



Small guide to foraging for the Lancashire  
region  
With  
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## Introduction

Welcome to your foraging experience! For this foray we will be visiting the beautiful Crook O' Lune area on Saturday the 1<sup>st</sup> of April.

Before you start delving into the plants you are likely to find on our walk, some words of caution:

Never pick something unless completely sure of what it is or unless it is necessary for identification purposes. Many plants have toxic/inflaming sap that can irritate your skin. In addition by picking up the plant, you are likely harming it which is a shame. So don't do that unless sure of what the plant is.

Never taste anything unless 100% sure of what it is. If you do need to taste it to identify place the smallest amount on the tip of your mouth and then spit it out and rinse your mouth. How can you make yourself 100% sure? By cross-referencing with online and in paper guides as well as asking foragers that are more experienced than yourself.

Lastly, although foraging can be a great source of fun, please don't forage everything on site. Many plants are endangered or cannot reproduce a sustainable number fast. So always leave something for the person after you and for nature.

## Dandelion- *Taraxacum officinale*



One of the easiest plants to identify, it grows almost everywhere and is characterized by the basal rosette the leaves grow in, the serrated edges on the leaves, the taproot and the characteristic yellow flower and airborne seed head. The whole plant is edible.

## Garlic mustard- *Alliaria petiolata*



Another easy green to identify, garlic mustard also called Jack-by-the-hedge, grows in hedgerows and road sides. When young the leaves are heart-shaped, deeply veined and smell greatly of a combination of garlic and mustard. The whole plant is edible.



## Cleavers- *Galium aparine*



Cleavers, aka catchweed and sticky willy among others, grows everywhere and is characterized by tiny hooks that make it attach to clothes and animal fur. The leaves are edible as a green filler as they don't have a very characteristic taste.

Ground elder- *Aegopodium podagraria*



Ground elder is a pest for many as it tends to grow quite fast and cover ground quickly, choking other plants. It is however a very aromatic and tasty green that works well in pies and soups.



## Nettle- *Urtica dioica*



Another green that grows everywhere, it is characterized by the ragged appearance of the leaves as well as its stinging nature which means it should be handled with care and with gloves. It is a fantastic green however, with plenty of medicinal and culinary uses!

## Scarlet elf-cup - *Sarcoscypha austriaca*



The scarlet elf cup is a very distinctive fungus that grows on rotting wood through late winter and early spring. It is bright red and it decomposes wood. It can be eaten raw or cooked.



## Wood Avens- *Geum urbanum*



Wood avens is a fantastic little plant growing on the side of the road and in forested areas alike. The leaf bearing stems are arranged in a basal rosette and they are deeply lobed. The whole plant is edible, however the leaves don't taste like much. The root however contains eugenol and smells like cloves!

## Sorrel- *Rumex acetosus*



Common sorrel grows in hedgerows and is very characteristic due to the two abruptly pointed “wings” at the base of the leaf. A part of the Dock family, this lovely little green has a very sour and mouth-watering taste. It can be dangerous in big quantities so if you have heart or kidney problems make sure to inform your doctor.

## Gorse- *Ulex europaeus*



Gorse is a very characteristic plant, growing on path and road edges. With sharp thorns and bright yellow flowers that smell of coconut, this plant is unmistakable!