



Edible Campus

University Park foraging map



Area A

- Spring**
- Eleagnus ebbingei
 - Hawthorn
 - Primrose
 - Wild garlic/Ramsons
- Autumn**
- Bramley Apple
 - Apple
 - Hawthorn
 - Oregon grape
 - Japanese quince
 - Pear

Area B

- Spring**
- Jack-by-the-hedge/Garlic mustard
 - Primrose
 - Wild garlic/Ramsons
- Summer**
- Fig tree
 - Juneberry
 - Raspberries
- Autumn**
- Apple
 - Creeping raspberry
 - Rosa rugosa
 - Oregon grape
- All year**
- Lavender
 - Rosemary

Area C

- Autumn**
- Cornellian cherry
 - Medlar
 - Quince

Area D

- Spring to summer**
- Large-leaved lime
 - Nettles
 - White dead nettle
- Spring to autumn**
- Elder
- Autumn**
- Brambles
 - Cherry
 - Caucasian walnut
 - Elder
 - Hazel

Key to symbols

Indicates which part of the plant can be foraged

- Flowers
- Leaves
- Petals
- Stem
- Buds
- Fruit
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Berries

The seasons indicate which times of year you can forage for these plants.



Important notice

Please read the disclaimer on page two very carefully before foraging.



Important! Disclaimer

Foraging and eating wild food is a potentially dangerous activity. It should only be carried out by those with the knowledge and experience to identify species correctly. Incorrect identification of plants or fungi could cause illness, death or serious injury.

The information in this guide is correct to the best of the University of Nottingham's knowledge. However, errors and omissions cannot be ruled out. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of individuals to ensure the safety of anything they choose to eat.

The university is unable to guarantee that any specific plant foraged on campus is safe for consumption. The use of this guide and accompanying maps is for general information only. You forage entirely at your own risk.

Many wild plants and mushrooms in the UK are deadly poisonous and easy to misidentify. When foraging for wild food, it is your responsibility to ensure that you have accurately identified any plant or mushroom before consuming it. If you have any doubts about the identification of any plant or mushroom, or the circumstances in which it was picked which mean that the item could be contaminated in some other way, **do not eat it**. Leave it where it is or dispose of it if already foraged.

It is your sole responsibility to ensure that any item foraged is safe to consume prior to eating it. Participation in foraging and consuming any wild plants or mushrooms in the areas indicated on the map (page one of this document) on the university's campus and elsewhere is therefore entirely at your own risk and the university will not be liable for any damage or loss caused to you, including injury, illness or death caused by eating wild plants or mushrooms after viewing this guide.

Further information

Please also be aware that it is illegal to uproot any kind of wild plant growing anywhere in the UK unless you have the landowner's permission. Do not dig up or uproot any plant within the university's land and areas marked on the map on page one.

It is illegal to pick wild food from anywhere in the UK to sell it unless you have the landowner's permission. Do not sell or enter any commercial arrangement in relation to anything foraged within the university's land and areas marked on page one. Before foraging check local bylaws first and make sure you have the permission of the landowner if you are on private property. For a forager this means making sure you research the areas you go to thoroughly and read any available signs. It is illegal to forage on any cultivated area such as farmland or orchards unless with the landowner's express permission.

Please note, nothing in this guide limits or excludes the University of Nottingham's liability for death or personal injury arising as a result of the university's negligence.



How to forage safely



1. It is of vital importance to **make sure you have identified the plant correctly**. Many plants are easy to misidentify and some are poisonous and lethal. For example, hemlock is deadly poisonous and easily mistaken for wild celery or parsnip. Fungi (i.e. mushrooms) are notoriously difficult to identify and many are poisonous and grow alongside edible species. Do not guess or make any assumptions. If you have any doubt at all about the identity of a plant, leave it where it is. Plants should never be foraged and consumed unless you are 100% sure that they are safe.
2. **The best way to identify a plant is to use a plant identification key, a good identification book or a reputable website such as the RHS**. Whilst apps can be useful in a general sense, always double check against a good and reputable field guide, book or website. Never rely on one source to identify a plant, always check and seek guidance from multiple sources.
3. **Seek advice from foraging experts**. Asking someone on the internet to identify something can often give incorrect answers. People love to guess and can confidently give the impression that they know what they are talking about. Only take advice from people who are experts. "I think it's an x," is not the same as "I know for sure it's an x because of this identifying feature." If you are not 100 % sure of the identity and safety of a plant, do not eat it.
4. **Scientific names can avoid confusion** as many plants will have several common names.
5. **Get to know plants throughout the year and learn different identifying features**. For example, the lime tree has red buds in winter, it may have lots of small branches growing from the base, its leaves are heart-shaped and it also has small white flowers. Once you have identified one, use it as a reference point and observe it throughout the year.
6. **Some plants are very seasonal and will only be evident at certain points of the year**. For example, wild garlic is a spring plant and will not be evident in summer and autumn.
7. When consuming a foraged plant for the first time, **only sample a small amount** to ensure you do not have an adverse reaction.
8. **Even though certain plants may be safe for some people to consume, this does not mean they are safe for all to consume**. For example, there are some plants which are not advised to eat during pregnancy, or if you have certain underlying health conditions. To be safe, consult with a health care professional before eating any foraged foods.
9. **Be aware of your surroundings when foraging** and watch out for trip hazards, thorny plants, stinging plants and other hazards. Do not climb trees, fences or other objects to forage.
10. **Make sure you have the landowner's permission to forage** if foraging on private property.
11. **Do not over pick**. Good practice is to take no more than a third of what is presently available. Leave some for wildlife and some for other foragers.
12. **Avoid plants that are low to the ground which may have been fertilised or contaminated by dogs and other animals**. Make sure you pick away from areas that could have been watered this way.
13. **Avoid plants that are near to roads and developed paths** and land where pesticides are applied to avoid road pollutants and hazardous chemicals. If a plant looks unhealthy, has yellowing leaves or looks wilted then do not pick it.
14. **Wash foraged food well** prior to eating and **make sure you understand how to safely consume foraged plants and which parts of the plant are edible**. Some plants, for example elderberries, must be cooked to destroy toxins before they are safe to consume.
15. **Never uproot the entire plant** when foraging.
16. **Many species of plant are protected and must not be picked under UK law**. Ensure plants are not protected by checking Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
17. When foraging on the university campus, **only forage foods for your personal use** and do not sell to third parties.



Species in detail



Common name	Scientific name	Details
Apple	<i>Malus domestica</i>	There are a range of apple varieties on campus, some of which will be dessert varieties which can be eaten raw, and others will be suitable for cooking. Crab-apples can also be used, and due to their high pectin are ideal for setting jams.
Brambles	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	Produce blackberries, which are perfect for making crumbles and jams. The young stems can also be steamed and eaten.
Caucasian walnut	<i>Pterocarya fraxinifolia</i>	Produces edible nuts.
Cherry	<i>Prunus avium</i>	If you can get to them before the birds, you might be rewarded with cherries. They may be a bit too sharp to eat raw but can be used in cooking
Cornellian cherry	<i>Cornus mas</i>	This has distinctive yellow blossom very early in Spring. Its fruits can be used for preserves or fruit leathers. A dye can be made from the bark.
Creeping raspberry	<i>Rubus</i>	Creeping raspberries can fruit if you are lucky and whilst not prolific can make a tasty snack.
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elderflowers can be used to make cordial or wine. They can also be fried in a batter to make fritters. In the Autumn, the berries can be used to make wine or elderberry syrup for colds.
Eleagnus ebbingei	<i>Eleagnus X ebbingei</i>	If you are lucky, eleagnus will produce a small, speckled egg-shaped fruit that can be eaten raw (make sure it is fully ripe) or made into fruit leathers.
Fig tree	<i>Ficus carica</i>	Figs take two years to fruit. If you see tiny fruits in the Autumn, then these will grow into large figs next year.
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	The young leaf buds can be nibbled on and later in the year the berries can be used in preserves.
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	It is almost impossible to beat the squirrels to the hazelnuts, but the twigs and branches are useful to provide supports in the garden.
Jack-by-the-hedge/ Garlic mustard	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	Distinctive garlic mustard taste. Leaves can be added to a salad.
Japanese quince	<i>Chaenomeles japonica</i>	This has smaller fruits than its unrelated namesake the tree quince (cydonia). It can be used in desserts or made into jam.
Juneberry	<i>Amelanchier</i>	Juneberries have small blue berries that can be eaten raw or added to pies.
Large-leaved lime	<i>Tillia</i>	Limes are one of the few trees with edible and tasty leaves. It is important to get them when they are very young as they become bitter as they age.
Lavender	<i>Lavandula</i>	Lavender is famous for its smell. It has many uses but is renowned for its calming scent.
Medlar	<i>Mespilus germanica</i>	Medlars are Mediterranean fruits that do not fully ripen in the UK. Instead, the fruits are left to "blet", when they can then be used for jams etc.
Nettles	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	One of the most useful and abundant wild plants, nettles can be used as a green vegetable in spring, the stems can be used to make twine, and they can be used to make tea or flavour beer. The seeds can even be collected and used in cooking.
Oregon grape	<i>Mahonia aquifolium</i>	The attractive yellow blossom turns into dark blue berries that can be added to puddings, but they can be sharp to eat raw.
Pear	<i>Pyrus communis</i>	There are a range of pear varieties on campus. Some could be great for desserts, but if hard and tough they can be cooked.
Primrose	<i>Primula vulgaris</i>	Flowers can be added to salads or used as a decoration on cakes.
Quince	<i>Cydonia oblonga</i>	Quince are beautiful small trees with attractive, highly scented, yellow pear-shaped fruits. The fruits are too hard to eat raw so need to be cooked. Traditionally used to make membrillo (jelly) but can also be used to make wine or crumbles.
Raspberry	<i>Rubus</i>	Raspberries can fruit in the Autumn, but most fruit on two-year-old canes. They may be cut back before fruiting but worth looking out for.
Rosa rugosa	<i>Rosa rugosa</i>	Fruits are very high in vitamin C and can be used raw or cooked. They do contain irritant hairs below the flesh that were used as itching powder so be careful when processing!
Rosemary	<i>Salvia osmarinus</i>	Rosemary can be used as a culinary herb and can also be added to the bath or shower.
White dead nettle	<i>Lamium album</i>	The leaves can be used like a spinach and the flowers can be eaten too. Has the bonus of not stinging!
Wild garlic	<i>Allium ursinum</i>	Wild garlic can often be smelt before it is seen. Its leaves can be added to a salad or cooked like a spinach. The unopened flower buds can be lightly fried as a delicacy and the seeds can be added to food for an intense garlic hit.