



**Grow Eat
Learn**

Nourish Nova Scotia

Foraging with Kids in Mi'kma'ki

Information and activity guide



Introduction

Foraging is a great way to connect youth with the land and learn about the edible plants that grow throughout Mi'kma'ki. This activity encourages exploration while teaching how to safely identify local, seasonal plants. Since some wild plants can be harmful if eaten, we've included important tips to help ensure correct identification in every season: spring, summer, fall, and winter.

How to use this activity

- Print the activity page for the season (e.g., spring)
- Review the Getting Started with Foraging page
- Break out into teams
- **Start foraging** for the plants on your sheet! Check off the identifying markers as you go, and don't harvest unless there is an abundance of the plant you've spotted

Be cautious

Foraging can be a fun way to explore nature, but safety comes first! Always check with an adult before tasting anything you find as some plants can look very similar to others, and **not all of them are safe to eat**. When in doubt, leave it out!



Garden Climate Actions



Habitat Creation & Biodiversity: Gardens support pollinators, soil organisms, and wildlife, emphasizing the role of biodiversity in climate resilience.



Food Security & Sovereignty: Growing food locally reduces reliance on imported food, lowers carbon footprints, and builds community health.

Getting Started with Foraging

Ground Rules - Safety

Everyone must understand the safety rules before foraging. Read (or listen to) each rule and check the box if you agree to follow it.

- ☐ If I don't know what something is, I won't pick it
- ☐ I'll stay with an adult so I forage only in safe places
- ☐ I'll check with an adult before tasting anything
- ☐ I'll only try a small amount of a new food at a time

Ground Rules - Respect

Everyone must understand how to respect nature before foraging. Read (or listen to) each rule and check the box if you agree to follow it.

- ☐ I won't pick from the first patch I see
- ☐ I won't take more than one-third of any plant
- ☐ I won't leave any garbage behind
- ☐ I'll stay on the path to keep myself and wildlife safe

Ground Rules - Safety Gear

- ☐ Basket or bag
- ☐ Garden gloves
- ☐ All-weather boots
- ☐ Good attitude

Remember to Bring

- Medicine for kids with food allergies
- A few tools (such as a spade or scissors)
- A phone for photos, time and location

Food for thought: Going foraging is a great way to learn about whose land you are on. Find out more about Mi'kmaw place names at placenames.mapdev.ca/.

Foraging with Kids in Mi'kma'ki

Siwk (Spring)

Pseskw (Mint)



📍 Locate

- ☐ Found in damp areas near ponds, rivers or marshes

🔍 Identify

- ☐ Strong mint scent; may smell like toothpaste
- ☐ Green leaves with a jagged edge

🥄 How to Use

Add **leaves** to recipes like fresh rolls or dry for mint tea

Ma'susi'l (Fiddleheads)



📍 Locate

- ☐ Found in mostly shady areas near rivers and streams

🔍 Identify

- ☐ Tightly curled heads on long green stems; must be smooth, **not fuzzy**
- ☐ Clustered in vase-shaped packs of 6-8 fronds

🥄 How to Use

Sauté or roast **heads** (with 2 cm of stem); **do NOT eat raw**

Tewa'lutewei (Dandelion)



📍 Locate

- ☐ Found in mostly sunny areas like fields or grassy lawns

🔍 Identify

- ☐ Bright yellow flowers that are shaped like a bursting firework

🥄 How to Use

Add **leaves** (picked before or after the plant flowers) to salads; use **flowers** to make dandelion jelly or tea

Foraging with Kids in Mi'kma'ki

Nipk (Summer)

Pkwimann (Blueberry)



📍 Locate

- ☐ Found in damp areas or woodlands

🔍 Identify

- ☐ Small dark blue berries with a crown
- ☐ Low to the ground bush with woody branches and green leaves

🥄 How to Use

Eat **berries** fresh, dried, or frozen or make into jams etc.

Klitaw (Raspberry)



📍 Locate

- ☐ Found in mostly sunny areas like fields or woodlands

🔍 Identify

- ☐ Red compound berries; look like each is made of many small berries
- ☐ Prickly bush with green jagged leaves

🥄 How to Use

Eat **berries** fresh, dried, or frozen or make into jams etc.

Atuomkomin (Strawberry)



📍 Locate

- ☐ Found in mostly sunny areas like fields or woodlands

🔍 Identify

- ☐ Red berries with visible yellow seeds; berries may
- ☐ Small white flowers with jagged leaves

🥄 How to Use

Eat **berries** fresh, dried, or frozen or make into jams etc.

Foraging with Kids in Mi'kma'ki

Toqa ' q (Fall)

Su'n (Cranberry)



📍 Locate

- ☐ Found in damp areas like wetlands, along lakes, and on forest floors

🔍 Identify

- ☐ Deep red berries with an oval shape; inside is partly hollow with pinkish-white flesh and brown seeds



How to Use

Eat **cranberries** cooked in sauce or compote; edible raw but are very tart

Sipekn (Groundnut)



📍 Locate

- ☐ Found along flowing water like a riverbank

🔍 Identify

- ☐ Pink flowers and bean pods hanging from vines
- ☐ Several tubers attached by a thin root once pulled from ground



How to Use

Shell **beans** and boil, cook **tubers** like potatoes

Ajioqjimin (Blackberry)



📍 Locate

- ☐ Found in mostly sunny areas like fields or woods

🔍 Identify

- ☐ Purple compound berries; look like each is made of many small berries
- ☐ Prickly bush with green jagged leaves



How to Use

Eat **berries** fresh, dried, or frozen or make into jams etc.

Foraging with Kids in Mi'kma'ki

Kesik (Winter)

Ka 'qaju ' mannaqsi
(Wintergreen)



📍 Locate

- ☐ Found in mostly shady areas like woodlands

🔍 Identify

- ☐ A small low to the ground shrub with waxy green leaves
- ☐ Bright red berries with a minty taste

🥄 How to Use

Eat **berries** fresh, dried, or frozen or make into jams, use new pale green **leaves** in tea

Wadakuna ' sikjech
(Dulse)



📍 Locate

- ☐ Found in saltwater or on rocks near the seashore during low tide

🔍 Identify

- ☐ Reddish-purple seaweed with finger-like shapes; may be hidden under other larger seaweed

🥄 How to Use

Eat **dulse** raw in a salad or soup, or dry to preserve as a seasoning

Kuow (White Pine)



📍 Locate

- ☐ Found in woodlands

🔍 Identify

- ☐ Long blue-green needles that grow in clusters of 5 from a single point
- ☐ Prickly bush with green jagged leaves

🥄 How to Use

Steep **pine needles** in hot water to make a lemony tea