

Nutrition – Nature's Way

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For many of us the winter of 2013/2014 will be remembered for decades to come. Between ice storms, record breaking snow falls, floods, and temperatures that were so cold they shattered records it was memorable to say the least. Now that the worst of it is over (we hope) we can start looking forward to eating lots of wild spring greens.

Why Eat Spring Wild Edibles?

How do we effectively cleanse our blood after a long cold winter? It's really very simple; it's been done for centuries in many countries – eat fresh, spring, wild greens.

Yes the fresh greens for the most part are bitter, but that's the whole point. They improve digestion more than any store bought greens and this is the whole essence behind purifying our blood. I was once told by a Native elder that their belief system claimed that the blood is not dirty. It's our liver and the lymphatic system that accumulate toxins from processing rich, heavy foods during the long, cold, winter months; eating fresh bitter greens helps to expel them. Bitter foods were once the norm and they are truly a healthier choice for our liver.

To find out what spring edibles are out there right now check out my latest blog! ([Spring Wild Edibles](#))

Wild Edible of the Month Chickweed (*Stellaria media*)



- Vitamin A
- Vitamins B1, B2, B3
- Vitamin C
- Calcium
- Copper
- Iron
- Magnesium,
- Manganese
- Potassium
- Silicon
- Zinc
- Beta-carotene
- Bio-flavonoids
- Coumarins
- Omega-6



CHICKWEED SALVE

Chickweed is an annual wild edible that grows in many locations and as hardy as it is, chickweed is quite delicate. This is an easy-to-grow plant that's healthy to eat and it produces flowers throughout the growing season even in hot, dry conditions. Chickweed is multi-functional because its presence decreases insect damage to other plants. Chickweed grows in a unique, intertwined manner, and it has small white star-shaped flowers hence its Latin name, *Stellaria media*.

There is a plethora of health benefits that chickweed is known for. It can cool inflammation and speed external healing. Drinking chickweed tea as a springtime tonic to cleanse the blood dates back hundreds of years. Chickweed poultices are useful for cooling and soothing minor burns, skin irritations, rashes and particularly for dry, itchy skin. Chickweed tea helps to quell a cough too.

Many herbalists including Susan Weed swear by drinking chickweed infusion for helping to eliminate fat cells. According to Susan Weed she recommends putting one ounce of dried herb in a quart jar and fill it to the top with boiling water. Drink at least two cups a day.

Perhaps the best way to capture chickweed's medicinal effects is to make a salve.

Fill a jar with fresh chickweed. (Be sure it is clean.) Cover the chickweed with olive oil. (Make sure you have at least 1 ¼ cup of oil.) Be sure all trapped air bubbles are released by poking it with a long thin object. Place the lid on the jar and let sit for 2-3 weeks. Shake every day. After 2-3 weeks pour the oil through a strainer or cheesecloth and squeeze as much oil out as you can.

In a bain marie, place 1/8 cup of grated beeswax. Slowly melt the wax. Once melted add 1/2 tbsp of vitamin E and one cup of chickweed oil. Stir well and pour liquid into tins or small jars. Let sit until hardened. It's that simple!

You can make lots of salve and give some to family and friend as gifts!



[TOOLS HQ](http://www.tools-hq.com/manufacturers/viking-knife-company)

ToolsHQ is an online store so that they are able to pass on some major savings to you. If you like to cook then you will love being in the kitchen when you use ceramic knives. Once you have experienced using a ceramic knife, there is no going back. Best part of all - the price is right at [Tools HQ](http://www.tools-hq.com)! Ceramic knives are terrific for use on most wild edible roots!

I recently wrote a blog about tea. Did you know that although we refer to this as the tea plant, when left on its own it actually grows into a tree? This 'plant' reaches up to almost 9 metres in height when not cut back.

When you drink black, white, or green tea, oolong or pu-erh you are drinking tea that all comes from the same plant *Camellia sinensis*. What makes them taste different is that they are processed differently to attain different levels of oxidation.

Many years ago I stopped drinking commercial teas because I discovered a whole world of free tea that was much better for my health. Wild edibles when combined can make some incredibly great tasting teas. I'm glad I stopped because over the past year there have been reports coming out about the high concentrations of pesticides in commercial tea.

Celestial Seasonings was the first brand that I heard about that contained a lot of pesticides. Just recently here in Canada CBC did their own investigations into many popular teas and high levels of pesticides are very common. I've embarked on a campaign emailing many tea companies asking them what they are going to do about this - but so far I haven't heard back from any of them. Perhaps by the time the next newsletter come out someone will have responded. Stay tuned!

In the meantime, if you are a tea drinker I urge you to read [Tea: Is it Really that Good For You?](#) You'll be shocked as to what else is in the tea you drink.



Tea leaves *Camellia sinensis*



Tea flower

There are almost 200 countries on planet Earth and EdibleWildFood.com has had people from all but 11 countries checking out what wild edibles there are to enjoy. I'm expanding what common edibles are out there and also I'll be adding in edible plants that are common to specific regions of the world. For example I have the [supplejack vine](#) on the website that is common only in eastern Australia, N.Z., and New Guinea. Be watching the website for lots more edibles coming your way!