



If You Can't Beat 'em, Eat 'em!

Cooking with Invasive Plants



<i>Objective</i>	To introduce people to invasive plants in a fun and memorable way – by cooking with them!
<i>Audience</i>	1 or more participants; all ages (most appropriate for adults/families)
<i>Duration</i>	Variable – depending on the recipe
<i>Materials</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invasive plants to cook• Other recipe ingredients• Cooking supplies• <i>Optional</i> – Printed cookbooks or recipes to hand out<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Check out the companion cookbook we've created (<i>separate document, tip: print cookbook pages "4 per page" for a pocket-sized cookbook!</i>)
<i>Background</i>	Most invasive plants were brought to the United States intentionally by humans. Some invasive plants, such as shrub honeysuckle, were brought to the United States as ornamental plantings. Others, such as multiflora rose, were originally used as a "living fence". While still others, such as garlic mustard and wild parsnip, were brought over as a food source. This activity introduces invasive plants in a fun (and delicious) way!
<i>Procedure</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Prior to the start of the program pick a recipe and gather all the ingredients and cooking supplies except the invasive plants.2. Once the program begins, introduce the topic of invasive plants.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make sure to cover what they are, how they got here, and what we can do to help.• You may want to mention that while cooking with invasive plants can be fun, it's not likely to make a dent in invasive plant populations.3. Teach participants how to identify the invasive plant you'll be collecting for the recipe.4. Gather the invasive plant to be used in the recipe.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remind participants about proper handling of invasive plants to prevent spreading them– they should never be composted!• Remind participants to always be 100% sure of their ID when gathering and eating wild edible plants.5. Cook the dish with participants.6. Eat and enjoy!7. Alternatively, prepare the food ahead of time and have it available while giving a presentation about invasive plants.8. <i>Optional:</i> hand out cookbooks for participants to take home.

Inspiration Sources – [Professor Joe Roman and EatTheInvaders](#); activities redesigned for our purposes.