



Wild Crafting Herbal Medicine and Edible Plants

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Overview

- Ancestral medicine
- Most common wonder weeds
- Native plants
- Bush tucker
- European highlights
- Important connections



Disclosure statement:

I have no actual or potential sources of conflicts of interest to declare

Wild crafting and plant identification

- Ancestral medicine
- Seasonal growths
- Flowers, Leaf shape, leaf texture, stem pattern, vein pattern
- Picked carefully to not damage plant
- Parts of plant used
- Used in small amounts
- Identification is highly recommended for safety
- Be mindful of pollution



Hillier Retreat





Cobblers pegs (*Bidens pilosa*)

- Farmers friends
- 240 known species
- 201 compounds (Traditional uses, phytochemicals & pharmacology, Arlene et al, July 2013)
- 480 studies or reviews in PubMed
- Studies show may help up to 40 diseases.
- Actions: Anti cancer, Anti inflammatory, Anti diabetic, Anti oxidant, Immunomodulatory
- Anti malarial, Anti bacterial, Anti parasitic, Anti fungal
- Hypotensive, vasodilatory and wound healing



Cobblers pegs (*Bidens pilosa*)



- Efficacy of *Bidens pilosa* Extract against Herpes Simplex Virus Infection In Vitro and In Vivo (Nakama S et al, Feb 2012)
- *Bidens pilosa* Formulation Improves Blood Homeostasis and β -Cell Function in Men: A Pilot Study ([Bun-Yueh Lai](#) et al, March 2015)



Blue tops (*Ageratum conyzoides*) *A. houstonianum*



- Family : Asteraceae
- Common name: Billy goat weed
- Ageratum – Greek ‘a geras’ non aging referring to longevity of plant and flowers.
- High in alkaloids.
- Moth repellent, Insecticides
- Can rub flowers onto insect bites. Aborigines mashed the plant and applied to wounds. Similar uses in Nigeria.
- India for prolapses
- South America – Metrorrhagia (irregular menses)
- Found: QLD, NSW WA

Blue tops (*Ageratum conyzoides*)

Inhibits 5-alpha-reductase gene expression in human prostate cells and reduces symptoms of benign prostatic hypertrophy in otherwise healthy men in a double blind randomized placebo controlled clinical study.



Detering M, Steels E,
Koyyalamudi SR,
Alliffranchini E,
Bocchietto E, Vitetta L.
Biofactors. 2017
Nov;43(6):789-800.
doi: 10.1002/biof.1389.
Epub 2017 Oct 19. PMID:
29048765



Nodding tops (*Crassocephum crepidioides*)

Red Flower, Rag leaf

Leaves taste like carrots
and yummy to add to salads.
Rich in Vit C and anti oxidants.
Studies show this plant to be
hepato protective and helps reduce
Liver toxicity.



[Biol Pharm Bull.](#) 2005 Jan;28(1):19-23. Free radical scavenging and hepatoprotective actions of the medicinal herb, *Crassocephalum crepidioides* from the Okinawa Islands. [Aniya Y¹ et al](#)

Fat Hen (*Chenopodium album*)



- Also known as Wild spinach, Goose foot or Lambsquarters
- Young leaves can be used in salads, or cooked like spinach.
- Nutty taste, Used in North Indian dish 'Bathue ka raita' (Grub A, 2013)
- Pakistan research as an anti-parasitic and anti-inflammatory
- Seeds found in stomach Tollund man, 4th C BC
- Similar genus to C. quinoa
- European Native but found in all states of Australia.

Fat Hen (*Chenopodium album*)

- The plant is used in diet not only to provide minerals, fibre, vitamins and essential fatty acids but also enhance sensory and functional value of the food. The plant has been traditionally used as a bloodpurifier, diuretic, sedative, hepatoprotective, antiscorbutic laxative and as an anthelmintic against round and hookworms.
- Pharmacological studies have revealed that the plant possesses anthelmintic, sperm immobilizing and contraceptive properties. It is also claimed to be antipruritic and antinociceptive in action. Therefore *C. album* holds a great potential for in depth biological evaluation.
- [Amrita Poonia](#) et al [J Food Sci Technol](#). 2015 Jul

Amaranth Species

Ovate leaves, wavy margins, can be reddish or green with indented veins.



Green Amaranth (*A. viridis*)

Pick young leaves and tips, starts of green but then the seeds turn brown

Can be steamed as a side dish with olive oil and lemon juice or eaten raw

High protein

The seeds are often puffed up as a breakfast cereal, grains can be made into flour or cooked

Traditionally ground and mixed into breads for a nutty flavour

Dates back to 4000BC in Mexico.

Apparently upsetting Monsanto growers as this 'weed'; is covering their GM cotton and soya crops (Grub. A). Found: All states but green is rare in Tas

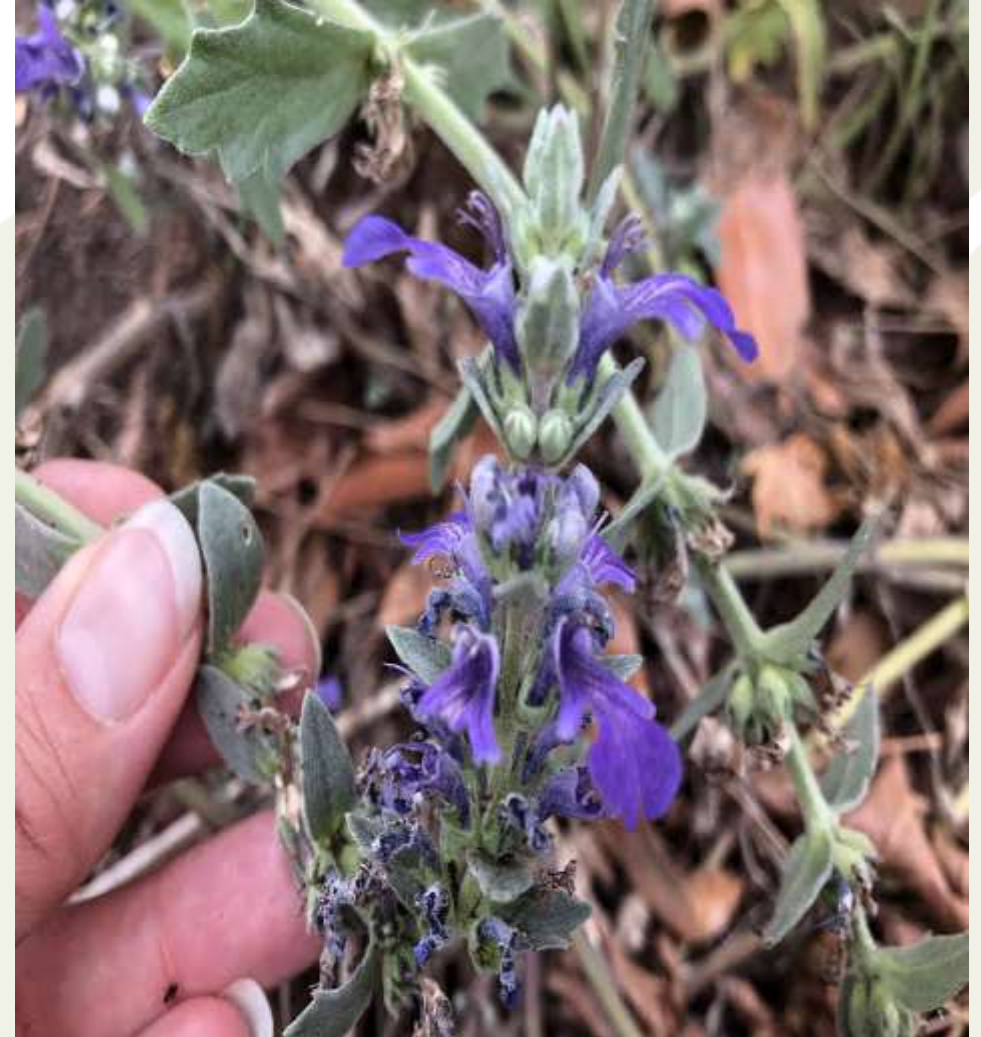


Australian Bugle (*Ajuga australis*)



Australian Bugle (*Ajuga australis*)

- Lamiaceae family (mint)
- Up to 40 cm high, with hair covering whole plant
- Flowers blue or purple from base up
- Leaves at base have round tooth margins then higher up, more oblong straight margins
- Found: Moist open forests in E. and S. Australia
- Use : Infused bruised leaves used to soothe boils and skin sores. Leaves used as a salve for wounds (Robinson L, 2003) and Canberra Botanical gardens, 1977, Aboriginal Trail
- [Israili ZH. Pak J Pharm Sci. 2009 Oct;22\(4\):425-62. Ethnopharmacology of the plants of genus Ajuga.](#)



Gotu kola (*Centella asiatica*)



Gotu kola (*Centella asiatica*)

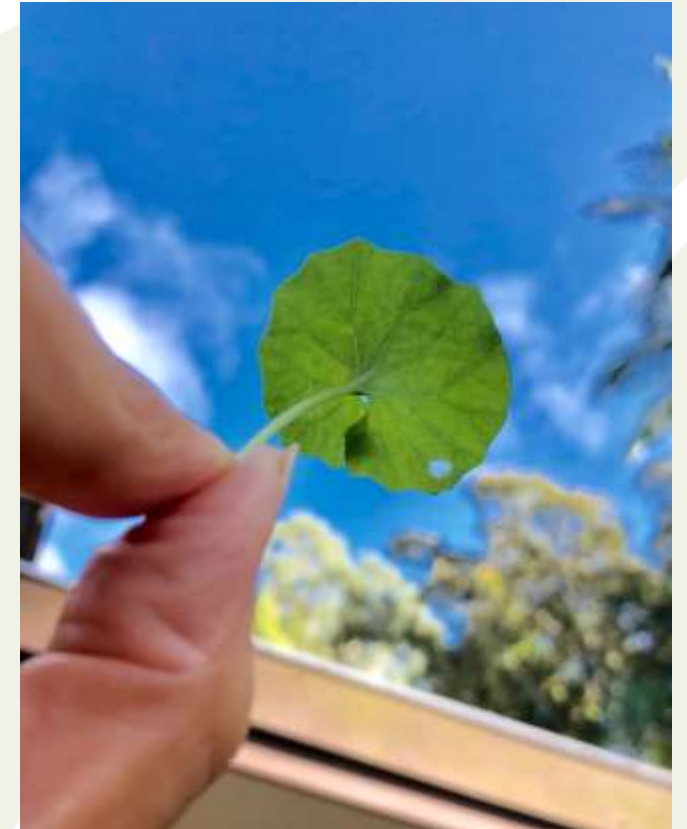


- Indian Penny wort
- Traditionally conditions treated: Skin diseases, locally and for leprosy.
- Skin sores on babies mixed with lime.
- Modern use: Any skin conditions especially after surgery for wound healing and circulation.
- It is also beneficial used topically for wounds, psoriasis, burns, cellulitis, and varicose veins.
- Over 1000 studies on PubMed. One study calls this “A potential Herbal Cure –all (Kashmira J, Jagruit A , Indian J Pharm Sci, 2010) for wound healing, eczema, psoriasis, diarrhea, fever, lupus, anxiety, depression and improving cognition.
- 5 leaves per day for health and longevity

Gotu kola (*Centella asiatica*)



Gotu kola (*Centella asiatica*)



Native violet: *Viola banksia* (former *V. hederacea*)

Leave tufted along creeping stems.
Smooth or irregular toothed margins.
9 mm petals on 2-4 cm stems



Viola odorata



European violet



Native violet

- Traditionally used for fertility and in love potions
 - Rich in essential oils, flavonoids and saponins
 - Used for sore throats, tonsillitis, colds and coughs
 - Mouth ulcers and herpes
-
- Tea is made from leaves and flowers
 - Ointments can be used for skin sores and cracked lips
 - Leaves can be used in salad although quite mucilagenous

Chick weed (*Stellaria media*)



Chick weed (*Stellaria media*)

- White star shaped flowers
- For inflammation and ulceration
- Wound healing, itching, eczema, psoriasis
- Great source of vitamin C, chlorophyll and minerals
- Can be used in salads or juices
- In soothing creams and ointments
- Found in all states but not the tropics. In cooler months.
- Note - If has a white latex like sap, may be Petty spurge which can irritate the skin.

Tropical chickweed (*Drymaria Cordata*)

- Traditionally used as medicine in Africa and India traditionally
- Can be used topically for wounds, eczema and dermatitis (blend with vitamin E cream base).
- Makes a great soother for sore joints when made into a poultice.
- In food, it is high in vitamin C, A and B vitamins.
- Also high in minerals: Si, Fe, Mg, Zn, K, Cr and Mn



Tropical chickweed (*Drymaria Cordata*)

- Studies on Pub med proving it's medicinal efficacy
- Shown it to be analgesic (pain relieving) and anti-pyretic
- Helps with fevers and hot sweats) comparably with aspirin (AJ Akindele, 2011)
- Another study proves it to be anti-tussive (reduces severity of coughing) (Mukherjee PK).



Tropical Chickweed, Common chickweed, Petty spurge



Australian sorrel (*Oxalis debilis corymbosa*)



Australian sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*, *O. corniculata*)



Wood sorrel, sour grass: Several Australian species

- Clovers, trifoliate, pin or yellow
- Creeping wood sorrel with Yellow flowers (*O. corniculata*)
- Flowers, tangy, high vitamin C
- Great remedy for mouth ulcers
- Note: C/I for those with sensitivities to oxalates

White clover (*Trifolium repens*)



Flowers white to pale pink on top of long erect stalks.
Leaves are trifoliolate



Medicinal uses: heals disorders and diseases of the eye
A tea can be used to treat coughs, colds, fevers and leucorrhoea

A tincture of the leaves can be applied as an ointment for gout
A tea of the flowers used as an eyewash.

Red clover (*Trifolium pretense*)

Flowers 40-100 cm long
Leaves are trifoliolate
with a light coloured V in
the centre, sit a base of
the pink flower.
Flowers can be in
clusters.
The leaves, stalks and
flowers are hairy.



Dandelion (*Taraxicum officinale*)



Dandelion leaf:

Rich in minerals such as potassium, calcium and phosphorus

Great for skin disorders and fluid retention

Can be used in salads, smoothies and pesto's

Dandelion root:

Liver and Gall bladder tonic

Can be drank as a healthy coffee alternative

Cats ear (*Hypochoeris radicata*)



- Similar properties to dandelion
- Leaves helpful for fluid retention and liver health
- High calcium, protein, copper and sulphate
- Anti fungal for skin infections
- Leaves used in salad if young or blanch them as high oxalates
- Roots used in a tea

Sow thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*)

- Oleraceus – indicates ‘a vegetable used in cooking’.
- Young leaves, petals, salads or cooked as a spinach.
- High in minerals, iron, calcium and vitamins.

- When young, leaves have spade shaped leaves, followed
- by smaller arrow shapes leaves. Can grow up to 1 m tall. World wide and most of Australia.
- Leaves used as a poultice, Latex sap used on warts
- Small flower buds can be stir-fried.

- Nicolas Culpepper: “The decoction of leaves and stalks causeth abundance of milk in nurse and their children to be well coloured” and rec for women to wash their faces with it for clear skin and lustre.



Sow thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*)

- 1. Antinociceptive action in mice, which supports previous claims of its traditional use. (Vilela FC et al, 2009). Traditional use being in Brazil as pain relief, the mice licked their wounds less in this study.
- 2. Anti-inflammatory and antipyretic effects of *Sonchus oleraceus* in rats. (Vilela FC et al, 2010). been used to relieve headaches, general pain, hepatitis, infections, inflammation and rheumatism in Brazilian folk medicine.
- 3. S.O protects against LPS-induced sepsis and inhibits inflammatory responses (Chen L et al Feb 2019)

Sow thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*)



4. Evaluation of anti-ulcer and ulcerative colitis of *Sonchus oleraceus* L. ([Alothman EA](#) et al, Nov 2018). total extract of the aerial parts (SA) at dose 500 mg/kg showed strong anti-ulcerative colitis activity and this activity is followed by the activity of the butanol and chloroform fractions of the aerial parts, they produced 77.28%, 57.4% & 47.68% protection from control colitis respectively. The standard drug dexamethasone produced 63.36% protection from control colitis.

Scotch thistle spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*)



Scotch thistle spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*)



St Mary's thistle (*Silybum marianum*)



Plantain species Ribwort (*plantago lanceolata*)



Fleabane (*Conyza bonariensis*)



Fleabane (*Conyza bonariensis*)

- Family : Asteraceae, up to 2 M tall, occasional toothed lance shaped leaves. Small daisy like flowers in clusters before seeding.
- Rich in minerals
- An astringent and named after an insecticide towards fleas.
- It has spasmolytic constituents (reduces stomach cramps).
- Traditionally the leaves have been used to treat IBD such as diarrhea, constipation, internal haemorrhages and gonorrhoea.

Recent studies (Bukhari et al, 2013) show this plant can be used medically as a gut modulator.

Young leaves can be made into a tea, cooked, boiled or dried for future uses.



Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*)

- Family: Portulacaceae
- Pig weed, Horse money
- Stems, leaves, eaten raw in salads juiced or cooked
- Great source of vit C
- High Omega 3 EFA
- Traditionally used to treat infections and diarrhea.



Cleavers (*Gallium aparine*)



Cranesbill (*Geranium solanderi*)



Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*)

Infusions of crushed leaves can be applied to soothe irritated skin conditions



Mallow (*Malva neglecta*)



Centaury (*Centaureum erythraea*)



Gentian family
Up to 50 cm tall
Triangular leaves
arranged oppositely
on the stem.
Bach flower remedy
for anxiety and
stress
Used as a tea for
gastric and liver
diseases.

Emilia sonchifolia

Pink flowers 1 cm long, whole plant is edible, raw or cooked
(Shipard I)



Raspberry leaves (*Rubus hillii*, *R. rosifolius*)



Raspberry leaves (*Rubus moluccanus*)



Raspberry leaves

- Family: Rosacea
- Common names, Wild Raspberry
- Leaves contain active constituents of triterpenoids rubusinic acid and rubutinic acid
- Medicinal: Pregnancy tonic (2nd and 3rd trim.) and to prepare for pregnancy
- Upset stomachs and diarrhoea as an astringent
- Mouth ulcers



More Vines: *Sarsaparilla australis*



- Another : Sweet sarsaparilla (*Smilax glycyphylla*): Vine with out prickles.
- Leave 4-12 cm, 3 veined from the base, black berries 6-10 mm.
- Medicinal: Leave and stem are said to provide a cure all and a general tonic for clods, flu and rheumatism.
- Leaves sucked to ease a sore throat.

Millaa Millaa Vine (*Elaeagnus trifloral*)



Edible red fruit, eaten raw
berries often seen on the ground
Leaves can have silvery underside.
Host for Indigo flash butterfly



Passion fruit (*Passiflora edulis*)



Climbing vine, Edible purple or yellow fruit



Passiflora incarnata



Photo credit G.Hammond

White passion flower (*Passiflora subpeltata*)



Stinging nettles (*Urtica dioica*, *U.urens*)

Nettle Leaf:

- Traditionally used for nose bleeds and haemorrhage
- Childhood eczema, skin hives, dermatitis, psoriasis
- Nursing mothers to enhance breast milk
- Gout and inflammation
- Rich in iron, chlorophyll and vitamin C

Nettle Roots:

- Men's health, good for men's prostate health for benign prostatic hyperplasia



Dock leaves (*Rumex crispus*)



Dock leaves (*Rumex crispus*)

- Antidote for nettle sting as a poultice (leaves)
 - For liver Qi stagnation and gall stones
 - Constipation issues
 - Skin eczema and dermatitis
 - Enhances elimination and detoxification
-
- Young leaves can be used in salad
 - Teas can be made from the dried roots



Sida rhombifolia, *S. retusa* (Paddy's Lucerne)

- 60 cm tall, QLD, *S. cordifolia* (Flannel weed) 1 m tall, more ovate shaped leaves (Shipard I.)
S. acuta NT NEQ
- Leaves alternate, margins toothed, bright green, Flowers with 5 pale yellow petals. Fruit with 5-7 mericarps.
- Alkaloids (Prakash A et al Dec 1981)
- Tea with leaves for diarrhoea, rich in mucilage and valued for treating respiratory ailments, relieving gastric ulcers, inflammation, irritation of the alimentary canal and as a poultice for ulcers. (Shipard I)
- Anti-arthritic activity of various extracts of *Sida rhombifolia* aerial parts ([Gupta SR¹ Nat Prod Res.](#) 2009;23(8):689-95. doi: 10.1080/14786410802242778.



Black nightshade (*Solanum nigrum*) *S. americanum*

- Family: Solanaceae
- Flowers, white star shaped petals, Ripe purple berries are edible
- Rich in vitamin C, iron and B vitamins
- Found in all states
- NOT to be Confused with Deadly nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*) – purple flowers
- Studies show anti inflammatory from steroidal saponins (Wang Y. May 2017)
- Anti cancer (Lai YJ, April 2016) supressing mitochondrial function in breast cancer cells



Scurvy Weed (*Commelina cyanea*)



Confused with
Wandering Jew,
Tradescantia
albiflora (White
flowers)

Eaten by colonists
to prevent scurvy,
as high in Vit C,
Niacin and
riboflavins

Phalaria clerodendron



Native ginger (*Alpinia caerulea*)

- Young shoots and underground roots eaten raw.
- White flesh around the seeds are edible.
- Leaves used in flavouring and as a wrap in cooking



Pycnoporou (Fungi)



A fraction obtained from the culture fluids of *Pycnopus sanguineus* fungus was shown to contain a compound with biological activity against strains of *Escherichia coli*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Salmonella typhi*, *Staphylococcus aureus* and members of the genus *Streptococcus*. The fraction was clearly more active on Gram-positive cocci than on Gram-negative bacilli.

Antibacterial activity of a substance produced by the fungus *Pycnopus sanguineus* (Fr.) Murr.
Smânia A, et al. J Ethnopharmacol. 1995.



Coast Pandanus palm (*P. tectorius*) – stilt roots : Screw pine/Bread fruit

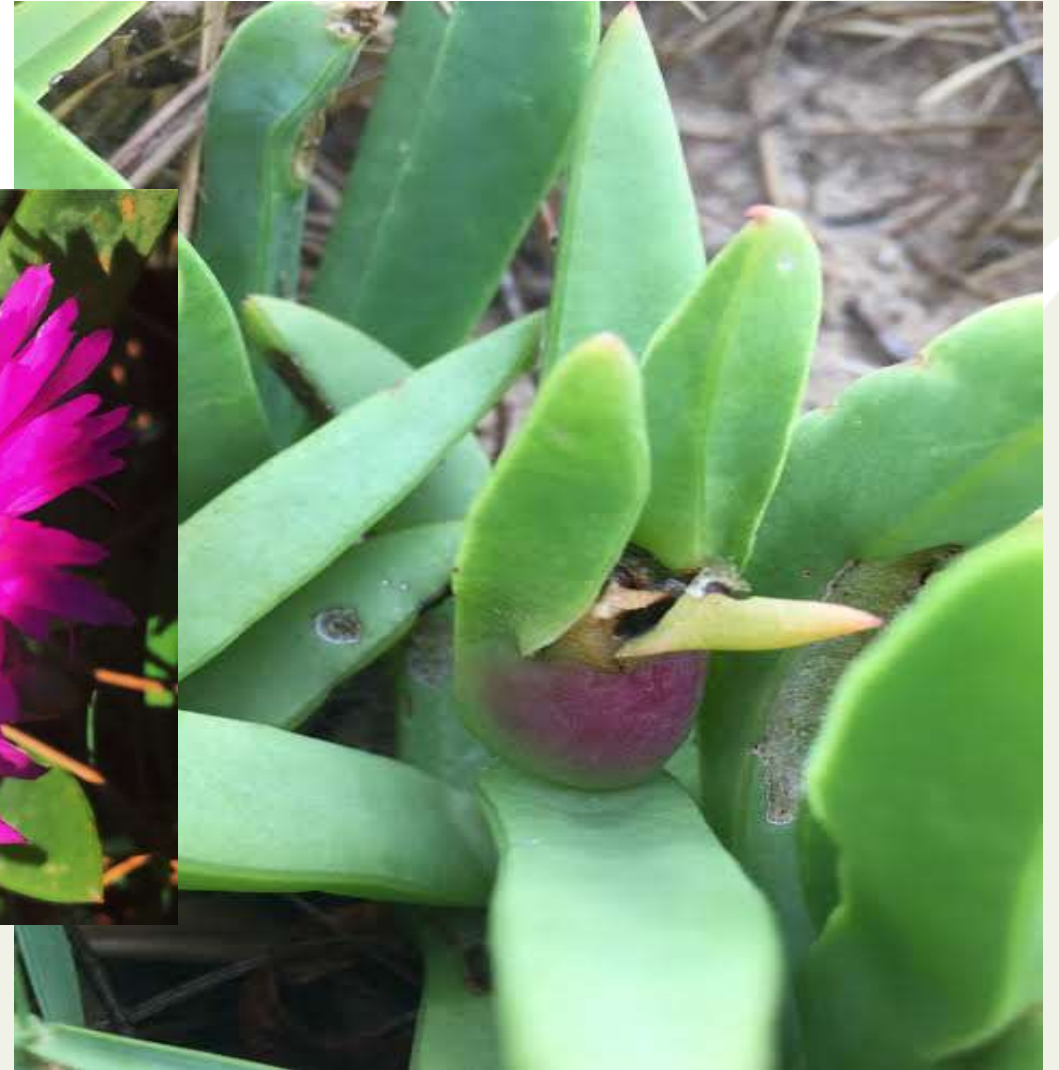


Northern Pandanus (*P. spiralis*) - spiral trunk, no stilt roots



Photos by Luisa Harvey, Noosa, QLD

Pigfaces (*Carpobrotus glaucescens*) QLD, NSW



Other species grow in other states

Photos by Luisa Harvey, Noosa, QLD

Kangaroo apple (*Solanum aviculare*)



Pituri (*Duboisia hopwoodii*)

- Joseph Banks in 1770 “we observed that some, though few, held constantly in their mouths the leaves of a herb which they chewed as a European does tobacco”
- Pituri was believed to provide the aboriginals with the strength to endure physical hardship and pain for long periods.
The alkaloids offered a pleasant narcotic effect

Over half the worlds supply of the drugs Hyosine and Scopolamine
Exported, researched and used to make Buscopan
by boehringer-Ingelheim



Lomandra hystrix



Millet grass



Dye berry (*Phytolacca octandra*) - Australian poke root)



Holy Basil (*Ocimum tenuiflorum*)



Lemon myrtle (*Backhousia citriodora*)



Bunya pine (*Araucaria bidwillii*)



Sand paper fig (*Ficus coronata*)



Blue Quandong (*Elaeocarpus grandis*)

- Elao carpus 'olive' 'fruit', Gradis - 'large' tree up to 40 m tall
- Fallen fruits eaten raw or made into an edible paste
- Within the seeds is a rich protein kernel than indigenous aborigines gathered in times of drought.
- Other types of Quandong: *Santalum acuminatum* found in all main states.



Gumbi gumbi (*Pittosporum angustifolium*)



Prickly pear (*Opuntia ficus-indica*)



Other herbs found in the wild in Australia

- Vervain (*Verbena officinalis*)
- River mint (*Mentha australis*)
- Horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*)
- Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*)
- Chicory (*Cichorium intybus*)
- Angled onion (*Allium triquetrum*)
- Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus sp.*)
- Salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*)
- Nasturtium (*Tropaelum majus*)
- Water cress (*Nasturtium officinalis*)
- Native Thyme (*Prostanthera rotundifolia*)
- Wild brassica (*Brassica oleracea*)
- Wild lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*)
- Wild celery (*Apium graveolens*)
- Wild carrot (*Daucus carrota*)



Spot the herbalist!



Rhodiola in Iceland



Rhodiola in Iceland



Angelica in Norway



Lady's mantle in Denmark



Chamomile in Cornwall, England



Ginkgo biloba in France



Hawthorn in the Lake district, England



Herbalists in Ireland (IRH)



Burdock in Nice, France



Eyebright in the Pyrenees, France



Chaste tree in Crete, Greece



Dittany



Sea squill



Saw palmetto in Sicily



Great review and study on food foraging in Europe

Ethnobotanical survey of wild food plants traditionally collected and consumed in the Middle Agri Valley (Basilicata region, southern Italy) ([Sabrina Sansanelli et al](#))



[J Ethnobiol Ethnomed](#). 2017; 13: 50. Published online 2017 Sep 6. doi: [10.1186/s13002-017-0177-4](https://doi.org/10.1186/s13002-017-0177-4) PMCID: PMC5586000 PMID: [28874202](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28874202/)

Plant Power Pesto (Weedsto)



Wild carrot:
Cyclospermum
leptophyllum



FOOD





noosa holistic health



Connections

Tree communication

Mushroom roots

Aboriginal dances to plants

Ask permission

Family



Spiritual connections



Grandfathers story –
tell a tree your
troubles

Tree connection
"Isn't that the most
beautiful thing you
ever heard Pete"





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