



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 |
| 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>Amphicarpaea 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 |
| Groundnut | <i>Apios americana</i> | Yes | herbaceous perennial vine | damp sandy, open areas, often near waterways | edible tubers (available year-round) + beans |

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| 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*(see NOTE)</i> | 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 (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 |
| 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 |

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| 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 |
| 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 pennsylvanica</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 |
| 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 |

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| 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 |
| 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 |

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| 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 hispidula</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 | <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 |
| 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 |

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| 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 Lactuca, 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 | herbaceous perennial | rocky areas near the ocean | young leaves, stems taste like cultivated lovage (a relative of celery) |
| Canada Lily | <i>Lilium canadense</i> | Yes | herbaceous 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 |
| 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 |
| 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 |

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| False Solomon's Seal | <i>Maianthemum or Smilacina racemosum</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 |
| 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>Michella 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 |
| Bayberry | <i>Morella caroliniensis (form. 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 |

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| 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 |
| 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; Aniseroot | <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.</i> <i>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 |
| 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. (*P. heterophylla is native to MA)</i> | 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 |

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| 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. juncooides</i> | Yes | herbaceous perennial up to 10 " tall | rocky areas near the ocean | be careful not to mix up with Arrowgrass, Triglochin maritima, 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 |
| Pickernelweed | <i>Pontedaria 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) |
| 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 |

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| 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 | 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 |
| 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 Q. alba to render them palatable |
| 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 |
| Roseroot | <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 copallinum</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 |

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| 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 hispidus</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 |
| 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 (aka canadensis)</i> | Yes | shrub (to 10 ft' tall) | wet open meadows | flowers used for beverages and fritters; ripe fruit edible after drying or cooking |

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| 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 |
| Carrion Flower | <i>Smilax herbacea</i> | Yes | herbaceous perennial thornless vine | damp meadows + field/roadside edges; stinky flowers pollinated by carrion 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 |
| 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 |

| Common Name | Botanical Name | Native to MA? | Type of plant | Preferred habitat | Comments |
|-------------------------------|--|---------------|---|--|---|
| 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 |
| Cranberry, Small | <i>Vaccinium oxycoccos</i> | Yes | prostrate vine - rarely more than a foot tall | acid bogs and seeps - likes sun | fruit has similar flavor (albeit smaller than) V. macrocarpon: 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 | V. edule 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 purple-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 |

| Common Name | Botanical Name | Native to MA? | Type of plant | Preferred habitat | Comments |
|--|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|--|--|
| 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 |
| 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 a listed species in MA so should not be harvested there |