

# Local Plants in Yavapai County

Every time you walk outside, take in nature around you. Many plants that grow in your back yard and neighborhood are edible. (There are many however that are poisonous, so please do your research.)

Stepping outside my own house, I can spot so many different plants that are used as food or as medicinal purposes that grow wild here in Yavapai County. I have fields full of purslane, plantain, dandelions and other amazing plants.

In the past weeks, we have talked about medicinal herbs that you can purchase and plant, so now we are going to hit upon local grown plants that you can step outside and find in Yavapai County. You can also pick up seeds for these local plants online. I have a set of seeds that I purchased as backups in case my wild sets don't come back up.

I am by no means a Master Gardener, but rather someone who takes being prepared very seriously. With the ease of using the Internet, I have been able to research and locate many of the local plants that are GREAT to have in your back yard. I have also been able to discover ones that are NOT so good for my kids and animals such as false red yucca and locoweed.

Plants do not only have to be in big fields or open area, but can be planted in pots in your back yard.

I tend to pick wild dandelion flowers when I am out and about too.... But I make sure that I don't pick from areas that I know have a ton of car traffic or where they spray pesticides. My back yard is the best place to find the perfect ones.

*"The health benefits of dandelion include relief from liver disorders, diabetes, urinary disorders, acne, jaundice, cancer and anemia. It also helps in maintaining bone health, skin care and is a benefit to weight loss programs. These and other health benefits are currently being studied for complete validation by a number of international institutions." - <https://www.organicfacts.net/health-benefits/herbs-and-spices/health-benefits-of-dandelion.html>*

## Purslane: The Everyday Edible “Weed” With Extraordinary Health Benefits

<http://www.naturallivingideas.com/purslane-benefits/>

January 6, 2016 by [Sierra Bright](#)

Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*)

*“A nutritional powerhouse, Purslane contains more [omega-3 fatty acids](#) than any other leafy vegetable. It’s rich in vitamins A, C, E as well as magnesium, calcium, potassium and iron. In [traditional Chinese medicine](#), purslane leaves are used for insect bites and bee stings, sores, diarrhea and hemorrhoids.*

*With a somewhat sour and salty flavor, it’s an acquired taste, but works great in soups and stews. Try breading and frying the leaves for a tempura style side dish.*

*Even though this weed happily grows in sidewalk cracks, try looking for some that’s a little less trampled – you’ll probably find some in your garden.” <http://www.naturallivingideas.com/18-edible-backyard-weeds-you-should-stop-killing-start-eating/>*

Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*, *P. sativa*) is known as an annoying weed to many but in reality it is a plant loaded with nutritional value and is actually a “superweed.” Out of all of the weeds that may spring up in your yard, this one is certainly worth keeping around.

Strangely enough, this weed that seems to pop up all over the place such as in between sidewalk cracks and in fields and lawns is classified by the United States Department of Agriculture as a noxious weed. Despite its alluring list of redeeming qualities.

According to reports, purslane, a member of the portulacaceae family, was one of Gandhi’s favorite foods and was also eaten by Thoreau while he lived at Walden Pond.

The benefits of this edible weed did not escape early Americans such as Martha Washington who had a recipe for pickled “pursland” in the *Booke of Cookery* and *Booke of Sweetmeats*. This was a collection of hand-written recipes that she received as a wedding gift.

### Distribution, Description and Varieties

Purslane is an annual plant that is native to Persia, Africa and India. It grows from late spring until early fall. It was brought to Europe in the 8th century by Arabs who used it as a salad herb. From Europe, the plant spread into the United States as well as Central and South America. This low growing herb prefers to grow in vacant areas where the soil is either slightly damp or dry.

The tear-shaped leaves of this fleshy succulent resemble those of a jade plant and it has a slightly reddish colored stem. Yellow flowers appear in the morning and often close by the heat of the day. After flowering, the plant leaves behind small dark-colored seeds.

There are actually 3 different varieties of purslane, green, golden and large-leaved. All have a similar nutritional profile.

If you don't already have this weed popping up in your yard or garden, you can generally find it at any farmer's market.

### Taste, Texture and Use

Many describe the taste of purslane as slightly sour but also pleasantly sweet. Because it is a succulent, its leaves are very crisp making it a great addition to salads. However, its use does not stop here, you can also enjoy purslane in stir fry dishes, soups, pickles, rice, potato dishes and even casseroles.

### Nutritional Profile

Purslane has a very impressive nutritional profile which includes many substances of varied therapeutic value:

- rich source of potassium ( 494 mg/100g)
- rich source of magnesium ( 68mg/100g)
- contains calcium ( 65mg/100g)
- contains vitamins C, A and E
- contains [alpha linolenic acid](#) ( ALA) and gamma-linolenic acid ( LNA)
- contains alpha-tocopherol and ascorbic acid

### Omega-3 fatty Acids

Purslane is one of the richest sources of omega-3 fatty acids found in any green plant and even higher than some types of fish. Omega 3 fatty acids have been proven to decrease the thickness of the blood making them beneficial in the treatment of [vascular conditions](#). In addition, a diet rich in omega 3 fatty acids has been found to help with the following conditions:

**Depression:** Research has indicated that depression rates were low in areas where people consumed a diet rich in omega 3 fatty acids.

**Bipolar disease:** There is a strong indication that omega 3 fatty acids help with [bipolar disease](#).

**ADHD:** Omega 3's have been found to help children with [ADHD](#). Sneak some purslane into your children's smoothies to help with cognitive function and focus.

**Dry Eye Syndrome:** Omega 3 fatty acids may help with [dry eye syndrome](#). Therefore, a diet rich in omega 3's such as those found in purslane can keep this condition at bay.

**Autism:** A diet rich in omega 3's may help children with [autism](#).

**Blood Sugar:** Research shows that diets rich in omega 3 fatty acids may decrease insulin resistance in people with diabetes. Just a handful of purslane day can help keep your blood sugar in check.

**Baby Development:** According to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) benefit both eye and cognitive development in babies. According to the study

**Reduced Risk of Pneumonia:** A higher intake of omega 3 has been found to [reduce the risk of pneumonia](#).

**Heart Health:** Omega 3 helps to boost the strength of the cardiovascular system. These powerful fatty acids can reduce "bad" cholesterol and promote healthy cholesterol. In addition, consuming foods high in omega-3's has been shown to significantly reduce the risk of heart disease and atherosclerosis which helps prevent the incidence of heart attack and stroke. In addition, purslane contains potassium which reduces blood pressure as it acts as a vasodilator, relaxing blood vessels and decreasing strain on the heart muscle.

## Antioxidants

You have probably heard the word antioxidants before. These are manmade and naturally occurring chemicals that help fight free radicals that cause cellular damage. In fact, antioxidants can help protect you from serious conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and macular degeneration.

Purslane is rich in vitamins A, C and E which are all known for their antioxidant potency. In addition, this edible weed also contains two betalain alkaloid pigments, beta-cyanins and beta-xanthins, which also act as antioxidants. Antioxidants also help protect you from certain types of cancers, specifically lung and oral cancers. The beta cyanins and beta xanthins have a anti-mutagenic impact on the body as they prevent free radicals from causing mutations to healthy cells. This keeps cancer development at bay.

## Vitamins and Minerals

The vitamins and minerals in purslane including iron, magnesium, potassium and manganese are all beneficial to health.

**Improved Circulation:** The iron and copper in purslane help to stimulate the production of red blood cells. Because of these minerals, there is more oxygen being delivered to essential parts of the body, along with increased speed of healing cells and organs, improved metabolic efficiency and even increased hair growth.

**Strong Bones:** The wide variety of minerals in purslane work together to [protect bones](#). The elements required to build strong bone tissue include calcium, magnesium, iron and manganese. These elements also help speed the healing process of bones which can help prevent osteoporosis.

**Improved Vision:** Both vitamin A and beta-carotene have been associated with [eye health](#). Studies show that purslane can help reduce the risk of macular degeneration and cataracts by eliminating free radicals that attack and damage the eyes and can cause commonly age-related diseases.

**Skin Conditions:** The vitamin A in purslane along with other nutrients can help reduce inflammation when applied topically to stings and bites. Also, it can boost the appearance, stimulate cellular healing, decrease the appearance of wrinkles, scars and blemishes.

**Gastrointestinal Health** In traditional Chinese medicine, purslane is used for a number of gastrointestinal conditions including diarrhea, intestinal bleeding, dysentery and hemorrhoids. Even today the herb known as Ma Chi Xian in Chinese medicine is used to treat numerous intestinal conditions. It is thought to be effective mainly due to the numerous beneficial organic compounds it contains including dopamine, citric acid, alanine, glucose and malic acid.

**Weight Loss Aid** If you are looking to [drop a few pounds](#), look to the nutrient-dense purslane that is also loaded with fiber. If you consume a meal that contains purslane you will feel full and be less likely to overeat.

### How to Grow Your Own Purslane

If you want your very own stash of purslane, it is remarkably easy to grow. Simply scatter seeds (available to [buy from here](#)) over a sunny or partly sunny area that has some good organic soil or compost. Do not cover the seeds, they need light in order to germinate. Water lightly and wait for germination. Be sure to harvest the purslane regularly or it will become invasive. It is best to harvest before the flowers open.

You can also set cuttings into the ground and water them. They generally root within a few days.

Be sure to collect the seeds at the end of the season and plant them next year.

If you are going to collect purslane from other places, be sure that it has not been sprayed with pesticides.

If you are buying purslane from your local farmer's market or health store, look for leaves that are perky, not floppy. Don't buy the herb if it has brown spots or appears dry. It is always best to use fresh purslane within a day or so in order to reap all of its benefits.

## Preserving Dandelion Roots

Dandelion roots can be used fresh from the ground for both culinary and medicinal purposes but if you want to store some of your harvest for future use, you'll need to dehydrate it.

If you have a dehydrator, simply slice the cleaned roots into strips of equal size and dry them until brittle.

Alternatively, wrap each whole root with a long piece of string and hang in cool, dry location with good air flow for several days until completely brittle. Once dry, cut into small pieces.

Whichever method you choose, store your dried root in a glass jar for up to a year. If dried correctly, the outer flesh of the dandelion root should have a dark color while the inner flesh should be creamy white.

### Using Your Dandelion Root

There are several ways to utilize your dandelion root harvest. Here are some of the best:

#### 1. Dandelion Root Tincture

A tincture is a fast-acting, alcohol-based plant medicine. Dandelion root tincture is [used](#) for its anti-inflammatory properties. It is also [said to be](#) a fantastic diuretic, blood cleanser and natural detoxifier for the liver, spleen and gallbladder.

Herbalists use the dandelion root tincture to improve overall health and vitality, regulate blood sugar, reduce stress, eliminate age spots and clear up skin condition like psoriasis, eczema, and acne.

To [make a tincture](#):

1. Place the dandelion root in a jar and cover with 100 proof (50%) vodka. Ensure there is at least an inch of vodka above the dandelion roots. The 100 proof vodka enables the alcohol concentration to stay high enough to prevent fermentation and rot.
2. Cover tightly and allow to steep for 6 weeks, shaking daily.
3. Strain out the root using a muslin cloth and store the liquid tincture in a sterilized dark glass bottle. Compost the roots.
4. For optimum health, take a few drops daily in juice or water.

#### 2. Dandelion Root Infusion / Tea

Probably the most common use of dandelion roots, this [healing tea](#) is high in antioxidants, helps balance blood sugar, aids digestion, acts as a natural diuretic and mild laxative, cleanses the liver, prevents UTIs and more.

To make this [simple infusion](#):

1. Place one ounce of dried roots or two ounces of fresh roots in a pot with one pint of water. Bring to a boil, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes. Strain and compost the roots.

### 3. Dandelion Root Decoction

A [decoction](#) is an infusion which has been reduced to one-half its volume by slow evaporation. They are more potent than infusions and keep for longer if carefully stored under refrigeration.

You can use the decoction for anything you would use the infusion/tea – except you can simply imbibe a smaller amount for the same effect. This makes decoctions particularly effective for treating children or animals. One cup of infusion is equal to one quarter cup of a simple decoction.

To make a [decoction](#):

1. Make the simple infusion/tea outlined above.
2. Heat the infused liquid until it begins to steam (but before it simmers). Turn the heat to low and steam until the liquid is reduced to one quarter of its original volume.
3. Once cooled, pour the decoction into a sterile dark bottle and store in the refrigerator.

### 4. Dandelion Root Poultice

Dandelion root can [be used](#) in a poultice to treat skin disorders like acne, eczema, itching, psoriasis, rashes, abscesses and boils.

Follow the steps below to make a [simple poultice](#):

1. Process one cup of dried dandelion root in a food processor into a fine powder.
2. Add a small amount of warm water to the powder to form a thick paste.
3. Spread the paste over a piece of gauze and apply to the clean, dry, affected area.
4. Wrap the poultice with plastic wrap and a towel and secure it with a safety pin.
5. Leave for 20 minutes to three hours as needed and repeat as necessary.

### 5. Dandelion Root Coffee

Roasted dandelion root is a delicious caffeine-free alternative to coffee. Combine it with roasted chicory root for a deep, slightly bitter flavor. [This recipe](#) also mixes in cinnamon for a sweet spiciness with added healing properties.

To make:

1. Place four cups of water, two tablespoons of ground roasted dandelion root, two tablespoons of ground roasted chicory root and one cinnamon stick in a pot.
2. Bring to a boil, then simmer for five minutes.
3. Strain and enjoy your healthy coffee substitute, adding a milk of your choice if desired.

6. **Dandelion Root Vinegar** Blend dandelion root with apple cider vinegar for a delicious vinegar that works well in salads and soups. You can also add it to water to [get your daily dose of apple cider vinegar](#) with the extra health benefits of dandelion.

For a gut friendly vinegar [simply](#):

1. Fill a mason jar two-thirds full with finely chopped fresh or dried dandelion root. Fill to the top with [raw apple cider vinegar with 'the mother'](#).
2. Leave to infuse for six weeks, in a cool place away from direct sunlight, before straining through a muslin cloth. Store in a sealed glass jar.

7. **Dandelion Root Smoothies** If you're a green smoothie lover – and here are [13 reasons why you should be](#) – consider adding some dandelion root to your shake to boost the nutritional content and support the liver.

If using dried root, place it in the blender and process to a fine powder before adding the other ingredients. If using fresh dandelion root, you can blend it with all the other ingredients as normal.

### Precautions

Dandelion is generally [considered safe](#) to take, although medicinal herbs are potent time-honored treatments so speaking to your doctor before use is recommended.

Avoid dandelion if:

- You are allergic to ragweed, chrysanthemums, marigold, chamomile, yarrow, daisies, asters or iodine.
- It triggers heartburn symptoms or irritates the skin.
- You are pregnant or nursing.

Those [who have](#) gallstones, biliary tract obstruction, stomach ulcers, gastritis or irritable bowel should speak with their health care provider before taking dandelion, as should those on potassium supplements, blood thinners or medications to treat infection.

Wondering what to do with your leftover dandelion leaves and blossoms? Here are [25 great ideas](#) for you to try out.

## 25 Reasons To Go & Pick Dandelions Right Now

March 11, 2016 by [Jayne Leonard](#)

Who hasn't seen those pesky yellow weeds pop up in the garden from time to time? Yet try as you might – from picking them to poisoning them – nothing keeps them at bay for too long.

Perhaps it's time you embraced the tenacious dandelion and all the benefits it can bring?

*“Probably the most well-known of all weeds, the humble dandelion is actually [bursting with vitamins](#) A, B, C, and D, as well as minerals such as iron, potassium, and zinc. The great news is that there’s probably a ton of this nutritious weed in your backyard.*

*Dandelion has been used throughout history [to treat](#) everything from liver problems and kidney disease to heartburn and appendicitis. Today, it is mainly used as a diuretic, appetite stimulant and for the liver and gallbladder.*

*Every part of this common weed is edible, from the roots to the blossoms. Use the leaves in sandwiches and stir fries – they boast [more beta carotene](#) than carrots, meaning they are great for [healthy eyes](#)! Roots can be made into a herbal tea, or roasted and ground as a coffee substitute. The sweet flower heads will add color to salads and can be used to make wines.”*

<http://www.naturallivingideas.com/18-edible-backyard-weeds-you-should-stop-killing-start-eating/>

### The Health Benefits of Dandelions

Dandelion has been used throughout history [to treat](#) everything from liver problems and kidney disease to heartburn and appendicitis.

Every part of this common weed – from the roots to the blossoms – is edible. It’s a good thing too, as the humble dandelion is bursting with vitamins A, B, C and D, as well as minerals such as iron, potassium and zinc.

Some benefits of eating your weeds:

- The leaves boast [more beta carotene](#) than carrots, meaning they are great for [healthy eyes](#)!
- The greens also [provide](#) 535% of the recommended daily value of vitamin K, which is vital for [strengthening bones](#) and preventing cognitive decline.
- A [2011 study](#) showed that dandelion root tea may induce leukemia cells to die. Researchers reported that the tea didn’t send the same ‘kill’ message to healthy cells.
- The plant is [a diuretic](#) that helps the kidneys clear out waste, salt and excess water by increasing urine production – perhaps the reason that European children’s [lore](#) claims you will wet the bed if you pick the flowers!
- With such a rich nutrient load, the plant is filled with antioxidants – which may help stave off premature aging, cancer, and other illnesses caused by oxidative stress.
- Animal [studies](#) discovered that dandelion root and leaf [manages cholesterol levels](#).
- Research also [shows](#) that dandelion extract boosts immune function and fights off microbes.
- Dandelion can also help the digestive system [according to](#) the University of Maryland Medical Center. Fresh or dried dandelion can stimulate the appetite and settle the stomach while the root of the plant may act as a mild laxative.

## 25 Remarkable Uses for Dandelions

**In the Kitchen** Because the entire plant is edible there are a myriad of ways in which you can use dandelion for culinary purposes.

- 1. Sautéed Greens and Garlic** With their rich mineral and vitamin content, dandelion greens are a healthy addition to any meal. Sautéing with [garlic](#) (or ginger or capers) adds flavor and negates some of the bitterness often associated with these leaves. Blanching them by immersing them in boiling water for 20 to 30 seconds helps reduce this acrid taste. Avoid the very mature leaves as these can be too unpleasant for some. This [double garlic and greens recipe is a delicious one](#).
- 2. Dandelion Pumpkin Seed Pesto** This nutritious pesto is perfect for a simple pasta, sandwich spread or veggie dip. Because the dandelion greens have a slight bite, the toasted pumpkin seeds, lemon juice and parmesan are vital to bring balance. Here is [how you make it](#).
- 3. Tempura Blossoms** Fried dandelion flowers, first dipped in seasoned batter, make a tasty, attractive and novel snack or side dish. By removing all the bitter green parts, you're left with the mild-tasting and faintly sweet blossoms. Follow [this recipe here](#).
- 4. Herbal Vinegar** Enjoy increased wellbeing by using this herbal vinegar on salads, in dressings, soups, stews and sauces or by simply mixing with water and drinking as a revitalizing tonic. Infuse dandelion flowers in [apple cider vinegar](#) for four weeks, strain and store in a dark place for up to twelve months. These steps outline [how to make the infusion](#).
- 5. Vegetarian Risotto** Cook the flowers and make them into a jewel-like vegetarian risotto. While the dandelions add visual appeal and a mild sweet taste, the onion, wine, stock, creamy yogurt and parmesan lend a rich, deep flavor and smooth texture. The Vegetarian Society [inspired recipe can be found here](#).
- 6. Kimchi** Instead of the [traditional spicy and sour Korean kimchi](#) which is made with cabbage, this foraged alternative uses dandelion greens. Eat your way to [good gut health](#) by fermenting the greens with herbs, spices, green onions and soy sauce, as [outlined in this recipe](#).
- 7. Savory Muffins** These soaked muffins, made with whole wheat flour, oatmeal, honey and dandelion petals are perfect for serving with Spring time soups such as asparagus or green pea. Learn [how to make them here](#).
- 8. Petal Sorbet** Make a delicious iced treat from freshly picked dandelion blossoms, sugar, [honey](#) and lemon juice. It's perfect for a summer's day in the garden, or served after one of the many dandelion-inspired main meals here! You'll [find the recipe here](#).
- 9. Jelly** This delicate jelly is delicious and sweet as honey. Use it on top of toast, crumpets or anything else that takes your fancy. It keeps in an airtight container for up to two weeks – but it definitely won't last that long! Follow [Martha Stewart's recipe](#).

**10. Pancake and Waffle Syrup** Love pancake syrup but want to avoid the sickly sweet store-bought variety, which is loaded with nasty artificial additives and preservatives? Then this is the recipe for you! It's made with just three ingredients – dandelions, lemon and sugar or honey. The [two-day process is described here](#).

**11. Dandelion Blossom Cake** A sweet, delicious and slightly tropical cake made with dandelion syrup, blossom petals, [cinnamon](#), crushed pineapple, walnuts and coconut, this is sure to be a hit with the whole family. [Click here to go to the recipe](#).

**12. Dandelion Cookies** Another sweet dandelion based treat, these healthy lemony cookies include organic local honey and oats.

**13. Dandelion Root Coffee** As we've found out, no part of the humble dandelion has to go to waste. After you've sautéed the greens, and used the blossoms in your dessert, hang onto the roots and brew a caffeine-free alternative to [coffee](#). Roast them before grinding for a deep, earthy flavor. Discover [exactly what to do here](#).

**14. Iced Lime and Dandelion Tea** This pretty iced lime and dandelion tea is so good even the kids will love it. It's also refreshing, natural and has many skin promoting properties. Blend a quart of dandelion flowers with fresh lime juice, stevia leaves or other sweetener, and dried red raspberry leaf. Learn how to make [this healing tea here](#).

**15. Dandelion Wine** Surprisingly, these pesky weeds can make a [fine country wine](#) – rich, strong and medium sweet. Head out into the countryside (or backyard) with a gallon container and collect enough complete flowers to loosely fill it. Ferment these with water, lemon zest and raisins for a couple of months before enjoying. The full wine making process is [detailed here](#).

**16. Danish Schnapps – Two Ways** If country wine isn't your thing, perhaps a Danish schnapps sounds more appealing? Make it with the flower heads for a fresh, aromatic and mildly sweet taste which goes well with chocolate, sweet desserts and cakes. Or, for a dry, spicy and very aromatic drink, brew it with the roots. Enjoy the schnapps on its own or serve with roast meat and other robust flavors. The [recipes can be found here](#).

**For Health and Beauty** Dandelion's properties extend beyond the dinner table – they can also be harnessed to reduce pain and inflammation, and treat minor skin maladies.

**17. Moisturizer** Try [making this dandelion and coconut oil moisturizer](#) that's great for dry elbows and feet, helps to relieve sore muscles and aches and can also be used as a lip balm or aftershave. Get [the recipe here](#).

**18. Pain Relieving Oil** Dandelions are one of the most useful plants to [reduce joint pain](#) and aching muscles. Infuse the flowers in an oil and rub onto sore muscles and joints, or anywhere pain strikes. To make, simply fill a small mason jar with fresh dandelion flowers and pour in a base oil – like [sweet almond](#) or olive – until the jar is full. Leave to infuse in a warm place for two weeks before straining the oil and decanting into a sterilized jar. Store in the fridge. For a full tutorial with step by step photos, click [here](#).

**19. Pain Relieving Salve** For a more portable version of the pain relieving oil, go one step further and turn the infusion into a soothing balm – ideal for carrying in your purse or gym bag, or keeping in the car or office. Create a double boiler and blend beeswax with the infused oil. Pour this mixture into a jar or tin and allow to cool before using. Exact measurements and [instructions are here](#).

**20. Lotion Bars** These therapeutic lotion bars help the toughest cases of cracked, dry skin by adding moisture and alleviating inflammation and soreness. If you're an avid gardener, or frequently do very manual work, rub the bar over your hands several times a day. It's a lot less messy than salve! Blend infused dandelion oil with beeswax, [shea butter](#) and [lavender essential oil](#) for a silky, smooth healing bar. The full process is [detailed here](#).

**21. Wart Remover** Dandelions are a natural wart remover. You've probably noticed that the roots, stems and leaves of the plant exude a white sticky resin – this is the secret weapon against warts. Apply this sap directly onto warts once, or several times, per day and they should soon disappear.

**In the Home and Garden** Use dandelions to add a pop of color to your home, or some much needed nutrients to the garden.

**22. Floating Table Centerpiece** Make a stunning and chic dandelion centerpiece simply using reclaimed wood and small nails. Assemble a box from the wood, hammer small finishing nails through the underside, and slide handpicked dandelions on top – creating a centerpiece that appears to be floating. Find out [more here](#).

**23. Natural Yellow Dye** Cook dandelion heads for an all-natural alternative to chemical-based dyes – which can [contribute to](#) water pollution. This is an especially useful tip for those who weave their own wool but can be used on any garment. Here is [how you can use the dye](#) to brighten up your fabrics.

**24. Fertilizer** A [liquid fertilizer, or 'weed tea' is simple to make](#) and will give your garden a boost of nutrients. Deep rooted dandelions are especially valuable weeds as they are so nutritious. Since you can't toss them into the compost pile as their seeds are still viable, brew up this organic fertilizer instead and pour or spray it onto flower beds and vegetable gardens. Here is the [simple process for making the fertilizer](#).

**25. Feed Your Goats** If you keep goats (and [here's why you should!](#)) then you'll know that they need a diverse, vegetarian diet. Use your unwanted dandelion weeds to form a portion of that balanced diet. Research has shown that animals choose [what to eat](#) based on their individual nutritional needs so if you simply leave the dandelions for the goats, they'll most likely munch on them and save you the job of weeding!

### Save Some For The Bees!

Dandelions are the first food of the season for the bees. When picking the dandelions, make sure not to claim them all for yourself. Leave enough for the bees to enjoy. And [learn more about ways we can save the bees and why we should here](#).