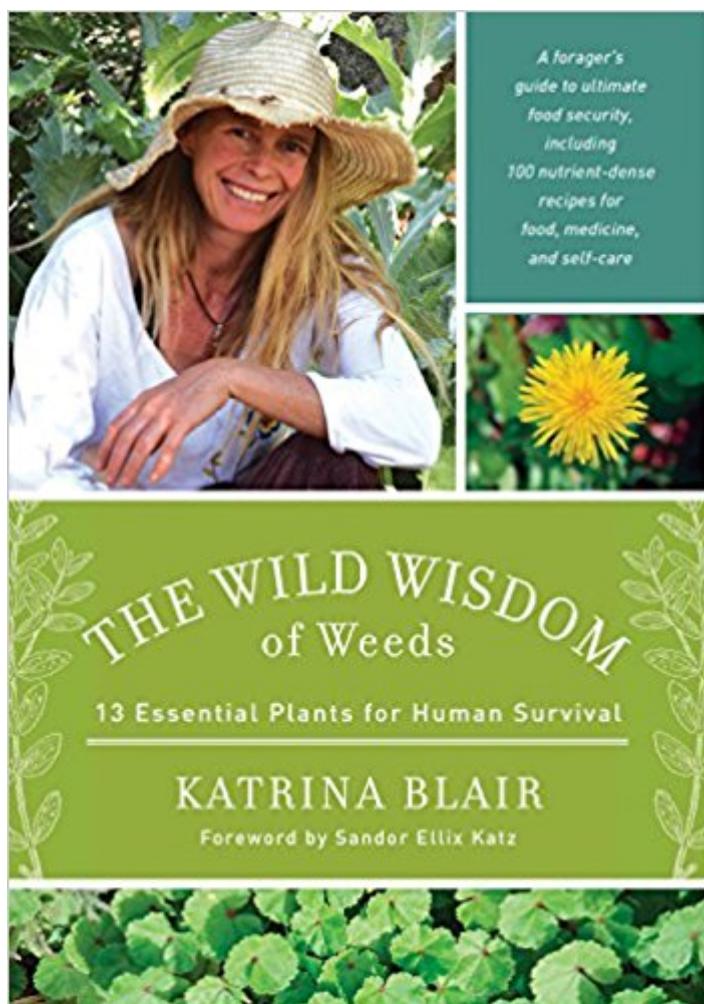


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# The Wild Wisdom Of Weeds: 13 Essential Plants For Human Survival



## Synopsis

The Wild Wisdom of Weeds is the only book on foraging and edible weeds to focus on the thirteen weeds found all over the world, each of which represents a complete food source and extensive medical pharmacy and first-aid kit. More than just a field guide to wild edibles, it is a global plan for human survival. When Katrina Blair was eleven she had a life-changing experience where wild plants spoke to her, beckoning her to become a champion of their cause. Since then she has spent months on end taking walkabouts in the wild, eating nothing but what she forages, and has become a wild-foods advocate, community activist, gardener, and chef, teaching and presenting internationally about foraging and the healthful lifestyle it promotes. Katrina Blair's philosophy in The Wild Wisdom of Weeds is sobering, realistic, and ultimately optimistic. If we can open our eyes to see the wisdom found in these weeds right under our noses, instead of trying to eradicate an "invasive," we will achieve true food security. The Wild Wisdom of Weeds is about healing ourselves both in body and in spirit, in an age where technology, commodity agriculture, and processed foods dictate the terms of our intelligence. But if we can become familiar with these thirteen edible survival weeds found all over the world, we will never go hungry, and we will become closer to our own wild human instincts all the while enjoying the freshest, wildest, and most nutritious food there is. For free! The thirteen plants found growing in every region across the world are: dandelion, mallow, purslane, plantain, thistle, amaranth, dock, mustard, grass, chickweed, clover, lambsquarter, and knotweed. These special plants contribute to the regeneration of the earth while supporting the survival of our human species; they grow everywhere where human civilization exists, from the hottest deserts to the Arctic Circle, following the path of human disturbance. Indeed, the more humans disturb the earth and put our food supply at risk, the more these thirteen plants proliferate. It's a survival plan for the ages. Including over one hundred unique recipes, Katrina Blair's book teaches us how to prepare these wild plants from root to seed in soups, salads, slaws, crackers, pestos, seed breads, and seed butters; cereals, green powders, sauerkrauts, smoothies, and milks; first-aid concoctions such as tinctures, teas, salves, and sothers; self-care/beauty products including shampoo, mouthwash, toothpaste (and brush), face masks; and a lot more. Whether readers are based at home or traveling, this book aims to empower individuals to maintain a state of optimal health with minimal cost and effort. A A A A

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Library Journal ï "When you encounter a weed, do you pull it, spray it, or consume it? Blair, a holistic health and sustainable living educator, recommends the latter. In the first few chapters of this title, she emphasizes the importance of wild plants as food and medicine. The remaining chapters profile 13 edible weeds commonly found worldwide near human habitations: amaranth, chickweed, clover, dandelion, dock, grass, knotweed, lambsquarter, mallow, mustard, plantain, purslane, and thistle. Many are frequently classified as noxious or invasive, but Blair encourages us to see them not as enemies to be eradicated but as allies to nourish body and spirit. Each profile includes botanical and common names, a description, photos, history, edible and medicinal uses, and recipes. All recipes are vegan and most are raw. A Verdict: This book includes valuable information about identifying and using common weeds and encourages us to reconsider our relationship with these usually scorned plants. ï The New York Times- ï "How do we learn to empathize with other creatures, to respect the web of life that connects us all? The answer must lie, at least in part, somewhere in the deeply pleasurable childhood experiences so many gardeners cherish, moments of gazing into the depths of a blossom or watching a tendril unfold ï and falling under the spell of a tiny miracle. A ï Katrina Blairïs charming and intelligent A The Wild Wisdom of Weedsï delivers just about the best argument Iïve read for the futility of figuring out what, exactly, qualifies as a native plant and why ï invasiveï can be a flawed concept. ï Weeds, she insists, are ïexamples of natureïs creative edge. ï Theyïre powerful ambassadors, here to support our quality of

life. "For more than a decade, I have been learning about the outstanding value of common weeds as survival food, as free and natural "live" foods with nutritive values far exceeding those of store-bought greens, and as sources of natural medicines to help restore health to bodies robbed of their vitality by the toxins, stresses, and poor diets of our modern world. There are thousands of wild edible plants on our planet, most of which are unpleasant to eat and difficult to locate or identify. Many of us wonder where and how we might best begin to learn to find and use these wild edibles. Katrina Blair's *The Wild Wisdom of Weeds* is the perfect handbook for taking this journey back to better health, vitality, food security, and peace of mind, by learning to collect and use thirteen common nutritious and delicious wild weeds that grow pretty much everywhere that people live. It is a fantastic resource, and I highly recommend it!" --Matthew Stein, author of *When Disaster Strikes* and *When Technology Fails* "Required reading for the survival of our species! What can we do to live more sanely in an increasingly insane world? Katrina Blair offers a new world of possibilities. The myriad brilliant insights and pragmatic solutions within *The Wild Wisdom of Weeds* are essential and evolutionary." --Happy Oasis, Adventure Anthropologist, founder of Bliss U and the Raw Spirit Festival "The Wild Wisdom of Weeds provides a beautiful and empowering exploration of wild foods, helping you to identify, prepare and celebrate edible weeds that you might otherwise overlook with simple tips on medicinal use, and charming, nutrient-dense recipes. A must-have for any beginning or serious forager." --Jennifer McGruther, author of *The Nourished Kitchen* "This may be the most important book you will ever read. Far more than just a book about foraging; it offers, with comforting clarity, hope for the future of feeding the world when before there seemed to be none." --Nomi Shannon, RawGourmet.com "This is the kind of information that should precede gardening and farming. Katrina Blair expertly shows that before picking up a hoe or spreading a single seed, we can turn to our yards, fields and forests for so many of the foods and medicines we need to live well. *The Wild Wisdom of Weeds* is a gem, and will be foundational reading for anyone wanting to live close to the goodness of this Earth." --Ben Falk, author of *The Resilient Farm and Homestead* "Katrina Blair keeps it really simple and approachable..her recipes have inspired me to experiment with new ingredients in my ferments." --Sandor Ellix Katz, author of *The Art of Fermentation*, from the foreword "Common weeds can be even more nutritious and medicinal than our favorite vegetables. Three cheers to Katrina Blair for sharing the depths of such friends as lambsquarter and purslane! Release your inner goat and go graze. Use these fantastic recipes to become an inspired gourmet of wild things. This book radiates with thorough research and first-hand knowledge

of plants that matter. --Michael and Nancy Phillips, authors of *The Herbalist* -- "The Wild Wisdom of Weeds is one of those rare and important books that has the capacity to radically alter your view of a world you thought you knew well. You'll never look at weeds the same again!" --Ben Hewitt, author of *The Nourishing Homestead* and *The Town that Food Saved* "Covering a small number of the most common edible/medicinal plants in depth, *The Wild Wisdom of Weeds* offers information on these species and their close relatives from multiple perspectives. From identification, harvesting and uses, through personal experiences and philosophy, to science and mysticism, this book has it all. Wherever in the world you live, whether you're a beginner or experienced forager, you'll have lots of fun reading and using this book." --"Wildman" Steve Brill, naturalist, and author of the foraging app "Wild Edibles" "Weeds used to be something you kill, eradicate, make war on, get rid of. But weeds are the plants that thrive, and *The Wild Wisdom of Weeds* is a much needed guide to understanding the virtues these plants possess and the wisdom of knowing them, using them, and keeping them around. Weeds are clearly more important than we have imagined." --Deborah Madison, author of *Vegetable Literacy* "Katrina Blair has written a comprehensive guide to 13 foraged food plants that we can find anywhere in the temperate world, diversifying our diet whilst giving sensible guidelines to ensure we leave our wild plant colonies healthy. She encourages us to grow the weeds we love to eat, so we can literally forage on our doorsteps, and teaches us their medicinal properties, making food our medicine too. This is an engagingly written manual of radical self-responsibility, full of recipes and information, that belongs on every bookshelf." --Maddy Harland, editor and co-founder of *Permaculture* magazine "I don't know anyone more qualified to write this book than Katrina Blair. I've seen her go into the woods to harvest wild plants and "weeds", and then transform them into gourmet meals later that day that rivaled the best from any fancy restaurant. She definitely knows her stuff and I am proud she wrote *The Wild Wisdom of Weeds*." --Markus Rothkranz, author of *Free Food and Medicine* "Katrina Blair's great celebration of thirteen wild weedy plants that have followed human civilizations is a lively and passionate argument to change our attitude to weeds, to admire their resilience and high nutritional value, and to embrace them as a valuable resource -- at the same time improving our mental and physical health by becoming closer to the natural world. A fun and enjoyable read." --Martin Crawford, author of *Creating a Forest Garden*

Katrina Blair began studying wild plants in her teens, when she camped out alone for a summer with the intention of eating primarily wild foods. She later wrote "The Wild Edible and Medicinal

Plants of the San Juan Mountains— for her senior project at Colorado College, where she graduated with a biology degree. In 1997, she completed an MA from John F. Kennedy University in Orinda, CA, in holistic health education. She founded Turtle Lake Refuge in 1998, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to celebrate the connections between personal health and wild lands. She has taught sustainable living practices through John F. Kennedy University, San Juan College in Farmington, NM, and Fort Lewis College in Durango, CO. She teaches internationally at retreats, festivals, and educational and healing events. She is also the author of a self-published cookbook, Local Wild Life: Turtle Lake Refuge’s Recipes for Living Deep (2009). Sandor Ellix Katz is a fermentation revivalist. A self-taught experimentalist who lives in rural Tennessee, his explorations in fermentation developed out of overlapping interests in cooking, nutrition, and gardening. This book, originally published in 2003, along with his The Art of Fermentation (2012) and the hundreds of fermentation workshops he has taught around the world, have helped to catalyze a broad revival of the fermentation arts. Newsweek called Wild Fermentation "the fermenting Bible," and The New York Times calls Sandor "one of the unlikely rock stars of the American food scene." For more information, check out his website [www.wildfermentation.com](http://www.wildfermentation.com).

I'm really torn on the number of stars to give this book! It's lovely, good quality slick paper, and exceptionally informative. It has great pictures. It's well written. And for all that, I have decided it merits 4 Stars. I withheld the 5th star because of something that I found troubling. It was my hope, in making this purchase, to find information on how to use these 13 essential plants that grow IN THE WILD for actual nutrition if I were OUT IN THE WILD .. somewhere, far from a Trader Joe's or a Whole Foods or from California .. or from all the lovely ELECTRIC appliances which encourage our dependence in the whipping up of culinary treats with which to amaze our family and friends! There are, of course, a few recipes that would work, but MOST seem to be designed to accommodate a 'tossed-in-handful' of whatever wild green, simply for the sake of being able to say 'have a fresh slice of this Knotweed Bread' ... or 'try a bowl of this zesty Dandelion Ice Cream'! See what YOU think: here are the ingredients for the bread: the knotweed is incorporated with some oats, cashews, salt, coconut butter and honey. How likely are you going to be to have ready access to anything BUT the knotweed out on the trail? Baking is accomplished by drying in the sun for the day. Okay .. that works, but really... cashews and coconut butter in the wild?? And here's the Dandelion Ice Cream: 3 avocados... THREE?! everyone carries these in the WILD, right? plus the same ingredients you'd use for lemonade. So, to me at least, it appears the dandelions are basically being

added to what would otherwise be a tasty dish of 'lemon ice cream' .. and these are only two examples. I guess what I'm trying to say here, is that Ms Blair stopped somewhat short of what seemed to be her professed mission: she says, and I quote, "When we harvest our wild greens outside for our salads, we benefit in so many ways..." ... yet MANY OF THE INGREDIENTS IN HER RECIPES are those you will likely make a run to find at a grocery or health food store: miso, Turkish figs, cacao nibs, tahini, buckwheat groats, black sesame seeds, bananas, agave nectar, kalamata olives, vanilla. The rest you'll be able to manage from the full-fledged garden and orchard in your back yard! ;) The author has a lovely nature farm and a delightful restaurant that serves up delectable wild-greens-incorporated foods And she does tell you a great deal about both the nutritional and medicinal properties of these greens which can be found in every nook on the planet .. it's just that to incorporate them into recipes, you'll have to create your own or else be able to make use of them in your lovely suburban kitchen. If you have your own garden, if you're playing with weed identification, if your family enjoys your culinary experiments, then this book will give you many hours of pleasant reading, opportunities for experimentation, and perhaps some 'take away' for road trips and outings.

She does a fine job with descriptions and medicinal value of 13 plants that are every where and we don't even look at. This book is very interesting and it will be explored. She gives little rhymes so you can remember the facts about each plant in a more simplistic fashion.

I really like this book. I haven't tried the recipes yet, but I have found all of the makings in the wilds and in my own backyard. Very nice to know that we can literally live off the land even if we don't plant a garden with domesticated plants. These wild "weeds" are very nutritious and even have medicinal properties, topically and when eaten. Interesting.

Katrina takes her years of field experience and distills them into a thought-provoking book that makes one wonder about the weed's rightful place in the world. Though only limited to 13 weeds, she describes each in an expansive manner that it sets the reader off on an autodidactical journey to understand other weeds more. The recipes help encourage the reader to engage with the plants intimately and is part of the author's forethought to help people become more confident with themselves and the world that surrounds them. There are scientific claims in the book that could use some more empirical data, albeit this is not a fault of the author's part. It points out the fact that only if we as a society put more attention and resources researching the neglected plants that are

so much needed for our future! For those who hunger for a connection to the natural world, this is a great step towards reconciliation of man and nature. Take a step out of your doorstep and greet the plants that want to be close to us!

This is a great book, and the book to start with if you want to learn wild edibles. The author focuses on 13 common edible "weeds" that grow pretty much everywhere, with a chapter detailing health and medicinal benefits, plus recipes for each. One thing about the author: she lives this stuff. It's obvious her book is a labor of love. As I've read the chapters in the book, I've tried to learn to identify the plants and implement them into my diet. I also had an horticulturist friend come over and show me some of the wild edibles growing in my backyard. Also an old-timer friend went up the nearby canyon with me and pointed out a different wild berries. Combining that knowledge with what I've learned from Katrina Blair, whenever I go walking around the neighborhood or hiking, even above 11,000', I see wild edibles everywhere and often eat them. Dandelion has become a welcome friend instead of an enemy to be eradicated. Knotweed I used to walk over and was 100% unaware of. Now it's a favorite. Mallow, purslane... I also recommend Samuel Thayer's *The Forager's Harvest* and *Nature's Garden*. Great info on 2 other sets of wild edibles.

Disclaimer: I was raised in Idaho during the 70s, surrounded by hippies and California refugees, ergo, I speak (and can tolerate) fluent Flower Child; this book was written by one of them.

\*However\*, put aside all the New-Agey "Gaia is my muse" stuff, and this is a straight up delicious book. In fact, I love it so much, I bought it twice--once in hardcopy, and once in Kindle, so it can travel with me. Filled with great recipes and botanical Wisdom, this book should be in every kitchen. You'll love it.

Katrina Blair is leading us into the future. Why in heavens are we poisoning our backyards and weeding what's edible. I believe in mass ignorance and a lot more that I won't get into. But Thank you Katrina good start for a healthier life.

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