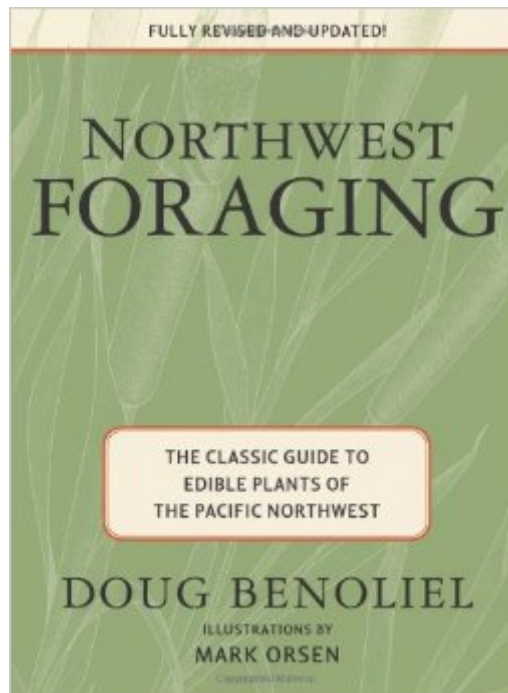


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Northwest Foraging: The Classic Guide To Edible Plants Of The Pacific Northwest



Synopsis

Originally published in 1974, NORTHWEST FORAGING quickly became a regional classic to the area's wild foods. Now fully updated and expanded by the original author, the new edition of this guidebook is sure to become a modern staple in backpacks, kitchens, and personal libraries across the Northwest. A noted wild edibles-authority, Doug Benoiel gives 65 thorough descriptions of the most common edible plants of the Pacific Northwest region, from asparagus to watercress, juneberries to cattails, and much, much more! Features include detailed technical illustrations of each plant, an illustrated guide to general plant identification principles, seasonality charts for prime harvesting, a nutritional chart, a selection of simple foraging recipes, and a glossary of botanical terms. It's a modern and elegant re-take on Doug's authoritative descriptions nature-lovers, gardeners, cooks, paddlers, and hikers across the Northwest will be smitten with this update of a regional cult classic.

Book Information

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: Mountaineers Books; Rev Upd edition (February 10, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1594853665

ISBN-13: 978-1594853661

Product Dimensions: 0.5 x 5.8 x 7.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (65 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #51,517 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #80 in [Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Reference](#) #135 in [Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Plants](#) #145 in [Books > Travel > United States > West > Pacific](#)

Customer Reviews

This soft-cover book has very nice line drawings but I wish it had color photos. I wouldn't trust my health to eating a plant identified just from the drawings. For someone who knows what they're looking at this would be adequate and informative, but I'm not one of those people. I'll take this book along in my back-pack for "just in case" situations but will rely more on my stored belly fat if I'm in a survival situation! The book IS good reading though.

Doug Benoiel of Lopez Island's elegant, slim jewel of a book is a handy guide for what grows in our

fields and woods here in the Northwest. Beautifully illustrated by Mark Orsen in grey tone drawings. The volume is organized into: How to Use this Book, Seasonable Edibles, Harvesting with Care, Drying and Storing, etc. The main part deals with Edibles, including delightful recipes; and ends with a lineup of Poisonous Plants. Who would have suspected the lovely Buttercup was one? A delightful, useful and affordable, book that connects you with our native Northwest Flora.

This is a handy little book that is brimming with useful information for foragers in the Pacific Northwest. It is an updated version of the 1974 edition. There are not many significant changes--a few plants like Bittercress and (controversial) Red Elderberry have been added to the edible list, and Bracken Fern has been relisted as poisonous. Other than that, the format, descriptions and the sections are largely the same. Plant structure, Seasonal availability, harvesting, drying and storing are discussed. More than 50 edible plants are listed and each plant is described according to: form, leaves, flowers, fruits, habitat, and edibility. Warnings are offered where applicable and there is a section dedicated to poisonous plants. The illustrations are still the graceful black-and-white line drawings by Mark Orson. While these are detailed, and show the plants at the optimal stage for harvesting, they are really not enough to go on as far as an absolute identification. If you actually intend to eat these wild plants, an additional field guide with color photographs is going to be necessary. Some intriguing recipes are scattered throughout the book along with plant folklore and information concerning traditional use by the Native people of this area. There is much practical wisdom gathered here, and I hope that all the public libraries of the Pacific Northwest will exchange their grimy and much-thumbed copies for this crisp new version!

I live in the Portland, Oregon metro area and spend nearly all of my outdoor time on the west side of the Cascades. It's good to see a foraging book focussed on the Pacific Northwest. I intend to begin using it soon; however, I will be using it with other books because the illustrations are just not very helpful. As other reviewers have noted, photos would have been of enormous help. Even without photos, the drawings could have been of better quality. An example of that is the book *Winter Twigs* by Gilkey & Packard. Their black & white drawings are so detailed and exquisite that neither color nor photos are necessary. Because this is a book on identifying plants for human consumption, detail and clarity are critical. An added benefit is the inclusion of numerous recipes furnished by Tamara Benoliel and others. A far superior book IMHO is *Edible Wild Plants* by John Kallas, PhD. My wife and I attended one of his field classes in a local Portland, Oregon park about 2 years ago and we were both impressed with his knowledge. I bought his book soon after the class.

My boyfriend and I live on six acres of land in Northern California and we are both very interested in the natural world and all that entails. We take our dogs on walks in the woods every morning and it's been very fun to take this book with us and see which plants we can spot and wild harvest to take home and experiment with. I do wish this book had all the same information with photographs instead of grey tone illustrations, but the art is fairly detailed so as long as you're willing to look very carefully it isn't too difficult to find the right plants. I probably wouldn't recommend this book to someone without any prior knowledge, but if you have a bit of experience or you'll be using this book along with another one that has color photographs, it really is very informative and gives very detailed descriptions of the plant, it's edibility, and even suggests ways to prepare and eat it. I'm very happy with this book.

Black and white line drawings leave a bit to be desired, and the descriptions are often bare bones. It's a useful quick guide that's small enough to fit well in a day pack and do in a pinch, but for my money, Douglas Deur's Pacific Northwest Foraging is better organized, has better taxonomic resources, and illustrations.

This revised edition of an already easy-to-read guide to edibles in the wild is user friendly, especially to a beginner and very importantly, packable! It is light but durable, small but not too small, with beautiful detailed line drawings. It includes a nice sprinkling of information with recipes of wide variety and I can tell you from personal experience that the recipes are worth trying. They range from simple and quick to meditative like the wild mustard green salad dressing which calls for a tightly packed quart of greens and already sprouted mung beans and alfalfa seeds. That one is my personal goal! Experience this book and feel green, healthy and happy! Also, each sale helps the endangered and rare Island Marbled Butterfly habitat on Lopez Island in the San Juans. (So you can feel virtuous as well.)

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