

Urban Foraging List - WINTER

Common Name	Botanical Name	What	How	Where	When	Caution	Texas Native	Description
Alliums	<i>Allium spp.</i>	Bulbs, Stems, Leaves, Flowers	Raw or Cooked	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Fields, Everywhere	Year round	Smell like onion?	Y	There is a minimally toxic mimic of wild onion, which is called Crow's Poison (<i>Nothoscordum bivalve</i>). This plant look almost identical to a small wild onion but it lacks the onion/garlic smell
Bastard Cabbage	<i>Rapistrum rugosum</i>	Flowers, Leaves, Seedpods	Raw or Cooked	Roadsides, Abandoned lots, Fields, Everywhere	Fall, Winter, Spring	Never eat an ornamental cultivar that has been treated with a pesticide	N	Flowers and pods raw in salads, Broccoli-like buds raw or cooked, Youngest leaves like collard greens
Chickweed	<i>Stellaria media</i>	Leaves, Stems	Raw or Cooked	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Fields, Everywhere	Winter, Spring		N	Source of vitamin C, use in sauces, salsa, pesto, energy shakes. Gives foods a creamy texture
Curled Dock	<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Young leaves, Seeds	Raw or Cooked, Seeds ground	Abandoned lots, Fields, near water	Year round	Older leaves can be quite bitter. Do not eat too much.	N	Related to the vegetable sorrel. Tangy leaves are nutrient dense. Remove papery sheath from seeds and lightly roast
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	Leaves, Flowers, Roots	Raw or Cooked	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Fields	Spring, Fall, Winter	Older leaves can be quite bitter	N	Young leaves can be cooked to remove bitterness or diluted with non-bitter greens in salad. Flowers eaten raw or fried or used in winemaking. Roots cooked as coffee substitute.
Dewberry	<i>Rubus spp.</i>	Flowers, BERRIES	Raw or Cooked, Jelly	Abandoned lots, Fields, some shady edges	Spring	Thorns, Poison ivy	Y	Related to blackberries and taste just as good but more seeds. Tea can be made from young leaves, flowers
Dichondra	<i>Dichondra spp.</i>	Leaves	Raw or Cooked	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Fields, Everywhere	Year round		Y	Better young when raw, cooked as they get tougher
Dollarweed	<i>Hydrocotyle spp.</i>	Leaves, Stems	Raw	Landscapes, Fields, Wetland areas	Spring to Fall	Wash well	Y	Young leaves taste cucumber-like, Older leaves pickled like kraut
Greenbriar	<i>Smilax spp.</i>	Tender vines, leaves, berries, tubers	Raw or Cooked	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Wooded areas	Year round	Look for thorns (prickles) and tendrils!	Y	Above ground portions can be eaten raw. Leaves and tendrils can be cooked like spinach and young vines can be cooked like asparagus.
Hackberry	<i>Celtis spp.</i>	Ripe Fruit	Raw, Jelly	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Wooded areas	Fall		Y	Hackberries are reported to grow on every continent except Antarctica and are believed to have been a vital food source on each. Ripe fruits are sweet. Reminiscent of fruit leather.
Juniper	<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	Berries (modified cone)	Spice, Flavoring	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Fields, Everywhere	Summer, Fall	Use only in moderation to flavor. Avoid European species	Y	Mature blue berries used in marinades, stews, stuffing and to flavor wild game. Mature but still green berries used to flavor gin and chartreuse liqueur.
Magnolia	<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>	Unopened Flowers	Raw or Pickled	Landscapes, Wooded areas	Spring		Y	Pickle unopened buds
Nutsedge	<i>Cyperaceae spp.</i>	Nutlets, Seeds	Raw or Cooked	Landscapes, Fields, Wetland areas	Summer	Remember sedges have edges (triangle stems)	N	Carefully dig up plant to find nutlets. Eaten raw or cooked flavors range from minty (Purple NS) to nutty (Yellow NS)
Oak	<i>Quercus spp.</i>	Acorns	Flour, Coffee subst.	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Fields, Everywhere	Fall	Leach out bitter tannins by soaking or boiling in water	Y	Focus on white oak species like bur oak. Remove shells and coarsely chop meat in blender or food processor. Boil meal, changing out water until not bitter. Dry and grind into flour.
Pecan	<i>Carya illinoensis</i>	Nuts	Raw or Cooked	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Wooded areas	Fall		Y	Native "unimproved" pecans are typically smaller with a thicker shell but can have exceptional flavor.
Redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	Flowers, Young pods,	Raw or cooked	Landscapes, Wooded areas	Spring		Y	Pink to purple flowers are pleasantly tart. Very young seed pods can be cooked and eaten as pea pods.
Sow Thistle	<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	Leaves, Stems, Buds, Roots	Raw or Cooked	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Fields, Everywhere	Spring, Fall, Winter	Beware Look-a-Like, Groundsel	N	Pickle unopened buds, Cook young leaves like spinach, Roasted roots make bitter coffee subs.
White Clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>	Leaves, Flowers, Root	Raw or Cooked	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Fields	Spring to Fall	Cyanide?!	N	Flowers and leaves must be used either within 30 minutes after picking or left to dry for 4-6 weeks
Willow	<i>Salix spp.</i>	Twigs, Inner Bark	Tea, Raw, Dried	Abandoned lots, Fields, Near water	Spring, Year round	Avoid excessive amounts	Y	Outer bark of young branches contains salicylic acid, the inspiration for aspirin. Inner bark porridge as famine food.
Woodsorrel/ Oxalis	<i>Oxalis spp.</i>	Leaves, Flowers, Roots	Raw or Cooked	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Fields, Everywhere	Year round	Limit consumption of oxalic acid	N	Heartshaped, clover-like leaves have a strong citrus-like tangy flavor. Try fresh in salads or as a citrus subst. in cooked dishes.

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Yaupon Holly	<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>	Leaves, Dried or Roasted	Teas	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Wooded areas	Year round	Red berries toxic	Y	Leaves are dried and sometimes roasted for a caffeinated tea. Not unlike closely related Yerba mate.
Cleaver	<i>Galium aparine</i>	Leaves, Stems, Seeds	Cooked is best, Teas	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Wooded areas	Fall, Winter, Spring	Cook to soften tiny hairs	N	Good source of vitamin C, Small plants can be eaten raw before hooked hairs develop. More mature plants are cooked greens. Seeds used as coffee substitute.
Japanese Hawkbeard	<i>Youngia japonica</i>	Leaves, Shoots, Roots	Raw, Cooked	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Wooded areas	Winter, Spring, Fall		N	Related to dandelion but less bitter, Raw in salads, Cooked as a pot herb
Nandina	<i>Nandina domestica</i>	Berries, Young Leaves	Boiled, Jelly	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Wooded areas	Year round	Seeds toxic, Leaves must be boiled twice	N	Berries with seeds removed can be used to make/ stretch jelly, Leaves cooked like Pokeweed-boiled twice to remove toxic compounds, Roots used to make yellow dye
Henbit	<i>Lamium amplexicaule</i>	Leaves, Stems, Flowers	Raw, Cooked, Tea	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Fields, Everywhere	Winter, Early Spring		N	Mildly bitter greens eaten like spinach raw or cooked, Buds pickled like capers
Hoary Bowlesia	<i>Bowlesia incana</i>	Leaves	Raw	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Fields, Everywhere	Winter, Spring	Toxic look-a-like creeping buttercup is hairless	Y	Mild cilantro-like flavored leaves can be used raw or cooked in the same manner as cilantro
Wood Violet	<i>Viola spp.</i>	Leaves, Flowers	Raw, Tea	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Wooded areas	Winter, Spring	Violine is a laxative in large amounts	Y	High in vitamin C, leaves and flowers used in salads, Flowers to decorate desserts, used in floral tea
Black Nightshade	<i>Solanum spp.</i>	Ripe Berries, Cooked Greens	Raw, Jelly	Landscapes, Abandoned lots, Fields, Everywhere	Summer, Fall, Winter	Avoid green fruits, Look for small calyx, Cooking leaves breaks down Solanine	Y/N	Ripe berries are delicious raw or in jellies, Young tender leaves boiled as a pot herb
Sweet Gum	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	Seeds, Sap, Leaf buds	Raw, Cooked	Landscapes, Wooded areas	Spring, Fall		Y	Seeds inside round capsule in Fall, Young leaf buds raw, Sap historically used to make chewing gum
Elderberry	<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>	Flowers, Berries	Flowers Raw, Berries Cooked	Wooded areas, Near water	Spring, Summer	Raw berries and other parts of plant are toxic! Beware pokeweed	Y	Flowers raw, fried, in liqueur. Berries cooked in syrup and in jelly
Inland Sea Oats	<i>Chasmanthium latifolium</i>	Tiny Seeds	Winnowed as a grain	Landscapes, Wooded areas, Near water	Late Summer, Fall		Y	Winnowed grain as cereal or ground to make flour. Breads, biscuits, mush, Fermentable sugars used in beer? 92 lbs per acre harvest?
Dwarf Palmetto	<i>Sabal minor</i>	Hearts, Fruit	Raw, Cooked	Landscapes, Wooded areas, Near water	Summer, Fall		Y	Fronds of palm are dug up and base of stems peeled to reveal softer "hearts", Roasting brings of sweeter flavors but can be somewhat bitter. Skins and flesh of fruit like as acai, Seeds pressed for palm oil?
Dead Nettle	<i>Lamium purpureum</i>	Leaves, Flowers	Raw, Tea	Landscapes, Wooded edges	Winter, Spring	Larger and more hairy than henbit	N	Mild tasting edible tops used in salads or cooked in stir-fry

*Never eat or touch a plant you cannot positively identify with 100% certainty. Many plants are poisonous, some can be life threatening.

** Responsibility for eating any plant must rest with the individual. BE CAREFUL!

Disclaimer: The information provided is intended to be a general summary of information. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of information. No warranties are expressed or implied regarding errors or omissions. No legal liability or responsibility for any injuries is assumed from this information.

Not all plants are edible, so make sure that it is before tasting it.

- Many edible plants have non-edible or very TOXIC look-alikes
- Refer to the botanical name when verifying whether a plant is safe to eat.
- Check a reference book or visit one of these websites
- <http://www.foragingtexas.com>
- <http://www.eattheweeds.com>

Remember the acronym I.T.E.M.

- Properly Identify the plant or fungus
- Time of Year, Is the plant "In Season"
- Environment, Check the environment and surroundings for signs of pollutants and other dangers
- Method of preparation, Does the plant need to be cooked, boiled or need other preparation to be safely consumed?

