

Enhancing the Edibility of Landscapes with Native Species

Presented by Russ Cohen at the 2013 RI Land and Water Conservation Summit

Saturday, March 9, at the URI Memorial Union, Kingston, RI



Flowering Raspberry (*Rubus odoratus*) in bloom



Ripe Butternuts (*Juglans cinerea*) in their husks

• There has been a burgeoning interest in recent years in restoring native plants to our gardens, yards and landscapes (e.g., as evidenced by the 2010 formation of the group Grow Native Massachusetts).

• This movement got a major boost several years ago from the publication of the book *Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in our Gardens*.

• In *Bringing Nature Home*, author and University of Delaware Entomology Professor Doug Tallamy makes a compelling case for the key role that native plant species play in supporting our native species of wildlife, particularly insects (such as butterflies and moths), which (in addition to their intrinsic value) serve as a major source of nourishment for nestling birds.

BRINGING NATURE HOME



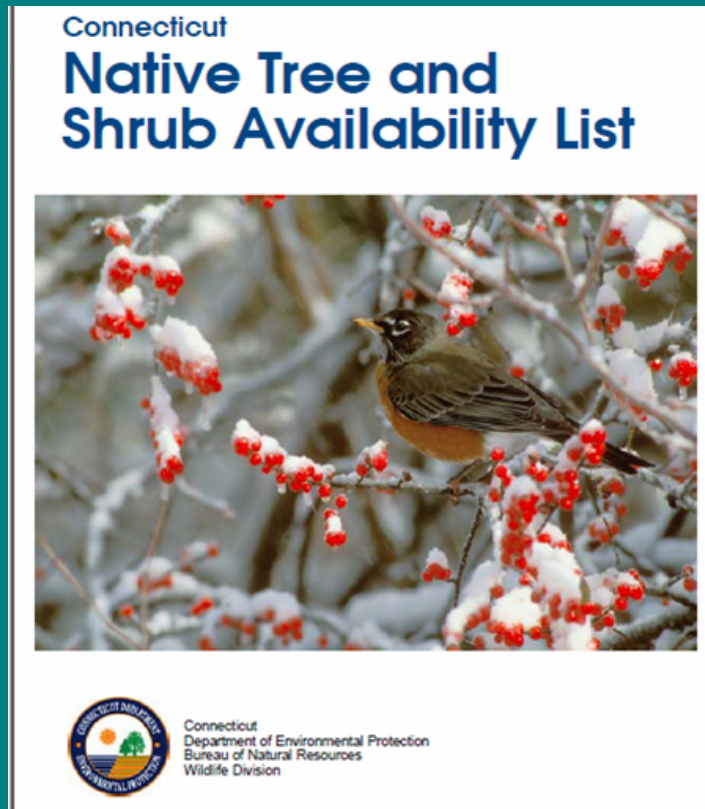
How Native Plants
Sustain Wildlife
in Our Gardens

DOUGLAS W. TALLAMY



Volunteers planting native plant species along the banks of the Housatonic River in *Great Barrington, MA*

A few examples of outreach materials intended to promote and facilitate the planting of native species --



[Recommended Native Species for Planting in Lexington, MA](#)

[National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat Program](#)

[Mass. Coastal Zone Management's Coastal Landscaping with Native Species](#)



Native Plant Site Solutions for Backyard Habitat

A how-to guide for designers and homeowners interested in enhancing wildlife habitat value in urban and suburban areas



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OUTREACH CENTER

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Excerpt from [Rhode Island Coastal Plant Guide](#) - while extremely informative and user-friendly, note the lack of an "edible by humans" column

RHODE ISLAND COASTAL PLANT GUIDE



50 of 231 Species

Page 1 of 3

Clear Filter

Help

[Enter all or part of name above to filter list]

[Select from dropdown list to filter plant list by attributes]

Species	Common Name	Zone	Plant Type	Native Status	Full Sun	Shade Tolerant	Drought Tolerant	Wet Sites	Wind Tolerant	Na:Spray Tolerant	Na:Soil Tolerant	Acid Tolerant	pH Adapt	Rain Gardens	Dune Plant	Height	Width
<i>Alnus incana ssp. rugosa</i>	Speckled Alder	1	Shrub	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	>10'	6-12'
<i>Alnus serrulata</i>	Common Alder	1	Shrub	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	>10'	6-12'
<i>Amelanchier arborea</i> !	Serviceberry	1	Tree	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	>10'	15-25'
<i>Amelanchier canadensis</i> !	Shadbush	1	Shrub	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	>10'	variable
<i>Amelanchier laevis</i> !	Allegheny Serviceberry	1	Tree	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	>10'	15-25'
<i>Amelanchier stolonifera</i> !	Running Serviceberry	1	Shrub	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	2-6'	variable
<i>Ammophila breviligulata</i>	American Beach Grass	1	Grass	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	2-6'	-
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	Big Bluestem	1	Grass	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	6-10'	2'
<i>Andropogon glomeratus</i>	Bushy Bluestem	2	Grass	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<2'	-
<i>Andropogon virginicus</i>	Broomsedge	1	Grass	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	2-6'	1-2'
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Bearberry	1	Shrub	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	<2'	variable
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	Butterfly Milkweed	2	Per.	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	2-6'	2'
<i>Atriplex sp.</i>	Salt Bush	1	Shrub	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	<2'	6'
<i>Baccharis halimifolia</i>	Groundsel-bush	1	Shrub	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	>10'	5-12'
<i>Baptisia tinctoria</i>	False Indigo	1	Per.	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	2-6'	2-3'
<i>Betula populifolia</i>	Gray Birch	2	Tree	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	>10'	10-20'
<i>Carex flaccosperma</i>	Thin Fruit Sedge	2	Grass	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	<2'	6-12"
<i>Carex pensylvanica</i>	Pennsylvania Sedge	1	Grass	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	<2'	6-9"
<i>Carex platyphylla</i>	Broadleaf Sedge	2	Grass	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	<2'	10"
<i>Carex stricta</i>	Tussock Sedge	2	Grass	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	<2'	1.5-2'
<i>Carya ovata</i>	Shagbark Hickory	2	Tree	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	>10'	-
<i>Ceanothus americanus</i>	New Jersey Tea	2	Shrub	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	2-6'	3-5'
<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	Common Hackberry	2	Tree	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	>10'	40-60'

► What this presentation is about:

- Extolling the edibility of many of the plant species native to the Northeast, some of which you might want to consider adding to your/ your clients' properties if they aren't already there (NOTE, however, the **Precaution** on a subsequent slide)
- Expounding on the premise that enabling people to connect to nature via their taste buds helps strengthen their support for land conservation, and that owners/managers of parks, open spaces and other conserved lands might consider edible native species as an opportunity to "spice up" (literally as well as figuratively) their properties and make them more attractive to people as well as wildlife
- Learning that many native species edible by people are directly/indirectly edible/useable by wildlife too, and so planting them enhances wildlife habitat and biodiversity as well as people's enjoyment of open spaces
- In other words, we can have our acorn cake and eat it too



Talking about Wild Carrot on a foraging walk at The Trustees of Reservations' Old Town Hill Reservation in Newbury, MA



Teaching about the edibility of Japanese Knotweed at an Army Corps' flood control project on the Quinebaug River in West Thompson, CT as part of a wild edible-themed canoe/kayak paddle trip



Talking about Burdock during one of my annual foraging walks at Blue Hill Organic Farm in Lincoln, MA (the land is owned by the Lincoln Land Conservation Trust)



Talking about Curly Dock on a foraging walk at Essex County Greenbelt's Cox Reservation, Essex, MA

► What this presentation will not be covering (although these are all worthy topics):

- Foraging for non-native species (many of which are weeds or invasives)
- Growing crops and other agricultural activities on conserved lands
- How to plant native species (soil testing and preparation, propagation from seeds, cuttings, how to protect young plants from damage by deer, insects, etc.)
- Design of Edible landscapes, edible forest gardens, permaculture, etc.
- Info about the ecological, aesthetic and other attributes of non-edible native species suitable for adding to conserved landscapes

- The types of conserved lands I'm focusing on in this talk: parks and open space lands where the natural plant communities have been significantly disrupted and native species diversity reduced through past and/or current human activity (e.g., farming, mowing, land clearing)

Precaution regarding introducing new plants to conserved lands

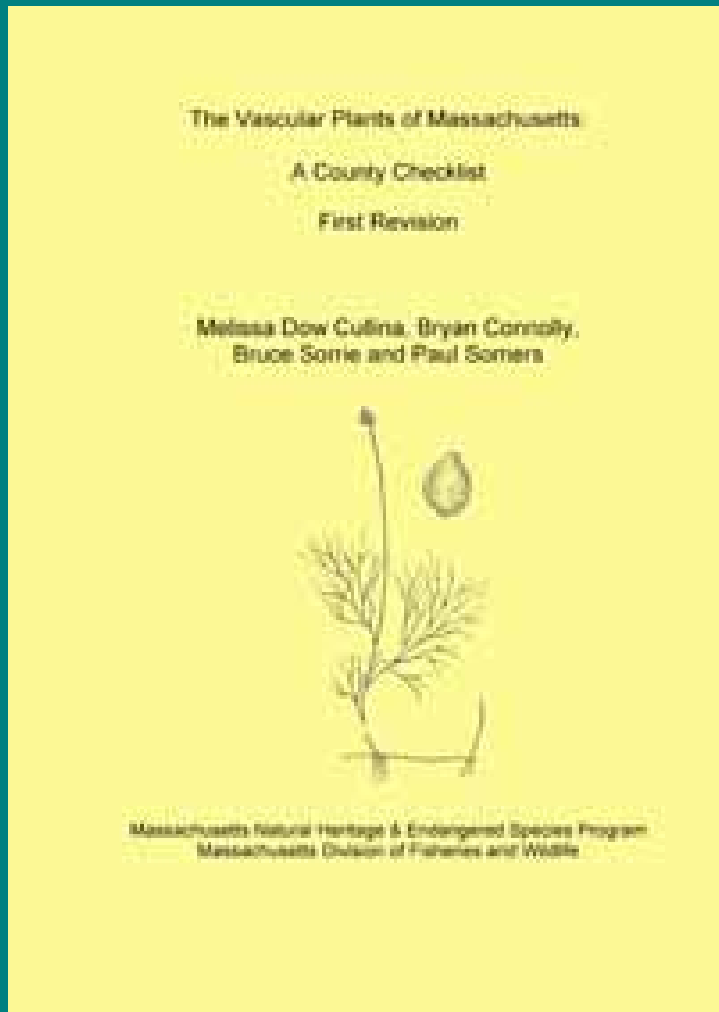
- If you know or suspect that the property in question contains rare species and/or a relatively pristine and intact native plant community, do not add new plants or seeds to those sensitive, ecologically significant sites

That said --

- If you are restoring a disturbed plant community (through, e.g., the removal of invasive plants), it is OK to reintroduce members of that plant community that are missing, or to enhance the numbers of plants of species that are already there (wintergreen and partridgeberry, e.g.)
- It's also OK to introduce native plants to other highly-disturbed, human-influenced sites, such as plantings in gardens and around buildings, parking lots, farms or playing fields

Precaution regarding picking edible plants on conserved properties

- Importance of respecting applicable policies and regulations ("no collecting" policy at Audubon sanctuaries, e.g.)
- Importance of foraging in an environmentally-responsible manner (fruits vs. roots)



In addition, you may want to consult [The Vascular Plants of Massachusetts: A County Checklist, First Revision \(2011\)](#) (a.k.a., the "yellow book") to confirm that a species you want to plant is deemed to be native to the county where your property is located.

Here's an example of what the info inside the yellow book looks like:

Tricolpates		The Vascular Plants of Massachusetts - 2011												173			
Status	S-Rank	BE	FR	HS	HD	WO	MI	ES	SU	NO	BR	PL	BA	DU	NA		
JUGLANDACEAE																	
WALNUT FAMILY																	
Juglans																	
cinerea L.	WL	S4?	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	*	*	*	
Butternut																	
nigra L.	SNA	I	*	*	I	I	*	*	I	*	*	I	*	*	*		
Black Walnut																	

See also the MA Natural Heritage Program's [info on Natural Plant Communities](#)

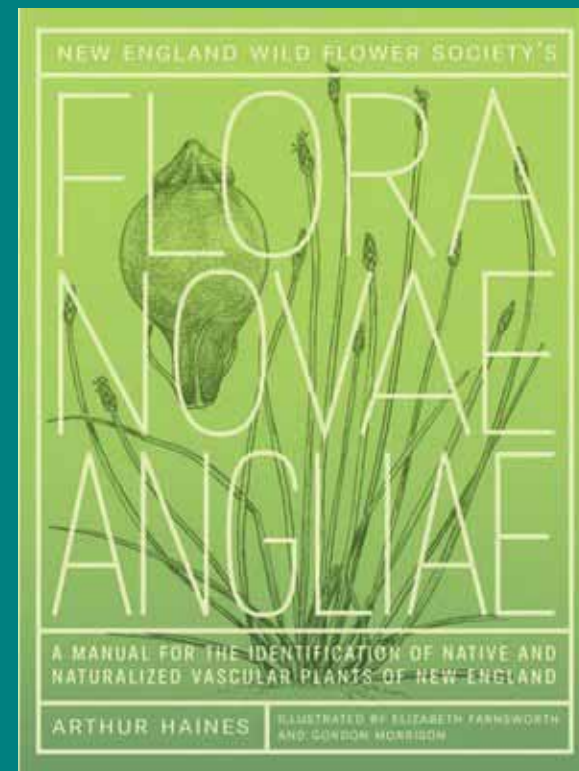
Documents like this exist for other states, so it is advisable to consult them as well to be informed about which plant species are considered to be native to which locations (counties, states, regions).

Two other resources helpful in figuring out which species are/are not native to your region:

- the “Go Botany” website (<http://gobotany.newenglandwild.org>), set up and maintained by the [New England Wild Flower Society \(NEWFS\)](#); and
- the book [Flora Novae Angliae](#), by NEWFS research botanist Arthur Haines.



The screenshot shows the Go Botany website interface. At the top, it says "Go Botany Discover thousands of New England plants" and "WILD FLOWER SOCIETY". The navigation menu includes "Home", "Single Key", "PlantShare", "Advanced ID Tools", "Teaching Tools", and "About". A search bar is present. The main content area is for *Lindera benzoin* (L.) Blume, northern spicebush. It features a distribution map of New England and North America, with the "Native to North America?" checkbox checked and circled in red. The "Facts About" section describes the plant's characteristics, and the "Habitat" section lists river or stream floodplains, shores of rivers or lakes, and swamps.



Now it's finally time to share the delicious details about members of the:

Edible Plant Species Native to the Northeast



Ostrich Fern
(*Matteuccia struthiopteris*) -
cooked
fiddleheads are
edible - note "U"-
shaped trough in
stem, vase-
shaped clump and
brown papery
scales on the
curled-up part



Alluvial (silty) floodplain soil - ideal Ostrich Fern habitat



Note vase-shape of unrolled fronds, plus pair of fertile fronds (see arrows)

Marsh Marigold (Cowslip) - *Caltha palustris* - young leaves are edible after boiling



Sweet Cicely (*Osmorhiza longistylis*) - entire plant smells/tastes of licorice (especially the root) - this native species likes damp, shady hardwood forests, esp. floodplains - not to be confused with *Osmorhiza claytonii* (Bland sweet-cicely) or *Myrrhis odorata* (a non-native species , sometimes planted in herb gardens)



Evening Primrose - *Oenothera biennis* - has an edible taproot, best gathered between the first + second years of growth (rosette stage)



(Note the pink coloration at the top of the root)



Common Blue Violet, Dooryard Violet, *Viola cucullata*



Black Walnut Cake, decorated with Candied Violet Flowers



Wild Lettuce - *Lactuca canadensis*



Our native species of Wood Sorrel (*Oxalis montana*) prefers cool, acidic woodlands, and is common in northern New England (esp. in the White Mountains) - the (possibly) non-native Yellow Wood Sorrel (*O. stricta*) is a very common field and garden plant elsewhere



100 % Wild Salad (except for the croutons)



Partridgeberry or Twinberry - *Michella repens*



Ground Cherry/Husk Tomato (*Physalis heterophylla* and other spp.) - the fruit is always found inside a husk (a.k.a. calyx), unlike poisonous look-alikes



Wild Leek (Ramps) - *Allium tricoccum*





Commercial harvesting and sale of wild leek (ramp) bulbs, or whole plants dug up with the bulbs attached, on a large-scale basis, is of questionable sustainability, at least in some locations where the plant grows



Photo taken at the Blue Hill at Stone Barns Restaurant, Pocantico Hills, NY



Photo taken in the produce section of the Berkshire Food Co-op, Great Barrington, MA

The good news: Wild Leeks/Ramps can be propagated (e.g., in a stockbed, such as the one at Garden in the Woods pictured below); and if only one leaf/per plant is harvested, and the bulb is left undisturbed, the plants can be harvested sustainably



Bluebead Lily or Corn Lily, *Clintonia borealis*



An Odd Couple: the acid soil- preferring *Clintonia* (on l.) and the sweeter-soil preferring Wild Leek (on r.) found growing together (in western NH).



Indian Cucumber - *Medeola virginiana*



Small Whorled Pogonia, *Isotria medeoloides*



http://www.centerforplantconservation.org/Collection/CPC_ViewProfile.asp?CPCNum=2350,
http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/nhosp/species_info/nhfacts/isotria_medeoloide.pdf

Dwarf Ginseng (*Panax trifolium*) - edible part is the round tuber (one per plant, usually 1/3 to 1/2 inch in diameter) - harvest only where abundant



Cat Brier - *Smilax rotundifolia*





Carrion Flower - *Smilax herbacea*



Steamed Carrion Flower shoots, ready to be folded into an omelet



Pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*) -
Shoots 4-9" high are edible + yummy
after being boiled for 7 minutes -
note the dried remains of last year's
stalk (see arrow), emerging from the
ground at the same spot as this
year's shoots



Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) - the
"procrastinating forager's dream food"



Boiled Milkweed
Flower buds - ready
to eat as is or
incorporate into
other dishes, like
Milkweed Egg Puff
(see below)



Milkweed pods at the edible stage (up to 1.5 inches long and nice and firm to the touch, not "springy" or "spongy")



Monarchs also munch on Milkweed



Sassafras - *Sassafras albidum*



Sassafras shoots with the root portions peeled (peelings are in the bowl) - the peelings are used to make Sassafras tea, Sassafras candy and other "root beer" flavored items



Young Sassafras Leaves at the right stage for making Filé powder



Sassafras leaves can produce some beautiful fall colors



Bayberry (*Myrica pensylvanica*) - its aromatic leaves may be substituted for commercial bay leaves in cooking. While this species is typically associated with sandy, open areas near the coast, it does occur in similar habitats inland (like the edge of sand and gravel pits). Like members of the Pea family (Fabaceae), this plant can produce its own nitrogen



Photo courtesy of Cory Janiak

Cattails (*Typha latifolia* and *angustifolia*) - the "Supermarket of the Swamps"





Immature Cattail
Bloom Spikes (flowers)
- boiled or steamed
until tender, they
taste like a cross
between corn and
artichokes



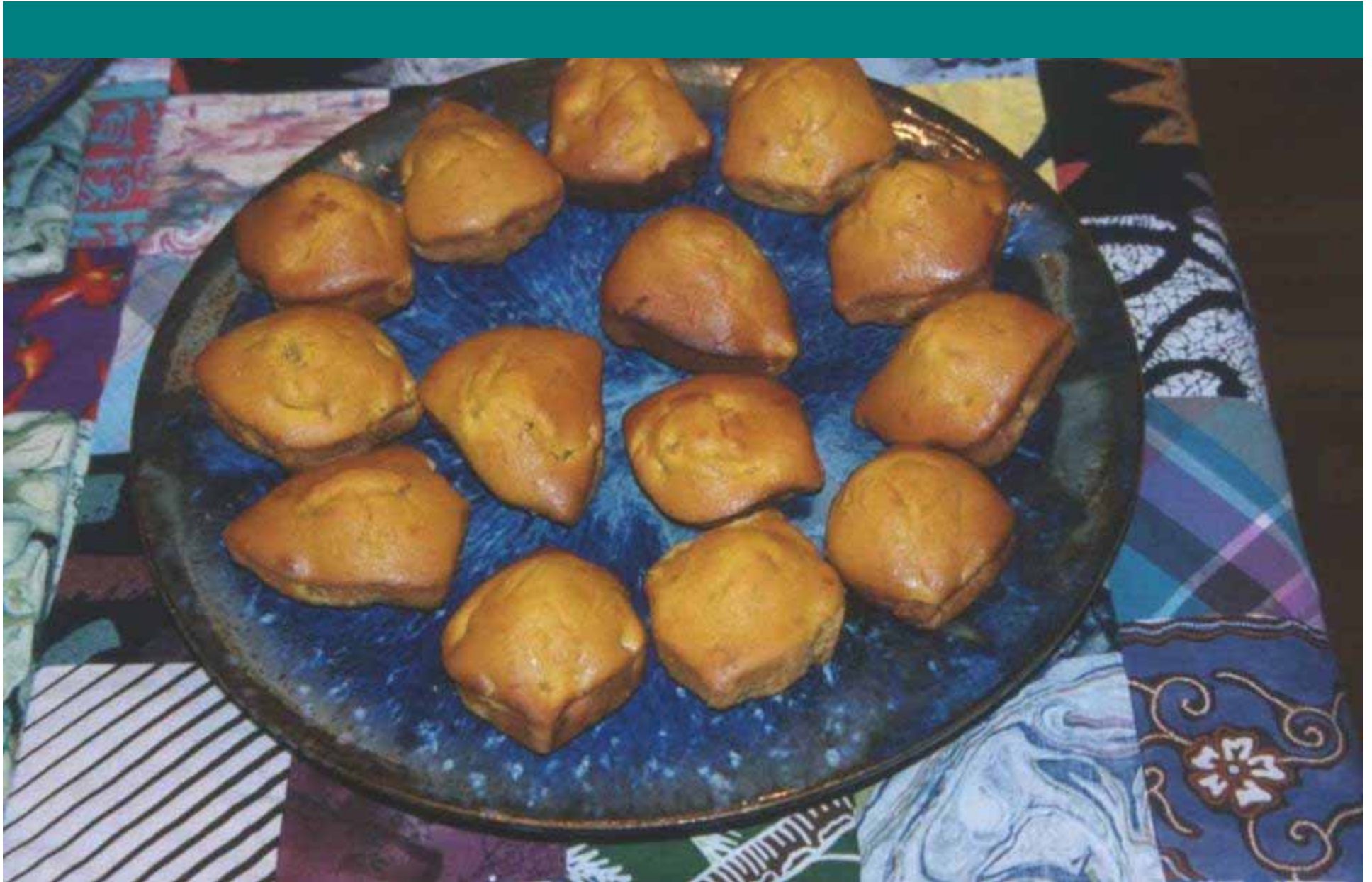
Cattail Heart (see arrow) - tender and tastes like cucumber

Cattails at the right stage for collecting pollen





Processing
Cattail Pollen



Cattail Pollen Muffins (A corn muffin recipe, with cattail pollen substituted for some of the corn meal)

Calamus (Sweet Flag) - Acorus calamus



Calamus flower (see arrow) and Calamus shoots, with tender spicy hearts





Wild Rice - *Zizania aquatica*



Two Edible aquatic plants:
Spatterdock (a.k.a., Cow Lily or Yellow Pond Lily), *Nuphar variegata*; and White or Fragrant Water Lily, *Nymphaea odorata*

Arrowhead/Wapato (*Sagittaria latifolia*) – has edible tubers – note veining on the leaf radiates from a single point (helps distinguish the plant from Arrow Arum/Tuckahoe)



American Lotus - Nelumbo lutea



Nelumbo lutea, American lotus



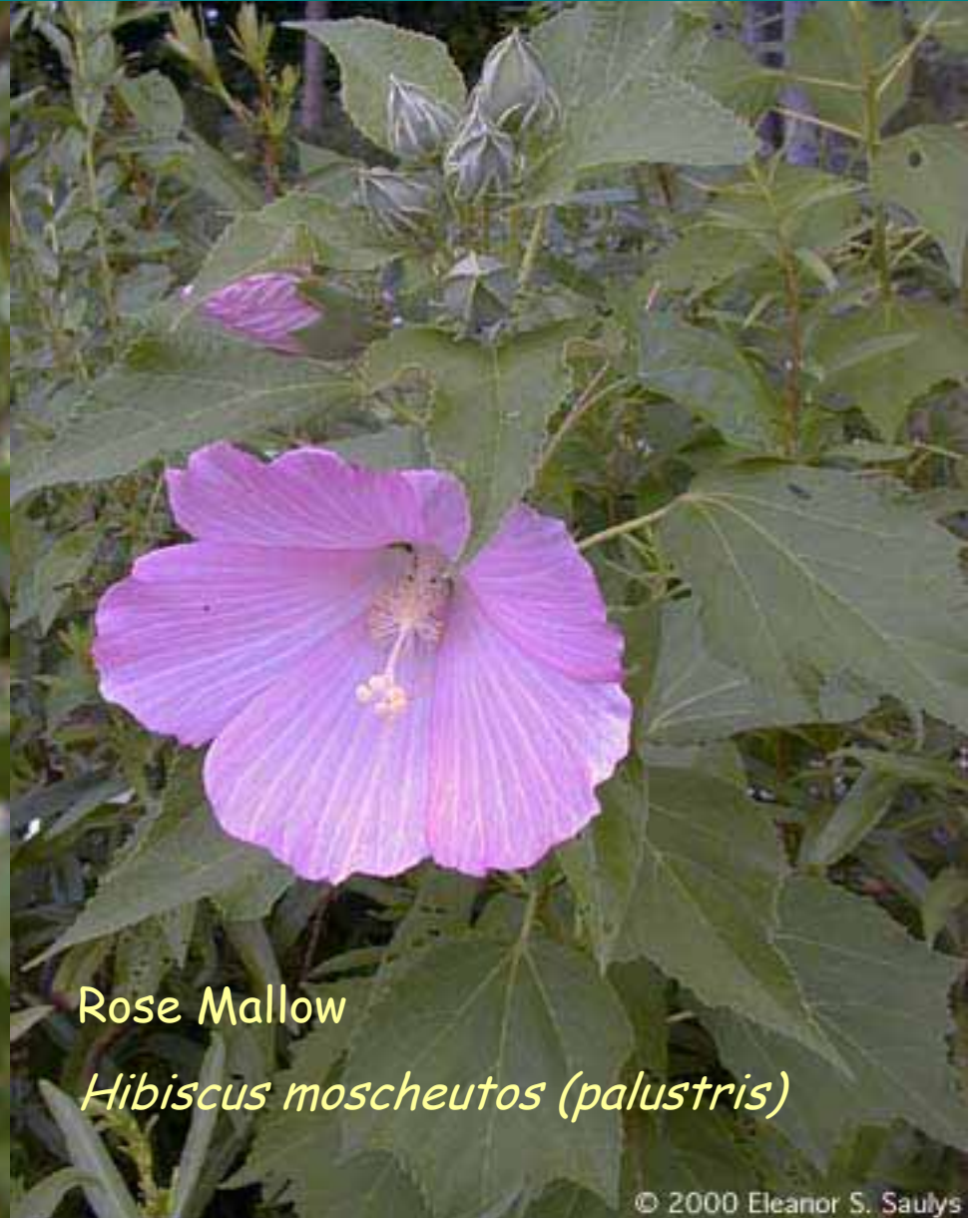
Nelumbo lutea, American lotus



Two pretty native species with similar (wet meadow, pond/rivershore) habitat preferences:



Meadow Beauty
Rhexia virginica



Rose Mallow
Hibiscus moscheutos (palustris)

Basswood (*Tilia americana*) – the young leaves from all *Tilia* species are edible raw, and the fresh or dried flowers make a pleasant-tasting tea with multiple medicinal properties



Juneberry/Shadbush/Serviceberry, *Amelanchier spp.* - an early-blossoming tree (a week or two before apples/crabapples) - flowering time is also a good time to spot (and remember) the trees for later fruit-picking opportunities



Juneberry (Shadbush/Serviceberry) - *Amelanchier canadensis* and other species - fruit is purple when ripe and tastes like a cross between a cherry and an almond





One of the fun (and yummy) items to make from Beach Plums, Juneberries and other wild fruit - strudel

Juneberry -
Mulberry
Strudel

Beach Plum
Strudel

Flowering Raspberry (*Rubus odoratus*) - an attractive, thornless bramble -
Has flavorful fruit (though a bit on the dry side)



Flowering Raspberry
fruit - the pulp on the
ripe fruit (see arrows)
is thin and a bit on the
dry side, but has a
decent flavor and can be
eaten raw or used in
cooking



Black Raspberry (*Rubus occidentalis*) - not a showy flower, but tastier fruit, and its purplish-colored canes add "off-season" interest to the landscape



Jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis (biflora)* and *pallida*) - the edible portions are the seeds inside the pods (see arrows), which explode when ripe (hence the plant's other name, "Touch-me-not"). Although an annual, it propagates and regrows readily from seed, and likes moist places away from full sun



One fun way to use Jewelweed seeds (if you have the patience)



Black Huckleberries (*Gaylussacia baccata*)



Blue
Huckleberry
or
Dangleberry
(*Gaylussacia
frondosa*) -
prefers
slightly
damper
habitat than
the Black
Huckleberry
- the plants
also tend to
be somewhat
taller and
the fruit
ripens 2-3
weeks later



Common or Black Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*), at (edible) blossom stage



Two examples of commercial beverages flavored with wild-harvested Elderberry blossoms:



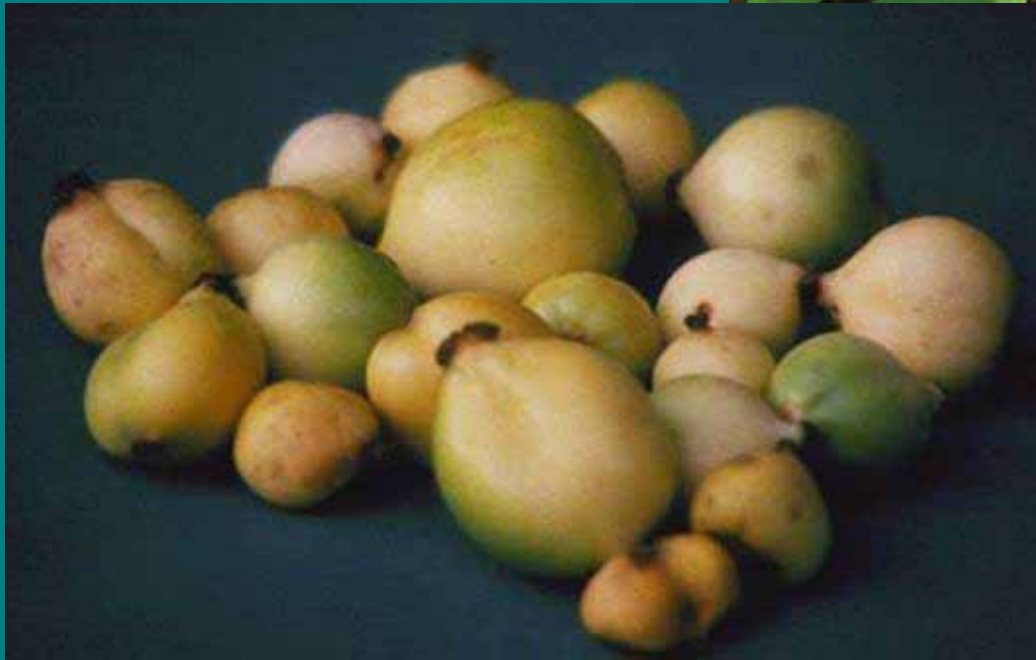
A non-alcoholic version from New Zealand, where the plants are non-native (left), and a liqueur made with the native (to Europe) *Sambucus nigra* flowers, gathered from the foothills of the French Alps (right)



Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*) - ripe fruit is edible after cooking or drying



May Apple (*Podophyllum peltatum*) - fully ripe fruit (early August) is edible and delicious raw and made into marmalade sorbet, chiffon pie and other desserts



May Apple flowers (and, eventually, fruit) are located in the crotch between the double-branched stalks (see arrow)



Passionfruit - Passiflora incarnata

Also - Pawpaws (Asimina triloba) and Persimmons (Diospyros virginiana), native to Zones 7 or higher, will grow in warmer and/or sheltered microclimates further north

Persimmon (Diospyros virginiana)



Sweet Fern (*Comptonia peregrina*) - not a true fern, but related to Bayberry (and shares its aromatic nature and tolerance of poor soils, due to its roots' ability to fix nitrogen) - one of the native species the American Colonists turned to to make tea from during the Revolutionary War era - the seeds inside the burrs (see arrows) are also edible



Sweet Goldenrod (*Solidago odora*) - the leaves and flowers have a licorice-like flavor - also one of the "Revolutionary tea" plants





Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) - yet another of the "Revolutionary tea" plants - the dried berries make a fine Szechuan Pepper-like substitute -

Migrating birds like these high-energy berries, though, so be sure to leave some on the plant

Spicebush likes to grow as an understory plant in hardwood forests, often near streams

Spicebush (along with Sassafras) also serves a host plant for the cool-looking [Spicebush Swallowtail](#) caterpillar (i.e., another reason why you might want to consider adding this species to your property if it isn't already there)



Hog Peanut (*Amphicarpa bracteata*) - this delicate, prostrate vine likes to grow in damp areas in the woods with dappled sunlight - the main edible portion are the small subterranean "peas" the plant uses for food storage - these are available from September onwards



Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*)





Beach Plum - *Prunus maritima*



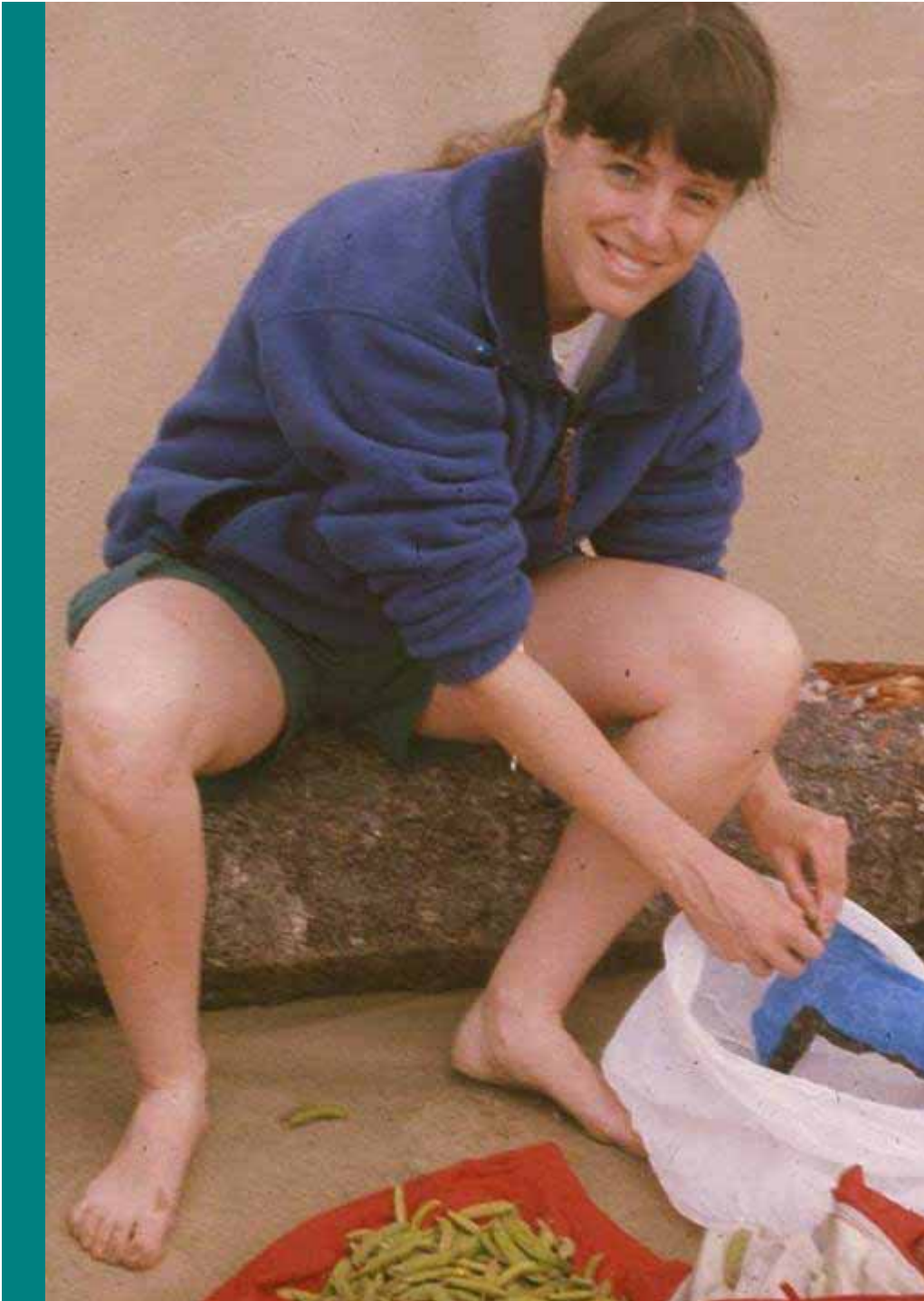
Beach Plum -
Prunus maritima



Beach Plums, gathered many miles inland from the ocean

Beach Pea (*Lathyrus japonicus*) - tender, green peas inside pods are edible (in moderation)





Beach Pea plants in bloom (above); Ellen shelling Beach Peas (left and below)



Wintergreen
(*Gaultheria procumbens*),
also called
Teaberry or
Checkerberry

Berries are
edible year-
round, and the
leaves can be
used for tea
(the new,
reddish-
green, tender
leaves are
best for this -
look for them
in late spring)



Black or Sweet Birch (*Betula lenta*) - can be nibbled or drunk



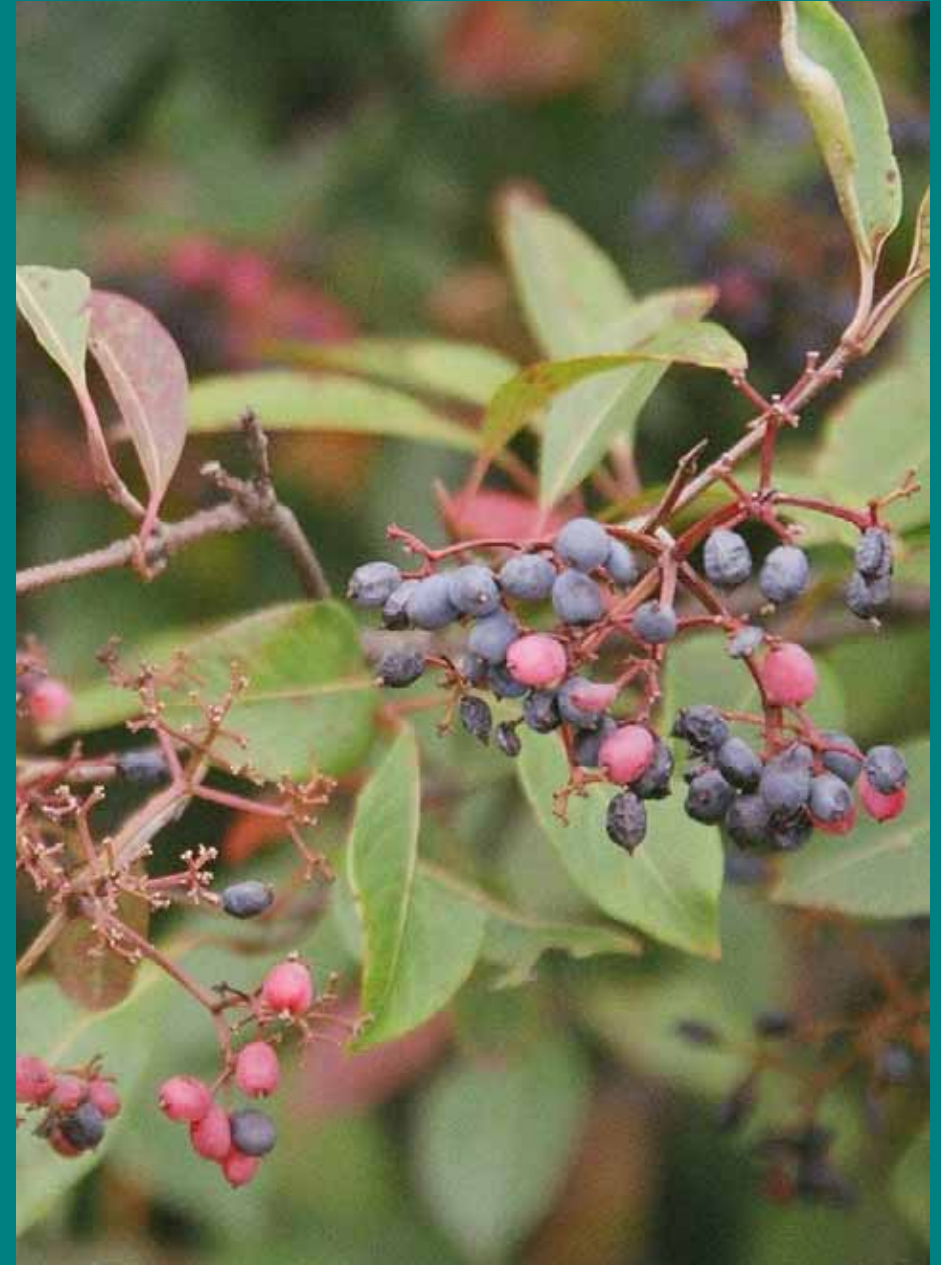


◀ Wintergreen-flavored "sun tea" made from peeled Black Birch twigs and peelings

Black birch trees (indeed, any good-sized tree of any Birch species) can also be tapped for sap, which can be drunk as is or boiled down to make a molasses-like syrup ▶



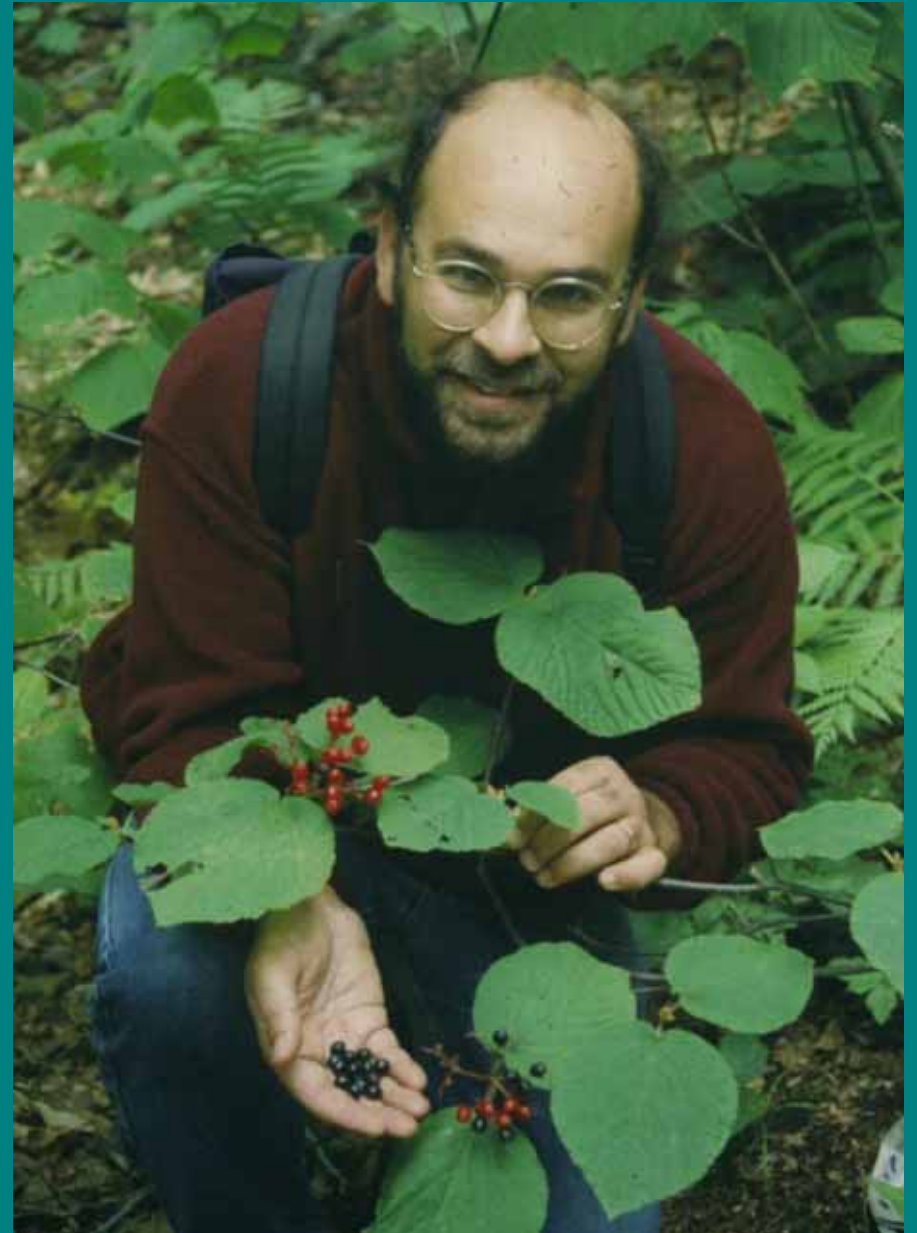
Wild Raisin (*Viburnum cassinoides*) - can tolerate drier, rockier soils (still likes sun) - produces pretty clusters of edible fruit (ripe when purple)



Nannyberry (*Viburnum Lentago*) - a shrub that likes damp, meadowy areas - the fruit ripens in September and resembles stewed prunes in flavor and texture



Hobblebush or Moosewood (*Viburnum alnifolium*) - a common understory plant in cool, northern hardwood forests - pretty spring flowers, and fruit with prune, clove-spiced flavor ripe (when black) in late summer





... and Hobblebush leaves can put on quite a colorful show in the fall



Wild Grapes - Riverside and Fox (Concord) Grape, *Vitis riparia* and *V. labrusca*



Wild Grape Cheesecake with a Wild Hazelnut Crust and a Wild Grape Glaze



Riverside Grape (*Vitis riparia*) leaves (note smooth, green undersides) at the right stage for stuffing



Stuffed Riverside Grape Leaves



Staghorn Sumac - *Rhus typhina*



Ripe Staghorn Sumac berry clusters, ready to be made into Sumacade



Sumacade (aka
"Rhus Juice" or
Indian
Lemonade) -



Staghorn Sumac produces brilliant autumn plumage



Bog Cranberry - *Vaccinium macrocarpon*



Ripe Cranberries growing in a "mini-bog" on the slopes of Mount Wachusett



Highbush Cranberry - *Viburnum trilobum* or *americanum* -



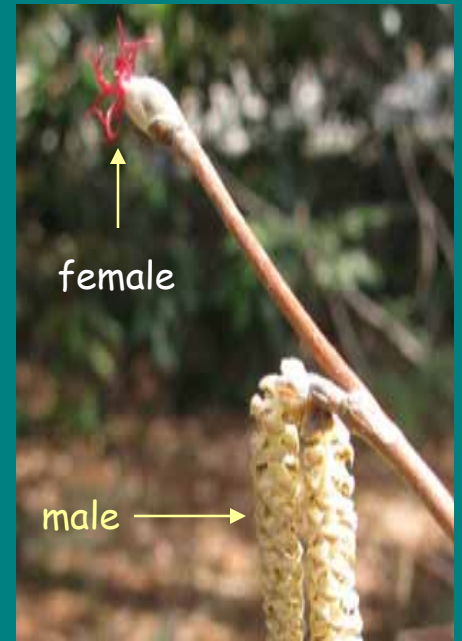
NOT Guelder Rose, *V. opulus*, an inedible European import

Highbush cranberry fruits often persist into the winter and can be gathered while snowshoeing or cross-country skiing





Common Hazelnut (*Corylus americana*) - flowers, husks and nuts



Beaked Hazelnut - *Corylus cornuta*



Oaks/Acorns (*Quercus alba* and other spp.) - note the rounded lobes on the White Oak leaves on the left, versus the pointy lobes of the other oak leaf, which produces more bitter acorns due to higher tannic acid levels



Fall Harvest Muffins,
made with acorn flour



Shagbark Hickory - *Carya ovata*



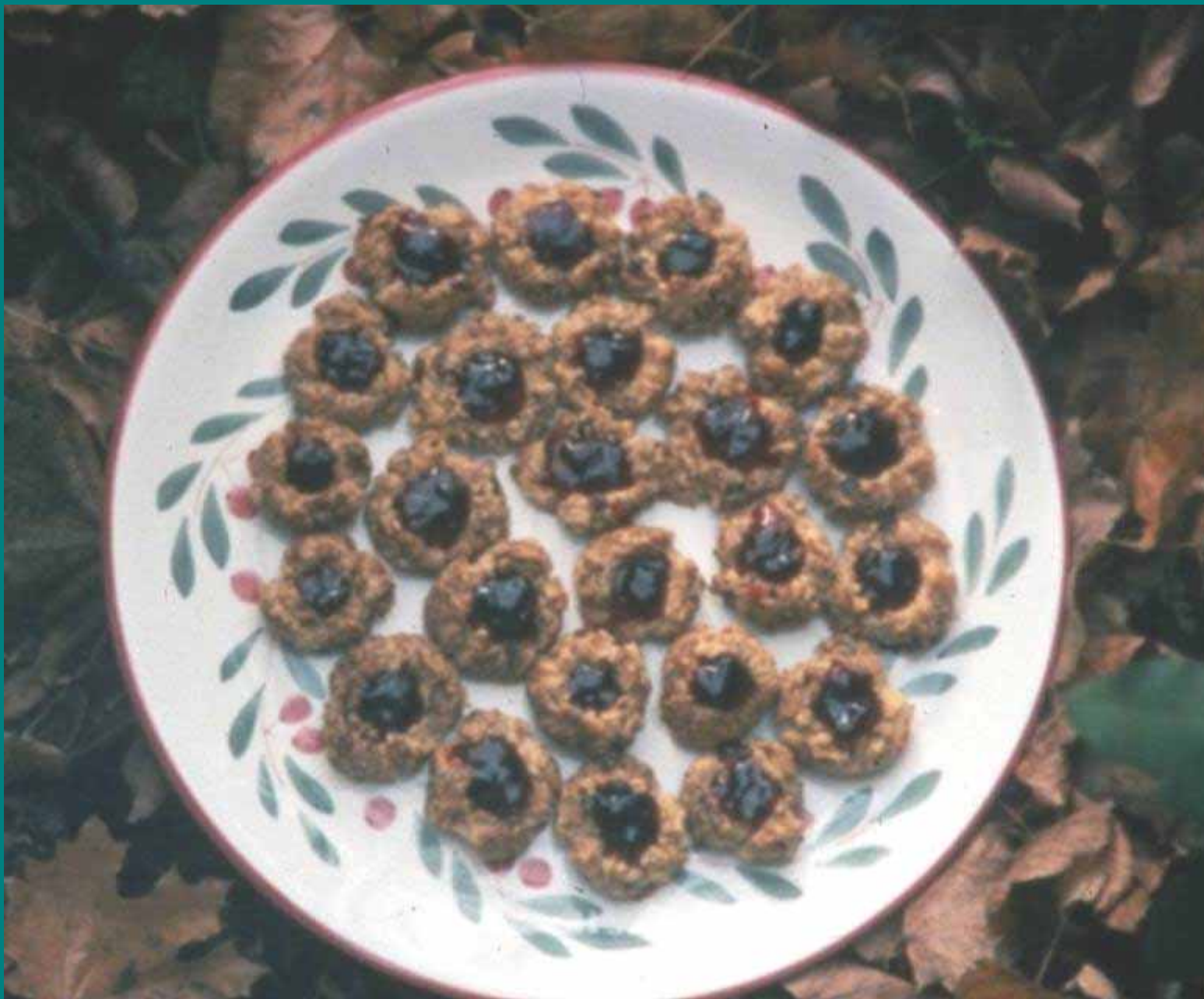
A basketful of freshly-gathered Shagbark Hickory Nuts, still in their husks



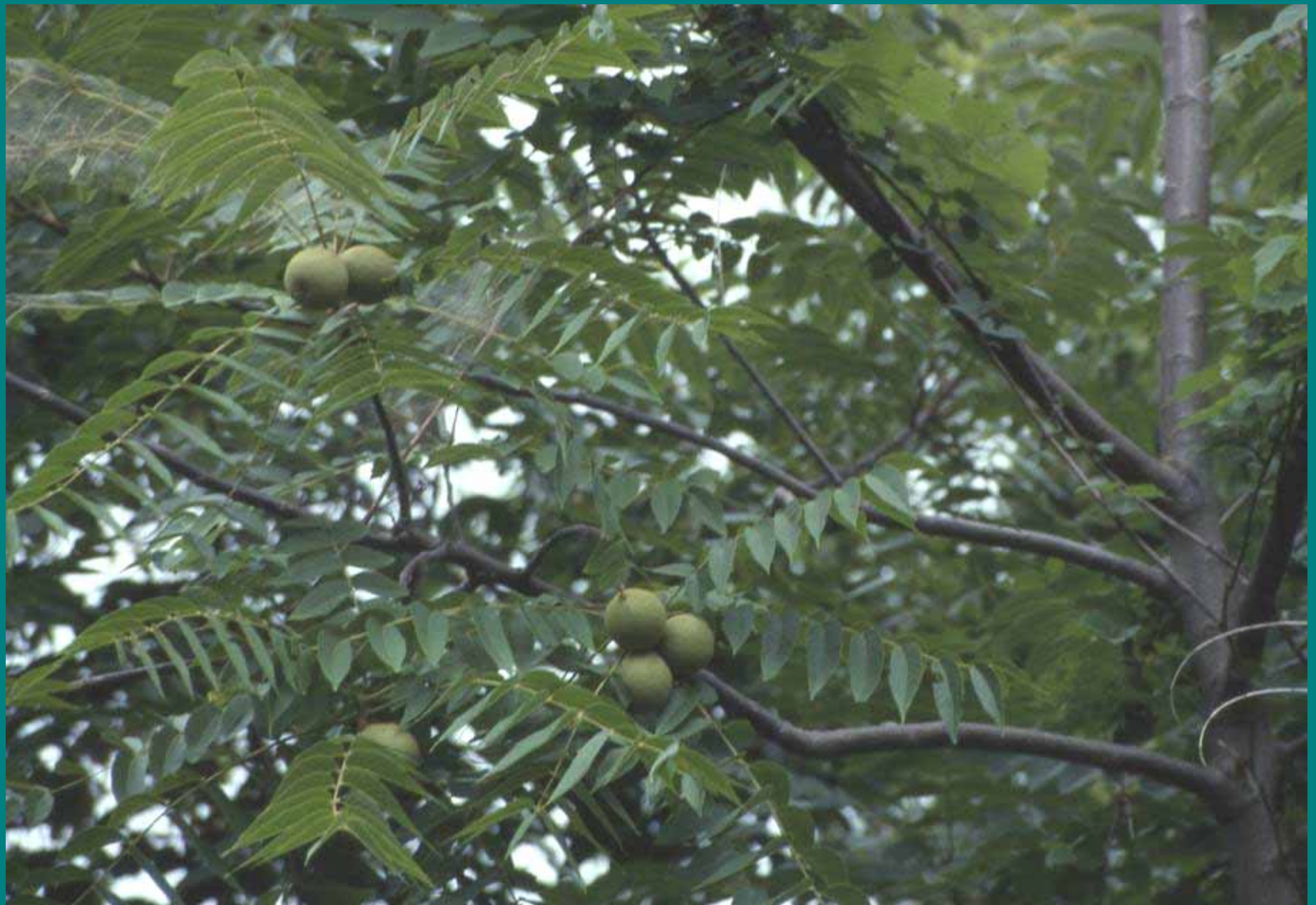


Maple Hickory Nut Pie

Thumbprint Cookies: chopped hickory nuts on the outside and wild jelly on the inside



Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*) - while not technically native to Massachusetts, the species occurs throughout the state, esp. in/near farms and cities



Basket full of Black Walnuts, (mostly) still in their husks



De-husked Black Walnuts, nestled in a bowl made from Black Walnut wood, ready for shelling, separating the nut meats from the shells and eating as is or for use in various recipes





Black Walnut Baklava

Groundnut - *Apios americana*



Groundnut "beans" (left) and tubers (right)



One fun and easy way to cook Groundnuts: slice thinly and then pan fry in oil until golden to make Groundnut Chips





Jerusalem Artichoke
(*Helianthus tuberosus*)
in flower



Jerusalem Artichoke tubers (note golf ball for scale)



Some examples of programs and projects involving adding edible native plants to the landscape:

- *Growing Native (Potomac watershed)*
- *Beacon Food Forest (Seattle)*
- *Edible Forest Garden at Roger Williams Park (Providence, RI)*
- *Revive the Roots/Niantic Gardens (Smithfield, RI)*
- *Edible Ecosystem Garden, Wellesley College*
- *Edible Garden at NEWFS's Garden in the Woods, Framingham, MA*



The [Growing Native](#) project, managed by the [Potomac Conservancy](#), a Maryland-based, watershed-focused land trust, emphasizes the connection between clean water and healthy forested land. Each fall, thousands of volunteers throughout the Potomac River watershed collect native nuts, fruits and seeds, which are donated to state nurseries, and used to restore streamside forests along the Potomac and its tributaries.

Since Growing Native's inception in 2001, nearly 56,000 volunteers have collected more than 164,000 pounds of acorns, black walnuts, and other native hardwood tree and shrub seeds. Many of the targeted species for collection are edible (e.g. Hazelnut, Pawpaw, Persimmon, Spicebush, Black Cherry)

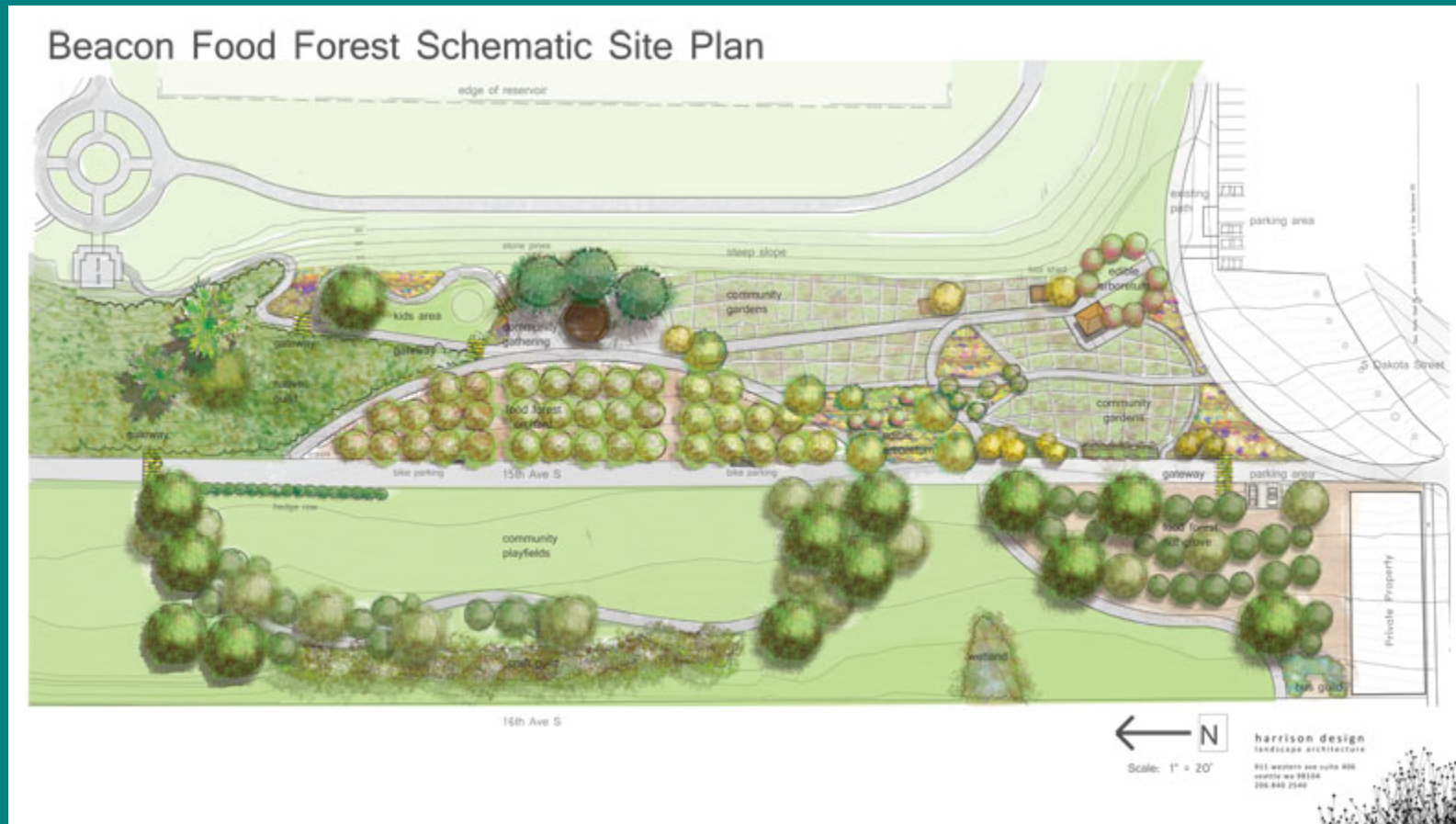


[A Coordinator's Guide to Community Seed Collection](#)

[News article from the Washington Times about Growing Native](#)



The [Beacon Food Forest](#), a seven-acre edible urban forest garden, being developed on a publicly-owned, grassy site in the Beacon Hill neighborhood of Seattle (will have mostly cultivated food plants instead of native edible species)



[Nation's largest public Food Forest takes root on Beacon Hill \(Crosscut, 2/16/12\)](#)

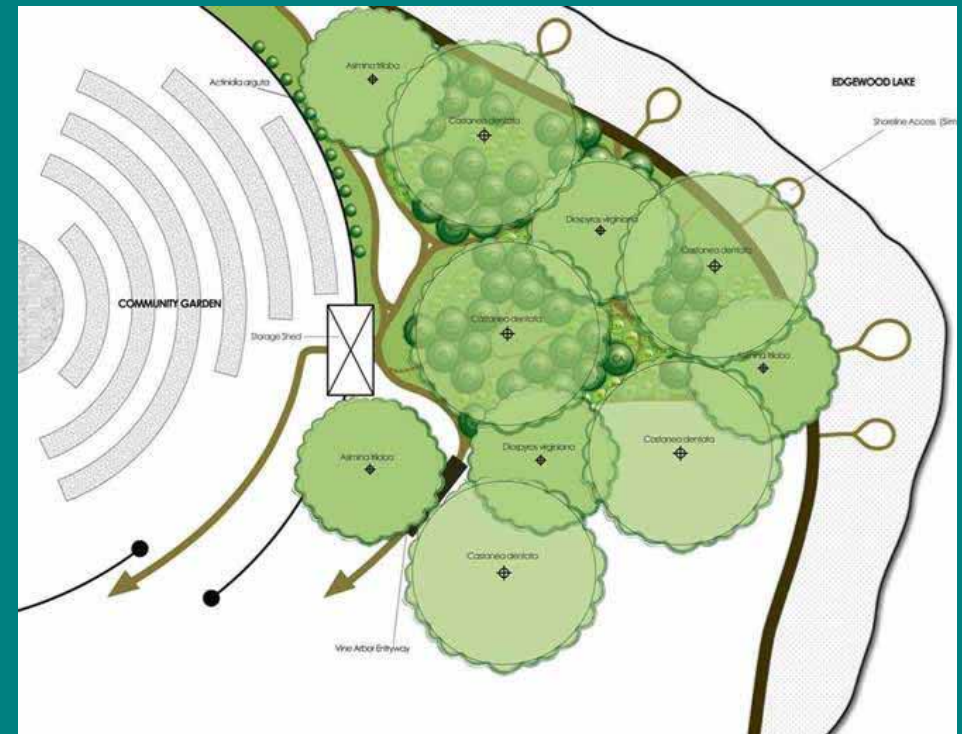
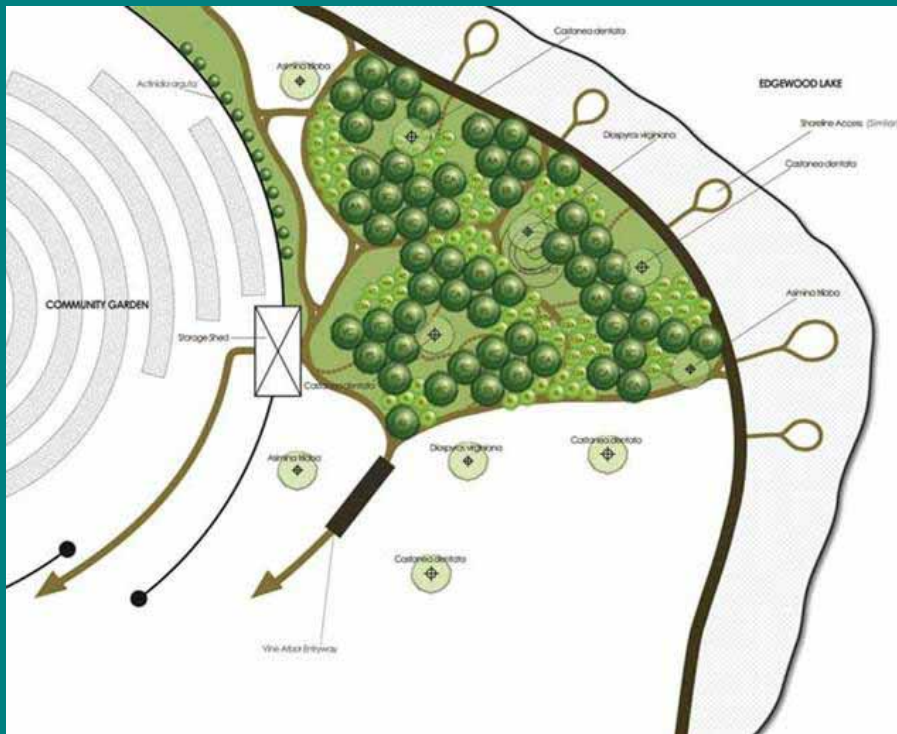
[“Living on Earth” Interview with Beacon Food Forest designer Jenny Pell \(3/9/12\)](#)

[Wild Orchard – A Food Forest Grows in Seattle \(Mother Nature Network, 3/7/12\)](#)

A less-publicized (but closer-to-home) example: the [Edible Forest Garden at Roger Williams Park](#) in Providence, which will utilize predominantly native edible species (see [plant list](#)) - the first phase is being installed in the spring of 2012

The year 2017 — Predominantly native understory thrives while canopy layer grows up!

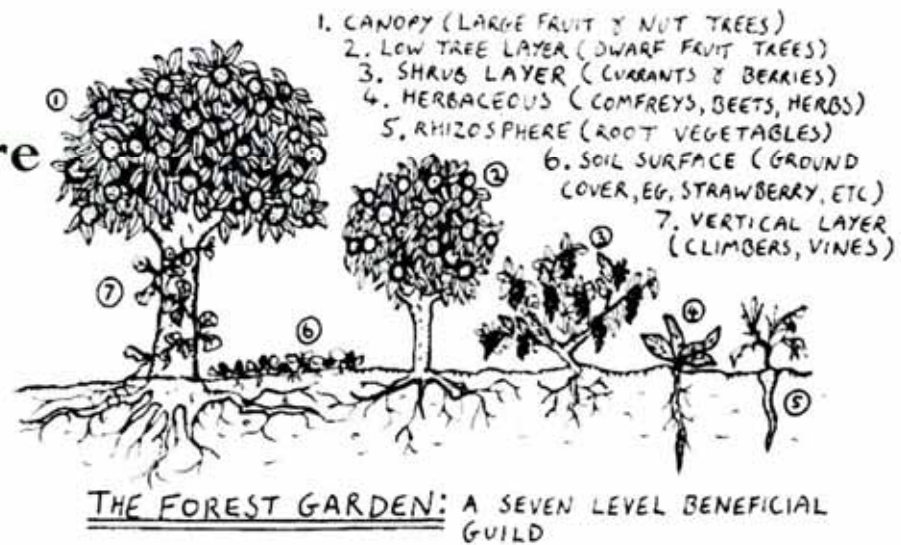
The year 2042 — American Chestnut, American Persimmon and Paw Paw canopy layer thrives!



See also the [URI Outreach Center's Landscape Restoration Program](#), which focuses on the restoration of native plants (edible and otherwise) and plant communities - see, e.g., [Native Plant Site Solutions for Backyard Habitat](#)

What is an Edible Forest Garden?

- ❑ Organic plant-based food production system **modeled after a woodland ecosystem**
- ❑ Incorporates fruit and nut trees, shrubs, herbs, vines and perennial vegetables that **yield 'edibles' for humans and wildlife**
- ❑ **Our best attempt to mimic the architecture and interactions of a natural forest system**



The Design Process: OUR GOALS

- ❑ **Design** a **system** that meets human and wildlife needs through the incorporation of **palatable native plants** that collectively also provide **wildlife habitat**
- ❑ **Establish** a plant system that serves as a riparian buffer to mitigate stormwater runoff and impacts on the adjacent Edgewood Lake



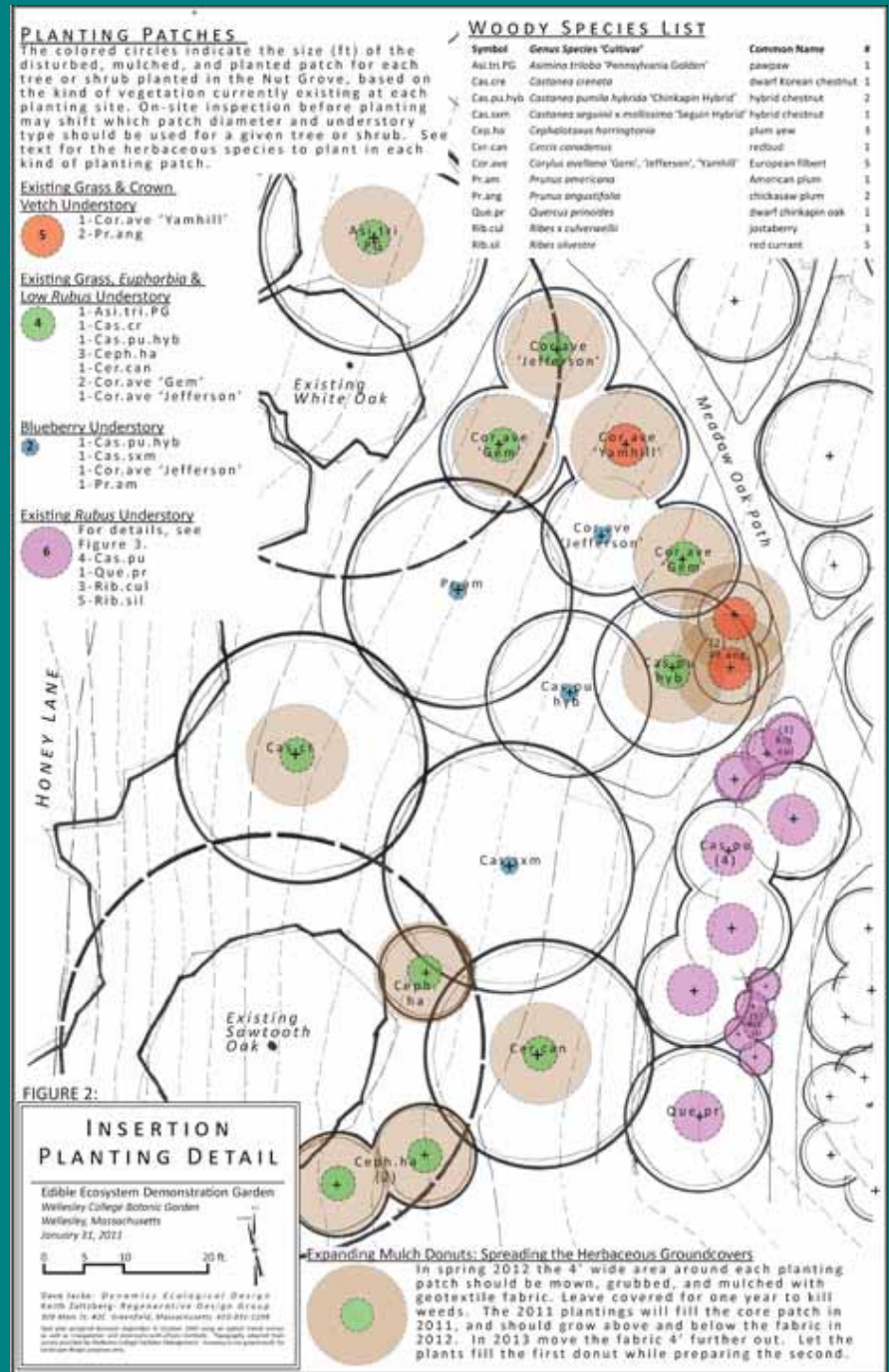
Revive the Roots, a grassroots group set up fourteen months ago by six friends from high school, recently entered an agreement with the Smithfield (RI) Land Trust to lease a portion of the historic Mowry Farm, recently donated to the Trust, to establish Niantic Gardens, an organic farm, community garden and a forest garden that will serve as a "permanent food-producing ecosystem".



An example from Massachusetts: the [Edible Ecosystem Garden](#), a project sponsored by the [Wellesley College Botanical Gardens](#), a plant community (designed by Dave Jacke of [Dynamics Ecological Design](#) and Keith Zaltzberg of [Regenerative Design Group](#)) intended to mimic the properties, principles, patterns and processes of natural ecosystems while producing food and other products useful for humans.



Dave Jacke and Wellesley students, Sophia Liu and Katie Byrnes, prepare for planting.



Edible Garden at NEWFS's Garden in the Woods, Framingham, MA



😊 The End 😊

-- Questions? --

More information on Russ' foraging programs, recipes,
book/articles, etc.: <http://users.rcn.com/eatwild/sched.htm>

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