

Wild Harvests and healthy/slow living: the connections (mostly from a wild food, especially edible wild plant perspective....)

1. Dietary diversity.
2. Attention to the seasons.
3. Familiarity with landscape: habitats, geology, moisture levels, other species of mammal!
4. Familiarity with plant species (also in relation to point 3).
5. Involvement with the landscape and with wild plants/ fungi etc.
6. Foraging is characterised by responding to what is there.
7. Wild plants are themselves a response to local conditions: responsiveness characterises reciprocity, mutuality, absence of coerciveness, subjugation.
8. Both 7 and 8 are in contrast to heavy-handed control exercised in monocultural, industrial agriculture; small-scale growing still shapes landscape and species radically compared to foraging.
9. Counterpoint to 8: greater species diversity in early agricultural landscape than in original wildwood.
10. The healthsome nature of wild food plants – much more so in most cases than cultivars.
11. Re points 7, 8, 9 – foraging is much less hard work, less effort.
12. Work equals expenditure of energy: also radically much less fossil fuel use, in fact NONE! No ploughing, sowing or harvesting by machine; no pesticides or fertilizers.
13. Re point 10, less effort in cultivation equals greater nutrition in individual plants.
14. Re point 1, less effort also means greater nutrition due to a greater diversity of available food plants.
15. Re point 12, less effort means a lower carbon footprint, no pesticides residues, no nitrate pollution and zero dependence on fossil fuels.
16. Foraging is something people mostly do in their own locality, so no food miles.
17. Truly local food: foraging involves finding familiar flavours in novel but indigenous forms such as mustard, garlic, almond. Often the wild flavour is superior e.g. wild watercress, wild fennel. We have erred in thinking exotic produce of far off lands is superior!
18. Health benefits of walking and gathering: no need for gym subscription.
19. Mental health benefits of being outdoors, satisfaction gained from gathering and eating what has been gathered.