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The Edible Yard, eat your Weedies!

Get out your trowel and plant ID guide and get ready to eat some weeds!

Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) is packed with vitamins. The tender leaves (picked before the flowers begin to rise) are a nutritious addition to a salad or stir fry, with close to four times the protein level of lettuce, over five times as much calcium and 12 times as much vitamin A. They can also be boiled as a green, as can the flower buds. The root can be dried, roasted and ground as a coffee-substitute, and the flowers can be battered and fried as fritters or used as the base for a mellow wine.

Plantain (*Plantago major*) also makes an excellent, vitamin-packed early spring salad green or boiled vegetable. As they grow, the leaves quickly become fibrous. But later in the season, once the seeds are ripened on the flower stalk, they can be stripped off and used to add a nutty texture and flavour to baking.



Garlic mustard (*Alliaria officinalis*), the bane of our forest ecosystems, must be harvested before flowering. This plant is great in salads and makes a delicious pesto sauce — you'll never feel the same way about basil again!

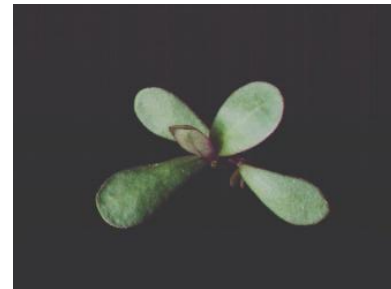
Creeping Charlie (*Glechoma hederacea*), is seen as a problem plant in many lawns, but you can get even by collecting and drying its leaves and brewing them into a tasty tea.





Common chickweed (*Stellaria media*) and mouse-ear chickweed (*Cerastium vulgatum*) are both found in lawns and both make excellent boiled greens.

Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*) shows up in most garden beds. It is rich in iron, calcium and vitamins A and C, and is delicious in salads or as a boiled green.



Lamb's quarters (*Chenopodium album*) is closely related to spinach. It can be added to salads or steamed as a green and served up with butter and lemon. The entire plant can be harvested up to about six inches tall or the top few inches can be picked off the plant later in the season.

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If you have garden questions please contact us at streetsvillehort@hotmail.com check out our website at www.streetsvillehort.ca