

Nutrition – Nature's Way

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At long last the warmth of spring, (or the attempt at warmth depending where you live), has arrived. The arrival of spring brings us all a sense of newness and of course, spring fever. Going on a pleasant walk through fields or a forest is the logical cure to spring fever. While you're out there be sure to collect some coltsfoot flowers!

Coltsfoot is a perennial flowering herbaceous plant that's a member of the Asteraceae (aster/daisy) family. The flowers, which many people mistaken for dandelions, appear in early spring (long before dandelions) and leaves do not appear until the flower begins to wither away.

The leaves are large and form a rosette at the base of the plant. The shape of the leaf broadly resembles the hoof-print of a horse (hence the common name). The plant is often found in waste and disturbed places and along roadsides and paths and as it spreads by both seed and rhizomes it is often considered an invasive plant. It is a native of Asia and Europe, where it has long been used as a cough suppressant. The Latin name of the plant *Tussilago* literally means 'cough suppressant' and *farfara* means far away.

The flowers and flower buds of the plant can be eaten raw in salads or they can be cooked. In some parts of Wales there is a tradition of making coltsfoot wine. The young leaves can also be used as a salad vegetable or they may be added to soups and vegetable stocks. They can also be stuffed to make dolmades or wrapped around stuffing balls. Flowers can be used to make tea.

Weed of the Month Coltsfoot



- All parts of coltsfoot are abundant in mucilage, contain a little tannin and a trace of a bitter amorphous glucoside.
- The flowers also contain a phytosterol.
- Coltsfoot is a demulcent, expectorant and tonic.
- This is one of the most popular of cough remedies.
- **CAUTION:** Coltsfoot contains traces of pyrrolizidine alkaloids which can affect the liver. Never eat a lot of coltsfoot, **ONLY** in small doses.



Coltsfoot Infused Honey Cough Syrup



Coltsfoot Sorbet

Coltsfoot Cough Syrup

Coltsfoot flower honey is an herbal medicine excellent for the treatment of respiratory diseases, including cough, asthma, and acute and chronic bronchitis. It may alleviate laryngitis, pertussis, influenza, and lung congestion. Allow to sit 3-6 weeks

7 large coltsfoot leaves
3 small handfuls of licorice root (cut into small pieces)
2 ¼ cups water
½ cup local honey

Place all ingredients into a pot. Simmer until there is one cup of liquid remaining. Add in the honey and store in a sealed glass jar in a cupboard. Take a teaspoon as required to soothe a sore throat and ease coughing.

Coltsfoot Sorbet

65 fresh coltsfoot flowers
1 cup organic cane sugar
3 1/3 cups water
1 tsp fresh squeezed lemon juice
1 egg white

Make sure you have only the yellow petals from 65 coltsfoot flowers. (Remove the petals by rubbing the flowers between your thumb and forefinger. Make sure there are no green sepals in with the petals.)

Place the petals, sugar and water into a pan. Bring to a boil and cook for 2 minutes then remove from the heat and let steep for 20 minutes. Filter through a sieve and refrigerate the syrup until chilled. Add the egg white and whisk. Either place in an ice cream maker or in the freezer. As the sorbet churns, the egg white will trap air bubbles and this turns the sorbet white. If you have chosen the freezer method you will need to whisk briskly every five minutes for the first hour, then every fifteen minutes until the sorbet sets.



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February 2015 went into the history books as the coldest February on record where I live in Ontario. I did not let that hinder winter foraging and hosted two walks to teach people what they could survive on should circumstances arise in which we were forced to forage in the winter.

At this time I am awaiting an ISBN number and then Winter Survival Food will go to the printer. Be sure to keep an eye on my [store page](#) to order your copy when it becomes available!

If you are like most people identifying spring edibles is very difficult. Although I did this a year ago, I have a video that will help you. If you have a Google account, please subscribe to my [YouTube channel](#) because this will help me in the YouTube search rankings. Thank-you for your support!

For those of you who visit the website regularly you will be seeing a new look later this month. If you own a mobile device you will appreciate the ease of navigation once these changes are live!

If you haven't already, be sure to "like" the EdibleWildFood.com page on Facebook and I am @EdibleWildFood on Twitter. Also, I'm trying to build my presence on [Google+](#) so any follows are appreciated!

Enjoy the long overdue springtime and happy foraging!



Coltsfoot Leaf



Fiddlehead Fern – Late April to Late May
Harvest times depend on location.

