

Walking in my neighborhood always results in plenty of opportunities for foraging. This time of year, the abundance includes Clover, Dandelions, Mullin, and Birch tree Catkins.



Most people living in town have lawns gracing their property. Clover grows everywhere, and soon the white blossoms will be present. The leaves are food right now, as will be the white blossoms later. According to Linda Runyon, author of “The Essential Wild Food Survival Guide,” clover is an excellent source of vegetable protein, and can be dried and ground as flour.

Everyone is familiar with the common Dandelion. The leaves are nutritious as are the roots, but the blossoms are so sweet! Firmly grasp the yellow fuzz and pull out of the hips and enjoy a delicious, delicate flavor. This plant is also rich in vegetable protein. I used to eat the entire blossom, but decided the “hips” were too bitter for my taste, and now concentrate only on the yellow fuzz.



Mullin has become my best friend again this year. Because allergies never seem to go away for me, I never forget about my friend Mullin, remembering, “Oh! My *fuzzy, furry* friend!” Every time I go walking or jogging, particularly in the spring, I pick at minimum two or three leaves and enjoy immediately; because it is similar to chewing on a piece of wool fabric, it takes some serious chewing time. Linda has one word for Mullin that says it all: “antihistamine!”

Almost every block in my neighborhood has at minimum a couple of birch trees gracing property, and the Birch Catkins are a wonderful spring resource. Because Linda warns of their aspirin attributes, one needs to limit the intake of Catkins to a reasonable quantity, but when dried in a food dehydrator, they are crunchy and have a delicate flavor. The bark can also be an emergency food as well as the leaves. In her book, she states, “Hundreds of Confederate soldiers were saved during their retreat to Monterey, Virginia, when they used birch bark as food!”

