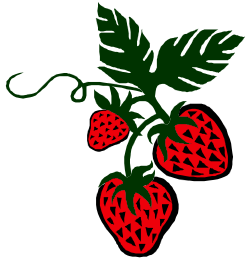


# Field Notes

Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre

July 2003

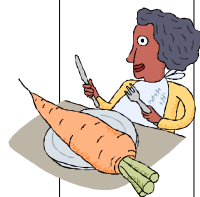


## EDIBLE WILD PLANTS

When you first begin learning about wild edibles you may find the large number of plants available overwhelming. Start by learning a few plants. Study a handful of plants and get to know the scientific name, where they grow, how they grow, what part is edible, how to prepare it, and what time of year is best for collecting it. **If you are unsure of the identification of a plant don't eat it until you are 100% sure of what it is.** Once you master your initial list then move on to others.



Scientific names are not as intimidating as they may seem. If you can learn the common name of a plant - you can learn its scientific name. Plants can have many common names so it is important to know the scientific name for identification purposes. Knowing the scientific name of each plant will help to avoid confusion when collecting wild edibles.



## Did you know?

That you can steam the flower buds of the Canada thistle and eat them with butter.



That a deep yellow dye can be made from the flowers of the Canada goldenrod.



That Blue giant hyssop is a good replacement in your garden for Purple loosestrife.




# Field Notes

Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre


July 2003




THE EDIBLE PARTS of a plants can be broken into three broad categories: fruits and seeds, leaves, stems, and flowers, and roots.

 Most people are familiar with fruits and seeds. Whether you have gone blueberry picking, hunting for saskatoons, or have stumbled across a strawberry patch we have all probably eaten wild fruit. The fruits and seeds of many plants can be eaten in many different ways. They can be eaten as fresh fruit, made into jams and jellies (like rose hips), ground up for spices (like bayberry), used as oils (like sunflower), used as flour (like cattail pollen), boiled for teas (like wild bergamot), or eaten as nuts (like hazelnut).



 The leaves, stems, and flowers of plants can be eaten directly (as in cattails), in salads (as in dandelions), or can be cooked (as in ferns). This is the largest and most nutritionally important category of edible plants. They are exceptionally rich in vitamin A, and contain significant amounts of vitamins C, E, K, and B, as well as iron, copper, magnesium, calcium, and other minerals.



 The roots of plants can be ground into flour (like in breadroot) or eaten like potatoes (like wild lily). As many of the vitamins and minerals are found in the skin of these root parts, they should be prepared with the skin on.

Wild plants also have many other uses: medicinal, as dyes, as material for mats, ropes, baskets, crafts, and more.



Finding a good reference book to help to identify and prepare edible wild plants is very important so that you can better enjoy nature's feast!



Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre is a joint project of Ducks Unlimited Canada and the Province of Manitoba

