

A PATCH OF OLD SNOW
by Robert Frost

There's a patch of old snow in a corner
That I should have guessed
Was a blow-away paper the rain
Had brought to rest.

It is speckled with grime as if
Small print overspread it.
The news of a day I've forgotten --
If I ever read it.

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While the patch of old snow is still around, you can begin your Spring harvest of FREE FOOD.

In May 1977 your Editor attended a one-day seminar in Wild Edible Foods, held at Hunky Dory Farms Resort near Balsam Lake WI. Teacher: Larry G. Monthey, Extension Specialist, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 53706. Dr. Monthey led our class afield to gather our huge tossed salad, made of dandelions, violet leaves and flowers, lambsquarters, amaranth (pigweed), leeks, wild lettuce, curly dock, purslane. The dandelions we sought sprouted out of patches of leaves; they were blanched and less bitter than dark-green plants.

We learned the food value of cattails: as a steamed vegetable or (its roots) ground into flour for pancakes . . . the gourmet appeal of lilac flowers dipped in batter and deep-fried (their flowers are little pitchers of nectar) . . . steamed milkweed shoots, tasty as asparagus . . . ostrich fern sprouts, "fiddleheads," steamed as a side dish (Editor ordered them from the menu at Chateau Frontenac in Québec) .

Check your large library for workbooks, cookbooks and other materials to help you forage for wild foods. Dr. Monthey calls this search " A New Recreational Pastime." But DON'T gather your vegetables inside the Eloise Butler Sanctuary! Our guidebook (free to all visitors) lists at least 15 plants as edible, but please leave them to sustain native wildlife.

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

Did someone give you a gift membership, and did you sit there looking at the card and saying, "Who needs this?"

True, it costs nothing to enjoy the Garden. Ah, but now you are a SPONSOR (read PROTECTOR) of this unique, irreplaceable fenced-in twenty-acre spread of woodland, bog and prairie. You will receive news through our Gentian four times a year. You may attend our Annual Meeting later this Spring -- please come and meet other members! And you may offer to help on committees that keep our organization viable. And please, if possible, volunteer a few hours during the season to keep our Shelter open. THAT'S the BEST way to enjoy being a protector in the fine tradition of Eloise and hundreds of others.

INFORMATION ON MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES ... CALL DORIS LARSON, 934-7648 .

PUZZLED? ASK MR. FIXIT, MINNEAPOLIS STAR AND TRIBUNE

Recent items, written by Kent Youngblood of the "Fixit" staff, touched on these topics: SNOW-MOULD ON YOUR LAWN, March 24 (Information from University of Minnesota) DO THE "LOWER" ORDERS OF LIFE FEEL PAIN? March 23. Information from Harrison B. Tordoff, Bell Museum of Natural History.