

Spring foraging

Alexanders

Where: Hedgerows

About: The yellow flowers of Alexanders are the earliest umbellifer to bloom. They were introduced as a food to Britain by the Romans, and the leaves are tasty in salads, best eaten when the shoots are young.



Alexanders

Stinging Nettles

Where: Everywhere, especially in richer soils

About: We all hate being stung by nettles, but the young shoots make a flavoursome infusion in spring, and a superb soup.



Stinging nettles

Hogweed

Where: Hedgerows, woodlands, grassland

About: Collect Hogweed leaves in spring when the shoots are young, but take care as the sap can cause burning to the skin. They are delicious lightly steamed. Must not be confused with the toxic Hemlock.



Navelwort

Navelwort (Pennywort)

Where: Rock and wall crevices

About: The round leaves of this plant have a peppery flavour, and are a good addition to green salads. They grow through much of the spring and summer, with long flower spikes appearing from June.

Common sorrel

Where: Grassland and open woodland

About: Collect and wilt the leaves of sorrel, then mix them with yoghurt to make a lovely sauce to accompany fish.

Cuckooflower (Lady's-smock)

Where: Damp meadows

About: The leaves of this plant, which flowers in the spring, are spicy, and were once frequently grown as a salad herb. These days, the wildflower is probably best enjoyed for its prettiness.



DANDELIONS - DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

- the latex from the stems can be made into elastic bands.
- the stems make great whistles.
- the flowers can be used as a stain to create (temporary!) tattoos.

