

How To Cook Bulrushes

Here's a collection of Recipes for people who love to roam through fields, river and stream, and feast gloriously on their findings.

Have you ever tasted bulrushes? Sautéed dandelions? Sweet and sour plantain? Probably not.

Canadians are shockingly conservative people and the most conservative and unadventurous thing about us is our attitude to food. To acquaint you with the harvest of wild foods to be gathered while roaming through fields and woods, here are recipes using violets, elderberries, sorrel, lamb's quarters, bulrushes, dandelions and plantain.

There are people who say, "but why bother picking wild berries and getting scratched and hot in the sun when you can buy berries all picked and clean - and much bigger - at the fruit stores?" These are not the people for whom this collection of recipes is intended. It is, rather, for you who can smell wild raspberries through the dust of a country road even before you can see them, or can close your eyes and recapture the heat of the sun and the sweet smell and the wild rare flavor of the strawberries you picked long ago.

SORREL SOUP

There are two completely different plants bearing this name. One, the Sheep or Field Sorrel (*Rumex*), is considered an annoying weed and is therefore to be found in cultivated fields. Its basal leaves resemble those of the dandelion.

The other, Wood Sorrel (*Oxalis*), is a wild flower found chiefly in sheltered woods. Its leaves resemble those of the shamrock.

Both kinds complement spinach. Both make this excellent soup:

Take two large handfuls of sorrel and wash it well. Remove the stalks. Melt a piece of butter in a frying-pan and add the sorrel leaves. Stir them until they become a greenish-brown.

Now boil in a saucepan two peeled potatoes. When they are cooked, put them through a sieve. To this puree add the sorrel, with salt and pepper. Put back in the saucepan and add about three cups of milk and a spoonful of butter. Heat it and serve.

BOILED MILKWEED PODS

You will find milkweed growing in pasture fields and along the roadside. It is recognizable at a certain stage by the milkweed pods, which are ready for our cooking purposes about halfway through August. They will be a dusty shade of green, and should be no more than one to 1-1/2 inches in length. Gather enough to serve four.

Salt some water and bring it to the boil. Toss the washed milkweed pods in, and boil for 10 minutes (but test of course, to make sure they are tender). When you take them out, strain the water from them. Place them in a

hot dish and sprinkle with salt, pepper and, if you like, some grated cheese. Dab each pod with butter as you eat it.

BULRUSH OR CAT-TAIL

It is the young flowerspike we seek, in the late spring before it has turned brown and sausage-like. You may need to wear rubber boots or waders, for the bulrush grows in water-filled ditches and swamps.

At that time of year, the flower is still encased in its long green leaf (it is rather like a very long, very thin cob of corn). To prepare it for cooking, peel it as you would corn. It will be of a dark, velvety green color and texture, and in two distinct divisions.

Put the flowers into boiling water for about 10 minutes, when they should be cooked. A little bowl of melted butter to dip them in, salt and pepper, and you have a treat.

The inside, by the way, is a hard core which you just nibble around.

SWEET AND SOUR PLANTAIN

The plantain is a ubiquitous weed growing on lawns and in vacant lots. Pluck young leaves in spring, a bagful of plantain leaves, 3 strips of breakfast bacon, 1/4 cup of vinegar, 1/4 cup vegetable water, 1 tablespoon sugar, salt and pepper, 1 egg, hard boiled (optional).

Cook the plantain in two waters and drain when cooked (about 15 minutes). Chop the bacon into small squares and fry it until crisp. To the bacon add the vinegar, water and sugar. Add seasoning and heat to the boiling point.

Swimming Spots Opened In Twsp.

Swimming facilities in the township were officially opened last Saturday, June 19 - just in time for the 80 plus weather which moved into this area.

The two supervised beaches, at Albert E. Crookes park in Lakeview and Shoreline Park in Clarkson, were opened as were the Westacres swimming pool on Breezy Brae Drive near the

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Arrange plantain in hot dish and pour sauce over it. Garnish with egg, sliced thinly.

SAUTEED DANDELIONS

Since there is such an abundance of dandelions on lawns or in parks or fields, it is only sensible to pick the smallest, cleanest, tenderest leaves. You may use the leaves even after the dandelion has flowered, changed from yellow to a gray-white fluff ball and finally blown away.

Melt four tablespoons of olive oil or butter and add some chopped garlic. Then put in the dandelion greens immediately they have been washed, and cook 10 to 15 minutes. They will come out crisp and tasty.

CANDIED VIOLETS

The idea of nibbling on a violet or a rose petalsavors of luxury. To some people the idea is not a pleasant one, as though it were a wicked waste of beauty. This is nonsense, of course, since eating them is doing anything but wasting them.

Make a syrup of sugar and water (not much water - about 1/4 cup to one cup of sugar) and boil for a while, stirring if it gets upply. Add a little almond essence or rosewater and let the syrup cool. Now take the violets which you have gathered and which you have not allowed to dry out (to take violets home from the country and keep them fresh, wrap them up entirely in wet newspaper) and put some of them, a few at a

time, into the syrup. Let them stay there for a minute or so, being sure they are treated all over, then remove them to wax paper with a skimmer, or your fingers, and put more in. If the syrup goes hard halfway through, cook it up again, adding a very little water.

Leave the candied violets to dry thoroughly before storing them. You may store them in glass jars, if you are going to use them all in a few weeks. Otherwise it is better to store them in a cardboard box, in layers separated by wax paper.

To make rosewater

1/2 cup of water
1 quart of rose petals
Put half a cup of water in a pan with the rose petals. Bring it to a boil and let it simmer for at least 15 minutes, covered, and another five uncovered. Strain, and funnel into a small bottle.

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LAMB'S QUARTERS FRITTERS

Lamb's quarters generally grows in cultivated fields, and is usually considered merely a troublesome weed. In the spring and early summer, gather them when about six to 10 inches high. a bag of lamb's quarters (about a quart)
nutmeg
1 tablespoon butter
2 eggs, separated
grated cheese
cooking oil

Boil the lamb's quarters in very little water about 10 minutes over a medium flame, strain them well, then chop. Put into a bowl, grate a fair amount of nutmeg over them. Stir in a tablespoon of butter. Add the yolks of two eggs, stirring them in. Finally, mix in some grated Parmesan cheese. Leave the mixture to cool. When almost ready to serve, beat the egg whites and add them, and then drop the mixture by

spoonful into hot deep fat or oil. Fry golden on both sides.

ELDERBERRY CHUTNEY

The berries are borne on a compound cyme looking like an umbrella that is all ribs and no material, each rib having a tiny rounded berry. Only purple elderberries are edible.

1 pound berries (2 cups)
1 onion
8 cloves

1/2 teaspoon ginger
1/4 cup brown sugar

1 cup vinegar

1 cup raisins

pinch of cayenne

1 teaspoon salt

pinch of mace

1/2 teaspoon mustard seed

Pound all together. Boil

10 minutes. Remove from

heat, cover and leave until

cold. Then bottle.

Note: These plants are easily

identifiable, but never eat a

fungus or the greens, root

or berries of a plant of which

you are not absolutely sure.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Re: Garbage Disposal - By-law #3877

The Council of the Corporation of the Township of Toronto has received complaints about empty garbage containers being left by the street after 8:00 p.m. on the day of collection and wishes to bring to your attention the following extracts from the Garbage Disposal By-law #3877.

1) Receptacles used to contain garbage, rubbish, ashes or other waste material to be collected by the Township of Toronto shall be covered, water-tight containers not more than 30 inches high or 18 inches wide and shall not weigh more than 50 pounds when full. Receptacles which are smaller at the top than at the bottom, such as five gallon paint cans, shall not be used.

2) Such articles as crates, newspapers, packing, materials, brush, bedding, old furniture and material of like nature may be collected in like manner as garbage and ashes, but must be securely tied into compact bundles or parcels not exceeding 2 1/2 feet in any dimension or weighing over 50 pounds or placed in sufficient receptacles as specified in the above paragraph herein, so that they will not be scattered.

3) The following shall not be collected by the Township of Toronto:

- Swill or other organic matter not properly drained or wrapped.
- Liquid waste.
- Hay, straw or manure.
- Night soil.
- Any material which has become frozen to the receptacle and cannot be removed by shaking.
- Any material in receptacles or bundles which do not conform to the above two paragraphs herein.
- Hot ashes or any other material capable of starting fire.
- Manufacturers' and Trade wastes.

4) Empty receptacles and all material which the collector refused must be removed from the highway or from public property by the occupant of the premises from which it was taken, before 8:00 p.m. on the same day that the garbage is collected or the material refused.

5) Any person convicted of a breach of any of the provisions of this by-law shall forfeit and pay, at the discretion of the convicting Magistrate, a penalty of not less than Ten Dollars and not exceeding (exclusive of costs) the sum of One Hundred Dollars for each such offence.

The Council would appreciate your full co-operation in this matter.

G. Lummiss,
Clerk.