

## **Herbal Medicine of Spring | Lisa Bedner | 2026 Wild Medicine Conference**

All ancient cultures ate food and gathered medicines seasonally. It has only been in the most recent generations, assisted by shipping and mono-cropping, that we have forgotten this. Here in the U.S., we get fruit from Chili in the winter, vegetables from CA and FL when they are not in season here, and heated and greenhouse veggies year round. If we need an herb, we can go to our favorite website or the health food store and buy dried herbs in capsules or tinctures, all year round. The convenience is great, but maybe not the most healthy for our bodies.

Indigenous cultures look to the wild four leggeds to show us the way. During the winter, they dig up roots and grubs, and eat what is left of fallen nuts and fruits. Those of us that grow and store our own foods also eat the potatoes and carrots and root crops that will keep over the winter. We eat the stored winter nuts and dried berries. Even though stored foods often retain close to same amount of minerals as the fresh ones, many of the vitamins are lost are time. So we all rejoice and eat the first Spring Greens, full of nutrients and bursting with flavor!

Some of the wild weeds to eat fresh, steamed, or in stews and soups:

chickweed	cleavers
dead nettle	docks
dandelion	nettles
ramps	violets

Remember – any wild plant you eat fresh and UN-washed will have trace amounts of pollen so it is great for allergies by the Homeopathic method.

### Wild weeds for fresh medicines

Here's the ground rule – we rarely harvest roots in spring, unless they are needed for immediate use. This is because those roots are needed to feed the young plants. And the deeper we get into to Spring, the less nutrients and medicine will be left in the roots. Best to harvest roots in fall and winter, after the leaves have died back.

may apple                      ground ivy  
cleavers                        dandelions, both flowers and leaves  
dead nettle                    Stinging nettles

Cleavers *Galium aparine* helps with kidneys, clearing out the lymph system and mild immune boosting

Dandelion *Taraxicum officinale* leaves work as a diuretic and help with high blood pressure. The flowers help with gall bladder issues and help the body digest fatty foods.

Dead nettle *Lamium purpureum* helps with seasonal allergies, it's an anti-oxidant, and used topically as an antimicrobial treatment

Ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea* is really excellent as a decongestant, helps with season allergies, and it's a powerful antiviral herb, especially for flu viruses. Also good for preventing flu.

May apple *Podophyllum peltatum* stem juice has been used traditionally to remove warts.

Stinging nettles *Urtica dioica* helps with so many things, it's hard to list them all! Best spring tonic with high concentration of vitamins and minerals. Anti-bacterial, Anti-fungal, Anti-viral, helps with almost any illness when drunk as a strong decoction. Topically used as a wash for everything from diaper rash to exzema and psoriasis. Great for kidney and bladder infections