



# ISLAND GROWN

## HARVEST OF THE MONTH

- April -

## WILD EDIBLES

### FEATURED GATHERER: KRISTINA HOOK-LESLIE

**Kristina Hook-Leslie of Aquinnah is a local expert on wild edibles. Her favorites to harvest in early spring are swamp apples, which grow on standing white honeysuckle, and fiddleheads. She likes to cook fiddleheads with a leg of venison and island grown garlic. Her advice for those who want to forage for their own wild edibles is to do your homework- make sure you know what you're picking, and be respectful- take only what you need, and give thanks to the plants before harvesting.**

#### HEALTHY SERVING IDEAS

**BEACH PLUMS** - Fruit can be turned into jams, jellies, wine, and juice.

**WILD GRAPES** - Fruit can be eaten raw or turned into jams, jellies, or wine. Leaves can be stuffed.

**ROSE HIPS** - Hips can be turned into jams, jellies, soup, tea, or stewed with meat.

**PURSLANE** - Can be eaten raw in salads, or added to soups. Stems can be pickled.

**SASSAFRAS** - Roots, leaves, and stems can be turned into tea.

#### HEALTH BENEFITS

**Rose hips** are a great source of vitamin C.

**Dandelions** are rich in Vitamins A and C, as well as calcium.

**Fiddlehead ferns** are high in Vitamins A and C, niacin, beta-carotene, and potassium.

**Beach plums** contain Anthocyanin which can help strengthen the immune system and lower high blood pressure and cholesterol.

**Sassafras** also helps boost the immune system, and applying sassafras to sores or rashes on the skin can help reduce inflammation.

#### SHOPPER'S/FORAGER'S TIPS

Always make sure you know what you're harvesting before you eat it. If you are new to foraging, go with someone who is experienced, as some pictures of edible plants can be misleading.

Make sure you know the rules about picking wild plants in your area. For example, on Martha's Vineyard fiddleheads should not be harvested because some species are rare and can be difficult to identify, but they are often available at Cronig's.



HARVEST OF THE MONTH HIGHLIGHTS A LOCALLY AVAILABLE CROP EACH MONTH OF THE YEAR IN SCHOOL CAFETERIAS, RESTAURANTS AND GROCERY STORES. THE PROGRAM HELPS CHILDREN, THEIR CAREGIVERS, AND THE BROADER COMMUNITY LEARN MORE ABOUT HEALTHY, SEASONAL, WHOLE-FOODS EATING, WHILE SUPPORTING LOCAL FARMS.

For more information visit

[ISLANDGROWNSCHOOLS.ORG/HARVESTOFTHEMONTH](http://ISLANDGROWNSCHOOLS.ORG/HARVESTOFTHEMONTH)



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