots. Eat it or make it into a tea.
18. **Goldenseal.** Grows best in a shady area in rich, moist soil. Use it to treat bladder and fungal infections as well as sinus congestion. Use it in teas.
19. **Lavender.** This pretty purple plant isn't just nice to look at. It's easy to grow and is good for treating stress-related headaches, depression and anxiety. It's often used to make a calming, sedative tea. Infusions are also used to soothe insect bites, burns, and headaches. Use the plant, leaves and stems.
20. **Lady Fern.** Grows well in moist soil. Eases the pain of minor cuts, burns and stings.
21. **Licorice Root.** Grows best in rich soil in either sun or shade. Can't take extreme cold. Treats sore throats, ulcers and respiratory issues such as bronchitis.

22. **Marijuana.** Grows well in moderate to moist soil and high sun. Treats glaucoma, depression, anxiety, high blood pressure and nausea. The hemp plant makes great rope as well.
23. **Milk Thistle.** Grows best in semi-dry soil in temperate climates. It's a wonderful antioxidant and can be used to treat liver and kidney problems.
24. **Parsley.** Grows well in moist soil with sun or partial shade. Helps cleanse the blood and also helps with kidney stones.
25. **Peppermint.** Grows best in temperate climates in moist soil. Helps treat acid reflux, heart burn, headaches and gallstones.
26. **Rosemary.** Grows well in many different soils and climates and doesn't require much attention. Great for upset stomach and helps with headaches. May even help treat cancer.
27. **Saw Palmetto.** Grows great in full sun with moderately moist soil. Treats bladder infections, stomach problems including nausea and bronchitis.
28. **Self-heal.** This plant, also known as PRUNELLA VUGARISor prunella, is loved by people who look forward to their pretty little purple flowers but many consider them pesky weeds. It's been used medicinally for centuries to heal wounds, which is where the name came from. It used to be rubbed on warrior's wounds to help them heal, and later it was chewed to help get rid of mouth sores and sore throats. Science is showing that it may have pretty potent antibiotic properties, so now we know why it worked so well! The entire plant is edible but the healing powers purportedly come from the flowers. Eat them raw or dry them to carry with you.
29. **Shepherd's Purse.** Though this plant, like many, is native to Europe, it was carried to the states and is now fairly common throughout the country. It's edible and is extremely nutritious; cook them like greens. The whole leaves, stems and flowers are used to stop bleeding because it (usually) constricts the blood vessels. It's also an astringent, and anti-inflammatory and a diuretic. Shepherd's Purse can be used to staunch the bleeding during childbirth and can be used as a tea or eaten to help with menstrual cramps. Be careful using this dried because it's thought that it loses some of its power once it's dried. Skullcap is also used as

an anti-inflammatory, an astringent, an anti-spasmodic and a sedative. It's powerful so, as I've already stated, use with extreme caution!

30. **Skullcap.** Needs well-drained soil and full sun. Used to treat high blood pressure. This tall, pretty purple flower will be valuable to have on hand if you have somebody who is epileptic because it's historically been used to treat epilepsy as well as other disorders such as anxiety, insomnia and hysteria. If you have somebody in your group who is on a controlled substance such as barbiturates or tranquilizers, skullcap can be helpful with the withdrawals. Be careful using skullcap because you can overdose on it and pregnant women shouldn't take it.
31. **Spiderwort.** OK, I'm starting with this one even though it isn't medicinal, per se. Also known as Indian Paint, Cow Slobber, Widow's Tears, Dayflower and Trinity Flower, detects radiation or severe pollution. The flowers turn relatively quickly from blue to pink when exposed to as little as 5 rem of radiation. Though you'd already be exposed while waiting for the flowers to change, even though it happens quickly, this would be useful if you're on the run in a survival situation and notice a change in the local live flowers. Time to turn around and get the heck outta Dodge!
32. **St. John's Wort.** Grows well in warm, moist soil and can't tolerate the cold. Works well to treat depression and can also slow the progression of HIV.
33. **Tart Cherries.** Grows on trees in moderate to warm climates. Can't take extreme cold. Helps treat arthritis and diabetes and may help prevent cancer.
34. **Tea Tree Oil.** This is tough to grow so we suggest that you stock up on it. It's a powerful antibacterial, anti-viral and anti-fungal and works wonders to treat athlete's foot, vaginal infections, acne, and many other conditions.
35. **Valerian.** Easy to grow in many moderate to warm climates. Remove the flowering stems as soon as they appear. Great for insomnia and anxiety.
36. **Vinpocetine.** This comes from lesser periwinkle and helps to treat people with stroke, Alzheimer's and vascular dementia.
37. **White Willow.** Grows best in moist soil. It's the mother of modern aspirin and is used to treat fever, inflammation and aches.

38. **Wild Yam Roots.** Native to China, these roots grow best in temperate climates. It's great for rheumatoid arthritis, menstrual cramps and nausea.
39. **Witch hazel.** Grows best in moist, acidic soil and full sun but it isn't too particular. It will even grow in partial shade. It's an antiseptic and also helps make bruises feel better. Also used to treat IBS and other bowel issues.

There are many different wildflowers out there that have valuable medicinal properties that make them valuable to have in your survival medical kit.

7 Plants that Could Kill You if Used Wrong

There's been a bandwagon leap in the last few decades to try all things natural, because natural is obviously better, or so people believe. While we choose to believe that as well, we're also a bit more on the realistic side. Just because a medicine is "natural" doesn't imply that it's safe. Herbs are excellent substitutes for pharmaceutical medications as long as you use them properly. If not, some plants could actually kill you if used wrong.

Arsenic is natural and so is plutonium, but you're probably not planning to toss either one onto your cereal in the morning. Many plants can cure a wide variety of illnesses in the proper dose but will cause poisoning, abortion or organ failure if you take you much. Here are a few of the top plants that you should be careful with.

Wolfsbane

Originally thought to have been gathered from the dripping jaws of the three-headed dog, Cerberus, Wolfsbane, aka Monkshood or Aconite, is wildly toxic, even in mild doses.

It is still used under carefully controlled circumstances as a sedative, fever reducer, and cold/flu medicine.

However, it has a notable effect on circulation, respiration and the central nervous system. Not worth it when there are so many other treatments out there.

Belladonna

Translated from Italian to mean "pretty woman", belladonna, aka deadly nightshade, was originally used to dilate a woman's pupils so that they glittered.

Now it's used in the medical field under the name atropine and is used to treat bradycardia (slow heartbeat), arthritis, stomach cramps, hyperhidrosis, as a sedative, and to treat colds, sore throats, and hay fever because of its effects on the respiratory system.

However, though it's extremely effective, it's also lethal in a not-so-large dose. Pregnant women, women who are breastfeeding, or people with congestive heart failure or ulcers shouldn't take belladonna in any dose, or even come into physical contact with it.

Stinging Nettle

Stinging nettle has many uses in alternative medicine, such as treating urination issues, joint ailments, rashes, allergies, asthma and kidney stones.

Though recognized as possibly safe when used appropriately and for less than six months by people in good health, it may cause sweating and stomach upset.

There is some evidence that above-ground parts can decrease blood sugar levels so if you have diabetes, you should monitor your blood sugar levels closely. It may also

lower blood pressure so if you're taking blood pressure medications or are prone to low blood pressure, extreme caution should be used when taking stinging nettle.

Finally, if you have kidney problems, you should talk to you doctor before taking stinging nettle because it seems to increase urine flow.

Kava Kava

Native to the South Pacific, kava kava root has been used for centuries to treat insomnia, depression, anxiety and restlessness, among other things.

It causes a sense of well-being and calm but there are some serious concerns about the side effects that have caused widespread ban of the plant in countries including the US, Switzerland, Germany, and Canada.

Serious illnesses, including liver damage, depression, and death, have occurred with even short-term use at recommended dosages. It shouldn't be taken by pregnant women under any circumstances.

Devil's Claw

This plant is an anti-inflammatory often used to treat osteoarthritis and lower back pain.

Though there's not much research to support using devil's claw for anything else, it's also been used to treat gout, upset stomach, muscle pain, and rheumatoid arthritis.

Though generally recognized as possibly safe in recommended dosages for up to a year by healthy

adults, devil's claw shouldn't be used by pregnant women, diabetics, people with heart problems or abnormal blood pressure, or by people with gallstones or peptic ulcers.

It's thought that devil's claw may increase stomach acid and bile production.

Foxglove

Also known as digitalis, foxglove is treat congestive heart failure, irregular heartbeat, asthma and epilepsy when ingested. Topically, it's used to treat wounds and burns.

Foxglove is listed as unsafe for anybody to use without being under the direct care of a healthcare professional because all parts of the plant are poisonous.

It can cause irregular heart function and death. Long-term use can cause visual halos, stomach upset and yellow-green vision because toxicity occurs. People with heart disease should definitely avoid foxglove as should pregnant or nursing women.

Also, people with kidney disease may not eliminate foxglove effectively and may become toxic, so they should avoid it, too.

Comfrey

This plant has been used for centuries to treat a wide variety of ailments. It's brewed into a tea to treat heavy menstrual flow, stomach upset, ulcers, diarrhea, persistent coughs, bronchitis, sore throat, and chest pain.

It's also applied topically to treat arthritis, wounds, rheumatoid arthritis, phlebitis, gout,

and broken bones. Comfrey contains chemicals called pyrrolizidine alkaloids that can cause lung damage, liver damage, and even cancer.

The FDA has recommended that products containing comfrey be removed from US markets. It's likely safe when applied topically to unbroken skin, though it is absorbed through the skin. It's considered unlikely safe when taken orally or when applied to broken skin.

The truth of the matter is that most plants are just like most pharmaceutical medications. Though they may be therapeutic at certain levels, they are toxic when taken at higher doses or for extended periods of time. Some, such as hemlock, are lethal in even the smallest doses.

The bottom line?

Know what you're doing before you take anything herbal. If you're pregnant or nursing, assume that what you take will pass to your baby. Remember that the same drugs that cure you can also kill you.