



# Edible Wild Plants Native to the Northeast U.S. and Eastern Canada

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Common Name	Botanical Name	Native to MA?	Type of plant	Preferred habitat	Comments
Box Elder	<i>Acer negundo</i>	Yes	small to medium tree	wetlands and other damp areas; floodplains	a species of Maple; sap may be tapped + boiled down for syrup
Maple, Red	<i>Acer rubrum</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	red maple swamps (of course)	can be tapped for sap like Sugar Maple
Maple, Silver	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	forested floodplains and other wet ground	can be tapped for sap like Sugar Maple; seeds are edible raw
Maple, Sugar	<i>Acer saccharum</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	hardwood forests; roadsides	sap is source of maple syrup and sugar
Sweet Flag (Calamus)	<i>Acorus americanus</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	wet fields and meadows; sunny wetlands; along waterways	the similarly-appearing <i>A. calamus</i> is apparently non-native to MA
Meadow Garlic	<i>Allium canadense</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	river floodplains, forests	all tender parts of the plant (leaves, flowers, bulbs) are edible
Wild Leek (Ramps)	<i>Allium tricoccum</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	rich, mesic woods, such as those pref. by maidenhair fern + Dutchman's breeches	over-collecting by commercial diggers is harming ramps + habitat - pick 1 leaf/plant only
Juneberry/Shadbush	<i>Amelanchier spp.</i>	Yes	Shrub/small tree	likes to grow near water, but often planted in parks and other landscaped areas	fruit ripe in late June; flavor is a cross between cherries and almonds
Hog Peanut	<i>Amphicarpa bracteata</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial vine	damp spots in woods w/ some sun; often on old woods roads	small subterranean seeds are available from late summer onward; tiny peas may be edible too
Angelica	<i>Angelica atropurpurea</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial to 6 ft -large spherical flower cluster	wet ground along rivers and streams, in full or partial sun	tender, emerging leaves are edible raw or cooked, young, boiled stems are sometimes candied
Seacoast Angelica	<i>Angelica lucida</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	rocky areas near the ocean	tender, emerging leaves are edible raw or cooked

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Groundnut	<i>Apios americana</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial vine	damp sandy, open areas, often near waterways	edible tubers (available year-round) + beans
Spikenard, American	<i>Aralia racemosa</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	rich, often rocky, deciduous forests, growing on moist soils	ripe berries are edible, and aromatic roots can be used to make a root beer-like beverage
Silverweed, Saltmarsh	<i>Argentina (Potentilla) egedii</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	salt marshes - a closely-related species ( <i>A. anserina</i> ) may grow elsewhere	starchy root is edible - leaves may be used for tea
Chokeberry, Black	<i>Aronia melanocarpa</i>	Yes	small shrub	sunny, usually (but not always) damp soil; can tolerate rocky, acidic conditions	at its best, its flavor only tolerable as a raw fruit, but flavor is improved by cooking/sweetening
Wild Ginger*(see NOTE)	<i>Asarum canadense</i> *(see NOTE)	Yes	herbaceous perennial	rich, mesic woods, such as those pref. by maidenhair fern + Dutchman's breeches	*NOTE: while the plant's roots give off a gingery aroma, the plant has carcinogens so eat sparingly
Milkweed, Common	<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	old fields; field edges; roadsides	plant has at least four parts that are edible after boiling 7 minutes
Pawpaw	<i>Asimina triloba</i>	No*	small tree (to 20 ft.)	understory tree in rich woods	non-native to MA - Native to Zone 7+, but will grow in sheltered microclimates to Zone 5
Orache	<i>Atriplex spp.</i>	Yes*	annual herb	Grows at/just above the "wrack" (high tide) line	<i>A. patula</i> is non-native to MA; <i>A. cristata</i> and <i>littoralis</i> are native; young leaves are edible
Yellow Birch	<i>Betula alleghaniensis</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	hardwood forests	peeled twigs used for tea - sap can be drunk or boiled down to a molasses-like syrup
Black Birch	<i>Betula lenta</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	pioneer species for cleared areas and regenerating forest	peeled twigs used for tea - sap can be drunk or boiled down to a molasses-like syrup
Alpine Bistort	<i>Bistorta vivipara</i> ( <i>Polygonum viviparum</i> )	No	herbaceous perennial	mountain summits and open rocky cold areas	Only occurs in colder microclimates in northern New England + further north - "rare" status in ME+NH

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Sea Rocket	<i>Cakile edentula</i>	Yes	low-growing, herbaceous, succulent plant	on beaches, between the wrack line and the dune	leaves of this mustard family plant have a sharp, wasabi-like flavor - pick a few leaves/plant only
Marsh Marigold (Cowslip)	<i>Caltha palustris</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial - spring ephemeral wildflower	wooded swamps, usually near small streams	young leaves harvested sparingly before the plants bloom are edible after boiling
Bellflower, Scotch	<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	open rocky areas, in cracks. Gravel shores, ledges, cliffs, river banks	leaves are edible raw or cooked
Toothwort	<i>Cardamine (Dentaria) spp.</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial - spring ephemeral wildflower	understory plant in rich woods	root has horseradish flavor - be careful not to disturb listed (protected) species in the genus
Pennsylvania bitter-cress	<i>Cardamine pensylvanica</i>	Yes	herbaceous annual or biennial	wetlands, muddy river/lake/pond banks	raw and briefly cooked plant taste somewhat like Horseradish (a relative)
Pignut Hickory	<i>Carya glabra</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	woods and woods/field edges; more common in southern New England	ripe nuts are edible + usually have a nice flavor; <i>C. ovata</i> nuts are more reliably larger + tastier
Hickory, Shagbark	<i>Carya ovata</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	roadsides, field edges, hardwood forests	best trees for foraging are in the open + get lots of sun - nuts ripen in late Sep. through mid Oct.
Chestnut, American	<i>Castanea dentata</i>	Yes	small to medium tree (before blight hits them)	hardwood forests; field edges; roadsides	trees > 20 feet tall in good sunlight can produce viable nuts before blight hits
New Jersey Tea	<i>Ceanothus americanus</i>	Yes	herb	fields and field and road edges	leaves used for tea - roots host symbiotic bacteria that can fix nitrogen for plant uptake
Hackberry	<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	Yes	medium-sized tree	damp areas with some good sun exposure; will grow near water, including seacoast	both thin-fleshed fruit and starchy seed are edible
Redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	No	small tree (to 15 feet)	understory tree in limey or fertile soil	not native to MA - Found only in SW N.E. + further south, but will grow to Zone 5

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Bunchberry	<i>Chamaepericlymenum canadense</i>	Yes	ground cover about 5-6" high	northern and otherwise cooler woodlands; likes some sun	red berries are almost tasteless but edible
Fireweed	<i>Chamerion (Epilobium) angustifolium</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	pioneer species following fires or clearcuts - like cool climate	young shoots and pith in older stems are edible
Strawberry-Blite	<i>Chenopodium capitatum</i>	No	annual	rocky areas, esp. near the ocean	more likely to be spotted in northern New England and further northward
Spring Beauty	<i>Claytonia virginica + caroliniana</i>	Yes*	herbaceous perennial - spring ephemeral wildflower	rich woods and wooded floodplains - generally not found in acidic soils	*C. virginica listed as endangered in MA - edible tubers ("fairy spuds") and foliage
Clintonia (Corn Lily or Blue Bead Lily)	<i>Clintonia borealis</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial ground cover	common in acidic woodlands in N. NE and cool woods further S	young (to 3") leaves are edible and taste like cucumber
Sweet Fern	<i>Comptonia peregrina</i>	Yes	Small shrub	open areas; sandy/gravelly soil	leaves used for tea; small seeds are edible too - roots host symbiotic bacteria that fix nitrogen
Hazelnut, Common	<i>Corylus americana</i>	Yes	shrub	old fields, clearings, roadsides, often under power lines	nuts are ripe the second week of September
Hazelnut, Beaked	<i>Corylus cornuta</i>	Yes	shrub	old fields, clearings, roadsides, often under power lines	overlaps with but tends to range further north than C. americana
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus spp.</i>	Yes*	medium to large shrub	old fields and field edges	fruits are red when ripe and vary in size and flavor
Persimmon	<i>Diospyros virginiana</i>	No*	medium-sized tree	old fields	non-native to MA - Native to Zone 7+ but will grow in lower-numbered zones in suitable microclimates
Black Crowberry	<i>Empetrum nigrum</i>	No*	low-growing perennial	found on exposed mountain tops and ridges - higher elevations in northern N.E.	small fruit is edible but not particularly yummy
Trailing Arbutus (Mayflower)	<i>Epigaea repens</i>	Yes	prostrate plant	openings in acidic woodlands; sloping sides of paths+woodsroads - likes some sun	edible part are the spicy-scented flowers, which are the state flower of MA

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Trout Lily, Dogtooth Violet	<i>Erythronium americanum</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial - spring ephemeral wildflower	rich woods; wooded floodplains; woods with rich humus layer	cooked bulbs are edible; raw plant is reputedly nausea-inducing if you eat too much
Beech	<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	often found in hardwood forests	nuts ripen in September; best trees for foraging grow in the open
Wild Strawberry	<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	dappled sunlight along woods roads and woodland clearings	small but tasty fruit; seeds stick out (on <i>F. virginiana</i> , seeds are indented into the fruit)
Wild Strawberry	<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>	Yes	herb to 4" high	old fields; mowed areas; roadsides	the fruit are small nut delectable; species likes cooler climate
Creeping Snowberry	<i>Gaultheria hispida</i>	Yes	prostrate, diminutive vine -	cool, partial-to-full sun spots - often on old tree stumps	white berries the same size and flavor of wintergreen "Tic-Tacs"
Wintergreen	<i>Gaultheria procumbens</i>	Yes	perennial to 5" high	ground cover in acidic woodlands - can tolerate sun	leaves used for tea - berries also edible (though not very sweet)
Huckleberry, Black	<i>Gaylussacia baccata</i>	Yes	small shrub (to 3' tall)	acidic woodlands and clearings common understory plant in oak forests	black fruit ripens a bit later than blueberries
Dangleberry (Blue Huckleberry)	<i>Gaylussacia frondosa</i>	Yes	Shrub	understory plant in damp woods - occasionally grows in the open or partial shade	blue fruit ripens several weeks after the blueberries
Water or Purple Avens	<i>Geum rivale</i>	Yes	perennial herb	likes wet meadowy ground; can tolerate a bit of shade	root can supposedly be used to make a chocolate-like drink
Jerusalem Artichoke	<i>Helianthus tuberosus</i>	Yes*	herbaceous perennial	field edges floodplains; likes full sun	a Sunflower cousin w/ edible tubers *although here in 1620, species originated in Central N. America
Cow Parsnip	<i>Heracleum maximum</i>	Yes	herbaceous	wet meadows, stream banks, roadside ditches	young leaves and stems are edible, preferably boiled to reduce the strongly aromatic flavor
Rose Mallow, Swamp	<i>Hibiscus moscheutos</i>	Yes	shrub	in wet open meadows or in wet ground along waterways	species is related to Marsh Mallow ( <i>Althaea officinalis</i> ), for which the confection was named

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Beach Greens (Seabeach Sandwort)	<i>Honckenya peploides</i>	Yes	annual?	Grows in sandy areas near high tide line	entire green part of plant is edible
Waterleaf, Virginia	<i>Hydrophyllum virginianum</i>	Yes	herb	rich woods	Is sporadic in N.E.; more common S.+ W. - the related <i>H. canadense</i> is listed as Endangered in MA
Jewelweed	<i>Impatiens biflora or pallida</i>	Yes	annual	damp meadows and woodlands; doesn't like full sun	edible seeds taste like walnuts
Butternut/White Walnut	<i>Juglans cinerea</i>	Yes	medium -sized tree (to 40 ft.)	old fields; field edges; roadsides	nut inside egg-shaped husks/shells are milder than Black Walnuts
Black Walnut	<i>Juglans nigra</i>	No*	medium to large tree	old fields; field edges/roadsides	*Not considered native to MA (native further S.) but now grows wild there - nuts ripen in October
Wild Lettuce	<i>Lactuca canadensis</i>	Yes	annual	field edges; old fields; woods road edges; roadsides	of the several wild species of <i>Lactuca</i> , this is the most palatable
Wood Nettle	<i>Laportea canadensis</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	understory plant under hardwoods, usually mesic or damp soils	can be harvested and used (eaten aftercooking) in similar fashion to Stinging Nettle, <i>Urtica dioica</i>
Beach Pea	<i>Lathyrus japonicus var. maritimus</i>	Yes	annual	dunes and other seaside areas above high tide line	the shoots + tender green peas inside the pods are edible cooked, in moderation
Scotch Lovage	<i>Ligusticum scoticum</i>	Yes	hebaceous perennial	rocky areas near the ocean	young leaves, stems taste like cultivated lovage (a relative of celery)
Canada Lily	<i>Lilium canadense</i>	Yes	herbacous perennial	stream+ river banks, wetland borders, high-terrace floodplain forests, roadsides	bulbs are edible raw or cooked, but plant is rarely abundant and too pretty to pick
Turk's Cap Lily	<i>Lilium superbum</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	Floodplain forests and thickets, often in full sun	cooked bulbs are edible
Spicebush	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	Yes	shrub (to 12 ft. tall)	understory tree in acidic hardwoods, esp, near small streams	twigs used for tea; berries may be dried + ground up for a Szechuan pepper-like seasoning

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Northern/Mountain Fly Honeysuckle (Waterberry)	<i>Lonicera villosa</i>	Yes	small shrub	rich woods	Occurs more frequently in northern than southern New England
Bugleweed/Water Horehound	<i>Lycopus uniflorus</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	damp meadows and pond shores	a tuber-bearing wild mint - tubers are edible raw or cooked
Canada Mayflower (False Lily of the Valley)	<i>Maianthemum canadense</i>	Yes	herbaceous diminutive perennial ground cover	acidic woodlands - tolerates shade well	small red berries are edible but reputedly cathartic in large amounts
False Solomon's Seal	<i>Maianthemum</i> or <i>Smilacina racemosa</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	hardwood forests with rich humus layer	edible shoots and berries (reputedly cathartic in large amounts)
Starry False Solomon's Seal	<i>Maianthemum stellatum</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	understory plant, in partial shade - most commonly encountered near the coast	shoots and ripe berries are edible; flowers and berries are larger and prettier than <i>M. racemosa</i>
Ostrich Fern	<i>Matteuccia struthiopteris</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial fern	alluvial (silty) floodplain soil esp. in less acidic areas	edible fiddleheads available in April; unsafe to eat raw
Indian Cucumber	<i>Medeola virginiana</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	acidic, damp woods with rich humus layer	harvesting the edible root kills the plant, so use sparingly - also don't pick rare orchid lookalike
American Wild Mint	<i>Mentha canadensis</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	meadows and fields, shores of rivers or lakes, swamps	leaves have a "minty" aroma/flavor similar to spearmint or peppermint (both are non-native species)
Oysterleaf	<i>Mertensia maritima</i>	Yes*	herb	rocky/shelly areas just above the high tide line	*listed as Endangered in MA; more common in Northern/downeast Maine + further N. - leaves edible
Partridgeberry	<i>Michelia repens</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	ground cover in acidic woods, typically under pines/hemlocks	pretty red berries are edible (but have almost no flavor)
Wild Bergamot	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	field edges and roadsides - likes sun	leaves used for tea and/or seasoning

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Bayberry	<i>Morella carolinensis</i> (form. <i>Myrica pensylvanica</i> )	Yes	Shrub	open areas; sandy soil	fresh leaves can be used as a substitute for commercial bay leaves
Mulberry, Red	<i>Morus rubra</i>	Yes*	Small to medium tree	field edges; roadsides; tolerant of urban conditions	*native species ( <i>M. rubra</i> ) listed as Endangered in MA; non-native <i>M. alba</i> is common - hybrids also
Sweet Gale	<i>Myrica gale</i>	Yes	small shrub	in acidic swamps and along waterways	aromatic leaves used for tea - roots host symbiotic bacteria that can fix nitrogen for plant uptake
Lotus, American	<i>Nelumbo lutea</i>	No	herbaceous perennial aquatic emergent	shallow ponds and open marshy/swampy areas	*not native in MA; Native to Zone 7 or higher but will grow in Zone 5 - edible seeds + tubers
Spatterdock, Cow Lily	<i>Nuphar variegata</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial aquatic plant	shallow portions of lakes, ponds and slow-moving rivers	ripe seeds can reportedly be roasted in a skillet like popcorn
White Water Lily	<i>Nymphaea spp.</i>	Yes	aquatic plant	shallow areas of lakes and ponds	flower buds are edible boiled; other parts of the plants may also be edible
Tupelo/Black Gum	<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>	Yes	medium-sized tree	damp woodlands	pulp of blue fruits is thin-fleshed and sour but edible
Evening Primrose	<i>Oenothera biennis</i>	Yes	biennial	old + cultivated fields, roadsides, above high tide line	a native weed with an edible root after cooking; other tender parts of the plant are also edible
Eastern Prickly Pear	<i>Opuntia humifusa</i>	Yes*	small cactus	dunes, barrier beaches and other sandy areas near ocean	*listed as endangered in MA and very uncommon in the wild in N.E.; more common further south
Sweet Cicely; Aniseroott	<i>Osmorhiza longistylis</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	rich woods; river floodplains; tolerates shade well	whole plant smells and tastes like licorice; closely related species ( <i>O. claytonii</i> ) does not
Wood Sorrel, Mountain or White	<i>Oxalis montana</i>	Yes	herb to 3" high	ground cover in acidic damp conifer woodlands	common in White Mountains; less common further south

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Wood Sorrel, Violet	<i>Oxalis violacea</i>	Yes*	herbaceous perennial	grows on ridges and rocky slopes under a partially open forest canopy	*this is a listed (uncommon) species in New England, so should not be gathered from the wild
Mountain Sorrel	<i>Oxyria digyna</i>	No	small herb	mountain tops and cool damp rocky areas	Only occurs in cold microhabitats in northern New England and further northward
Dwarf Ginseng	<i>Panax trifolium</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	damp woods w/ good humus layer; often near streams	small, spherical tuber is edible - harvest only when abundant
Passionfruit (Maypops)	<i>Passiflora incarnata</i>	No*	herbaceous vine	railroad ballast and waste places - likes full sun	non-native to MA - Native to Zone 7 and higher - can grow in lower zones in warmer microclimates
Ground Cherry, Husk Tomato	<i>Physalis spp.</i> (* <i>P. heterophylla</i> is native to MA)	Yes*	annual ( <i>P. heterophylla</i> is perennial)	edges of cultivated fields; likes sun	ripe, tomato-like berries enclosed in papery husk (calyx) - ripens late summer onward
Pokeweed	<i>Phytolacca americana</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	field edges; roadsides; dirt piles and other disturbed areas; likes sun	only edible part are cooked shoots 4 - 10" high (be sure to avoid the highly cathartic root)
White Pine	<i>Pinus strobus</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	often grows in extensive stands in former old fields	young needles, branchlets, male cones are edible raw or cooked; needles used for tea
Seaside Plantain (Goosetongue)	<i>Plantago maritima var. juncoides</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial up to 10 " tall	rocky areas near the ocean	be careful not to mix up with Arrowgrass, <i>Triglochin maritima</i> , which can be poisonous
May Apple	<i>Podophyllum peltatum</i>	Yes*	herbaceous perennial	understory plant in hardwood forests with rich soil	*native status in MA is uncertain; ripe fruit is only edible part of plant
Solomon's Seal	<i>Polygonatum spp.</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	understory species in hardwood forests with rich humus layer	young shoots are edible
Pickerelweed	<i>Pontederia cordata</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial aquatic emergent	shallow margins of lakes, ponds and meandering rivers	young leaves and seeds are edible (but might not be tasty)

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Plum, American	<i>Prunus americana</i>	Yes	small tree	sunny fields, roadsides, power line corridors	smallish fruit, red when ripe, varies in flavor but can be just about as good as a domesticated plum
Beach Plum	<i>Prunus maritima</i>	Yes	small shrubby tree (to 8 feet tall)	dunes and other sandy areas near coastline	Can be found in sandy areas inland
Plum, Canada	<i>Prunus nigra</i>	Yes	small tree	sunny fields, roadsides, power line corridors	smallish fruit, red when ripe, varies in flavor but can be just about as good as a domesticated plum
Fire or Pin Cherry	<i>Prunus pensylvanica</i>	Yes	small tree (up to 25 feet)	pioneer species colonizing clearings and old fields	bright red fruit is very small but pleasant-tasting - ripens in July
Black Cherry	<i>Prunus serotina</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	pioneer species in cleared areas; field edges/roadsides	cherries ripen in the latter half of summer
Choke Cherry	<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	Yes	shrubby small tree (to 12 ft.)	old fields; field edges; roadsides; clearings - tolerates cool climate	a bit more common in northern New England than southern NE
Bracken Fern	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial fern	old fields; clearings; tolerates drier condions than most other ferns	edible cooked fiddleheads are tasty but carcinogenic in large amounts; eat sparingly (if at all)
Mountain Mint	<i>Pycnanthemum spp.</i>	Yes	small herb	edges of woods roads + paths with some sun	can be uncommon so use sparingly when gathering from the wild;
White Oak	<i>Quercus alba</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	hardwood forests; field edges; roadsides	acorns from this species tend to have lower levels of tannic acid, thereby requiring less leaching
Swamp White Oak	<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	wooded swamps; floodplains	acorns have reputedly less tannic acid content than most other Oak species
Bur Oak	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	Yes	large tree	Bottomland forests and swamps in deep floodplain soil	acorns are edible after processing
Chestnut Oak	<i>Quercus prinus</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	can tolerate dry, rocky and/or sloping conditions	acorns are edible after processing (leaching out the tannic acid)
Red Oak	<i>Quercus rubra</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	in forests, roadsides	acorns are edible, but may require more extensive leaching than <i>Q. alba</i> to render them palatable

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Meadow Beauty	<i>Rhexia virginica</i>	Yes	small herb	wet open meadows and lake/pond shorelines	whole plant has tangy flavor; uncommon so use sparingly
Roseroott	<i>Rhodiola rosea</i>	No	herbaceous perennial	rocky exposed areas - usually close to the ocean	Mostly found in cold rocky coastal habitats in Maine and further northward - roots smell like roses
Labrador Tea	<i>Rhododendron (Ledum) groenlandicum</i>	No	small shrub	acidic, open rocky or boggy habitats	more common in northern New England and further north - leaves used (in moderation) for tea
Winged (aka Shining) Sumac	<i>Rhus copallina</i>	Yes	shrub	sunny fields, roadsides, power line corridors	sour fruit used to make a pink lemonade-like beverage
Sumac, Smooth	<i>Rhus glabra</i>	Yes	shrub	old fields; field edges; roadsides	red fruit used to make a pink lemonade-like drink - peeled young shoots are also edible
Sumac, Staghorn	<i>Rhus typhina (hirta)</i>	Yes	Shrub to 15 feet tall	old fields; field edges; clearings	red fruit used to make a pink lemonade-like drink - peeled young shoots are also edible
Currants/Gooseberries	<i>Ribes triste and other spp.</i>	Yes*	small perennials (up to 4' tall) w/ spindly branches	understory plant in damp woodlands; can also grow near water	mixture of native/introduced species - all produce edible fruit
Wild Rose	<i>Rosa spp.</i>	Yes*	shrub	old fields, swamps	*The non-native <i>Rosa rugosa</i> is better species for eating due to its larger + tastier petals and hips
Bakeapple Berry (Cloudberry)	<i>Rubus chamaemorus</i>	No	herbaceous perennial (less than one foot tall)	boggy areas; seeps in open rocky areas	Mostly found in Northern New England Mountains and bogs and further north into Canada
Dewberry	<i>Rubus hispida</i>	Yes	Prostrate blackberry cousin	old fields; clearings	fruit has the same size, appearance and flavor as upright blackberry species
Raspberry, Red	<i>Rubus idaeus</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	old fields; field edges; woods clearings	tea made from the fresh or thoroughly dried leaves is edible, + medicinal for women

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Raspberry, Black	<i>Rubus occidentalis</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	likes field edges	purplish-colored canes make the plants easy to spot in the "off-season"
Flowering Raspberry	<i>Rubus odoratus</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	roadsides; wooded clearings; likes cool damp conditions	showy pink flower + large maple-like leaves; not thorny- fruit pulp is a bit thin + dry but OK taste
Blackberry	<i>Rubus spp.</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	old fields; field edges/roadsides; clearings	<i>R. allegheniensis</i> , <i>pensilvanicus</i> + several other spp. are native to MA
Arrowhead (Wapato or Duck Potato)	<i>Sagittaria latifolia</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial emergent aquatic	shallow areas of lakes + ponds; sunny swamps	edible tubers are available Oct.-Mar
Glasswort	<i>Salicornia spp.</i>	Yes	herb	Grows in salty areas in coastal marshes	tender portions of plants can be eaten raw, steamed or pickled; pick tender tips only
Elderberry, Common/Black	<i>Sambucus nigra</i> (aka <i>canadensis</i> )	Yes	shrub (to 10 ft' tall)	wet open meadows	flowers used for beverages and fritters; ripe fruit edible after drying or cooking
Sassafras	<i>Sassafras albidum</i>	Yes	small tree (to 30 ft., but usually much smaller)	understory tree in hardwood forests; field edges; roadsides	aromatic root bark used for tea, candy, etc. - young leaves are dried for file powder
Saxifrage	<i>Saxifraga spp.</i>	Yes	herb	woodland seeps, esp. non-acidic	young leaves of several species are edible
Bulrush, Common (Soft-stemmed)	<i>Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial emergent aquatic	shallow ponds and open swamps	the plant is reputed to be edible in a similar fashion as cattail
Carrión Flower	<i>Smilax herbacea</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial thornless vine	damp meadows + field/roadside edges; stinky flowers pollinated by carrión flies	harvest, cook and eat shoots like Asparagus (a relative)
Sweet Goldenrod	<i>Solidago odora</i>	Yes	herb	old fields; rocky areas; under power lines; sandy areas near the ocean	native to all counties in MA - leaves and flowers have a licorice-like flavor
Woundwort	<i>Stachys hyssopifolia</i>	Yes*	herb	damp meadows	* <i>S. hyssopifolia</i> is a "watch species" in MA - pick the non-native (to MA) <i>S. palustris</i> instead

Common Name	Botanical Name	Native to MA?	Type of plant	Preferred habitat	Comments
Twisted Stalk	<i>Streptopus lanceolatus</i>	Yes*	herb	rich woods; woodlands with rich humus layer	*species is "watch-listed" in MA, so shouldn't be harvested from the wild in that state
Twisted-stalk	<i>Streptopus lanceolatus and amplexifolius</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	understory species near stream courses, found more frequently in mtns.	leaves are edible, as is fruit (which is reminiscent of cucumber or watermelon)
Basswood/American Linden	<i>Tilia americana</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	field edges, roadsides, river banks - can tolerate damp conditions	leaf buds and young leaves are edible raw; blossoms are used for an edible/medicinal tea
Red Trillium/Wakerobin	<i>Trillium erectum</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	moist, deciduous forests, under ash, sugar maple or basswood	young leaves edible raw or cooked + taste like cucumber; gather only when abundant
Cattail, Common	<i>Typha latifolia</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial aquatic emergent	shallow areas of waterways; marshy areas - likes full sun	has at least five different edible parts
Elm, Slippery	<i>Ulmus rubra</i>	Yes	medium-sized tree	damp fields; floodplains	seeds and inner bark are edible
Nettle, Stinging	<i>Urtica dioica ssp. Gracilis</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	manured soil, such as at farms, or along rivers receiving sewage effluent	steam young leaves to remove sting, then use like spinach; the related <i>U. dioica</i> is non-native
Bellwort, Large-flowered	<i>Uvularia grandiflora</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	Rich mesic hardwod forests, mostly in calcareous soils.	roots, shoots and leaves are edible
Bellwort, Perfoliate	<i>Uvularia perfoliata</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	woods with good humus layer - likes shade	young shoots are edible like asparagus
Bellwort, Sessile	<i>Uvularia sessifolia</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	common understory herb of deciduous forests, esp. under Ash, Maple or Linden	young shoots and flowers are edible
Blueberry, Lowbush	<i>Vaccinium angustifolium</i>	Yes	small shrub (up to 2 ft tall)	acidic woodlands, old fields, rocky and boggy areas	flowers and berries are edible
Blueberry, Highbush	<i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i>	Yes	shrub (up to 8 ft tall)	acidic woodlands, old fields, lake/pond shorelines	flowers and berries are edible
Cranberry, Bog	<i>Vaccinium macrocarpon</i>	Yes	prostrate vine - rarely more than a foot tall	acid bogs and seeps - likes sun	same species (and flavor) as the cultivated cranberry

Common Name	Botanical Name	Native to MA?	Type of plant	Preferred habitat	Comments
Cranberry, Small	<i>Vaccinium oxycoccus</i>	Yes	prostrate vine - rarely more than a foot tall	acid bogs and seeps - likes sun	fruit has similar flavor (albeit smaller than) <i>V. macrocarpon</i> : cranberry species that is cultivated
Deerberry	<i>Vaccinium stamineum</i>	Yes	Small shrub	likes acidic rocky areas	berries are edible
Cranberry, Mountain	<i>Vaccinium vitis-idaea</i>	Yes*	low-growing perennial (up to 1' tall)	mountain peaks and cool habitats in northern New England	same species as Lingonberry - *listed as endangered in MA
Squashberry	<i>Viburnum edule</i>	No*	shrub	open meadows, along streams + rural roadsides; *natural range is N. part of N.NE	<i>V. edule</i> is consistently tasty (tho tart) and is the tastiest of the various "highbush cranberries"
Hobblebush (Moosewood)	<i>Viburnum lantanoides (alnifolium)</i>	Yes	shrub	common understory plant in cool forests	fruit ripens in September and tastes like a prune with a hint of clove
Nannyberry	<i>Viburnum lentago</i>	Yes	shrub	wet meadows; near waterways	fruit ripens in September and is prune-like in flavor and texture
Wild Raisin	<i>Viburnum nudum or cassinoides</i>	Yes	shrub	understory plant in open hardwood forests	small fruit are ripe when purply-black in color
Black Haw	<i>Viburnum prunifolium</i>	No*	shrub	damp meadows - likes partial to full sun - native only as far as SW New England	ripe fruit is edible, with prune-like texture and flavor. Species occurs in MA, even if non-native
Highbush Cranberry	<i>Viburnum trilobum</i>	Yes	shrub	sunny swampy areas - more common in northern New England	Don't plant <i>V. opulus</i> , a European species that tastes horrible
Violet, Common Blue or Dooryard	<i>Viola sororia</i>	Yes	perennial herb	fields; meadows	there are many other violets, some rare + some w/ laxative effect - stick to eating this species
Fox Grape	<i>Vitis labrusca</i>	Yes	perennial vine	roadsides; field edges; river banks	large grapes are ripe the second week of Sept. - young leaves may be stuffed
Riverside Grape	<i>Vitis riparia</i>	Yes	perennial vine	roadsides, fences, field edges; river banks	fruit is smaller, ripens later and not as tasty as <i>V. labrusca</i> - young leaves are good for stuffing

Common Name	Botanical Name	Native to MA?	Type of plant	Preferred habitat	Comments
Prickly-ash, Common	<i>Zanthoxylum americanum</i>	Yes	small tree	sunny roadsides, power lines, occurs mostly in w. N.E. where soil is less acidic	fruit and foliage have a mouth-numbing quality; fruit is related to Szechuan peppercorns
Wild Rice, Southern	<i>Zizania aquatica</i>	Yes	aquatic (emergent) grass	still and slow-moving shallow water, rooted in silty and muddy flats	ripe seed of this grass is "wild rice"
Wild Rice, Northern	<i>Zizania palustris</i>	Yes*	aquatic (emergent) grass	still and slow-moving shallow water, rooted in silty and muddy flats	ripe seed is "wild rice"; <i>Z. palustris</i> is listed in MA, so gathering wild seed is restricted there