

Wild Food Forage and Feast

On a sunny day in early March, ten people gathered at Steward Community Woodland to be introduced to the delights of wild foods by Dan Thompson-Mills, who has been studying the subject for more than ten years.

Foraging guidelines

Dan first set out a set of guidelines for foraging – the most important of which is to eat something only if you know for certain that it's edible! The group then set off on a walk through the wood in the glorious early spring sunshine. Dan introduced everyone to a large number of wild edible plants and trees, including nettle, cleavers, saxifage, pennywort, alexanders, elder, and hazel. He also talked about medicinal and other uses of plants.



Wood sorrel, a wild herb growing at Steward Wood

Wild food journey

Back at the campfire for lunch, Dan served up seaweed collected on the South Devon coast last year, along with a fry-up of nettles and cleavers with onion and tamari. There was also a display of preserved wild leaves, roots and berries for eating and medicinal purposes.

The afternoon was spent continuing the wild food journey and wandering through the woods once again. Learner Leighsa Anderson said the course was 'a good balance of information and practical experience with plants'. Unemployed learner Jake Slocombe from Exeter said the course was 'brilliant. . . essential skills which, growing up in British society, I did not learn.' Tina Kennedy called the course 'well led, very interesting' and said it had definitely 'stimulated my interest