



Enhancing the Edibility of New England's Landscapes with Native Species
Presented by [Russ Cohen](#) at the [2017 National Native Seed Conference](#),
Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, DC, Wednesday, February 15, 2017.



- There has been a burgeoning interest in recent years in restoring native plants to our gardens, yards and landscapes (e.g., as evidenced by the 2010 formation of the group Grow Native Massachusetts).

- This movement got a major boost several years ago from the publication of the book *Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in our Gardens*.

- In *Bringing Nature Home*, author and University of Delaware Entomology Professor Doug Tallamy makes a compelling case for the key role that native plant species play in supporting our native species of wildlife, particularly insects (such as butterflies and moths), which (in addition to their intrinsic value) serve as a major source of nourishment for nestling birds.

BRINGING NATURE HOME



How Native Plants
Sustain Wildlife
in Our Gardens

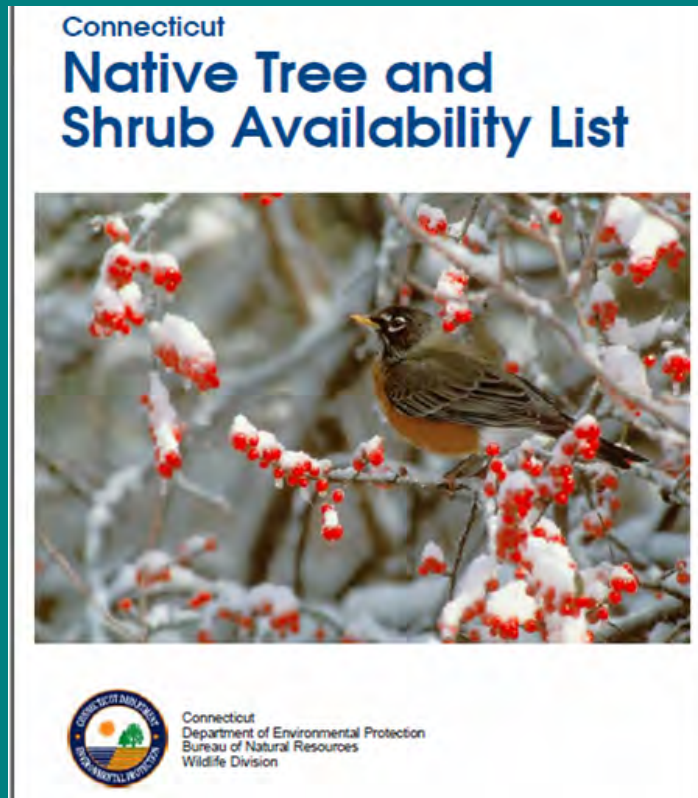
DOUGLAS W. TALLAMY

Hometown Habitat, a documentary film that extols the virtues of native plants, and features Tallamy, was released in the spring of 2016



Volunteers planting native plant species along the banks of the Housatonic River just east of downtown Great Barrington, MA as part of the [River Walk](#) community project

A few examples of outreach materials intended to promote and facilitate the planting of native species --



Native Plant Site Solutions for Backyard Habitat

A how-to guide for designers and homeowners
interested in enhancing wildlife habitat value in
urban and suburban areas



[Recommended Native Species for
Planting in Lexington, MA](#)

[National Wildlife Federation's
Community Wildlife Habitat Program](#)

[Mass. Coastal Zone Management's
Coastal Landscaping with Native Species](#)

THE
UNIVERSITY
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OUTREACH CENTER

THINK BIG  WE DO™

Excerpt from [Rhode Island Coastal Plant Guide](#) - while extremely informative and user-friendly, note the lack of an "edible by humans" column

RHODE ISLAND COASTAL PLANT GUIDE



50 of 231 Species

Page 1 of 3

Clear Filter

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[Enter all or part of name above to filter list]

[Select from dropdown list to filter plant list by attributes]

Species	Common Name	Zone	Plant Type	Native Status	Full Sun	Shade Tolerant	Drought Tolerant	Wet Sites	Wind Tolerant	Na:Spray Tolerant	Na:Soil Tolerant	Acid Tolerant	pH Adapt	Rain Gardens	Dune Plant	Height	Width
Alnus incana ssp. rugosa	Speckled Alder	1	Shrub	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	>10'	6-12'
Alnus serrulata	Common Alder	1	Shrub	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	>10'	6-12'
Amelanchier arborea !	Serviceberry	1	Tree	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	>10'	15-25'
Amelanchier canadensis !	Shadbush	1	Shrub	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	>10'	variable
Amelanchier laevis !	Allegheny Serviceberry	1	Tree	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	>10'	15-25'
Amelanchier stolonifera !	Running Serviceberry	1	Shrub	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	2-6'	variable
Ammophila breviligulata	American Beach Grass	1	Grass	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	2-6'	-
Andropogon gerardii	Big Bluestem	1	Grass	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	6-10'	2'
Andropogon glomeratus	Bushy Bluestem	2	Grass	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<2'	-
Andropogon virginicus	Broomsedge	1	Grass	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	2-6'	1-2'
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi	Bearberry	1	Shrub	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	<2'	variable
Asclepias tuberosa	Butterfly Milkweed	2	Per.	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	2-6'	2'
Atriplex sp.	Salt Bush	1	Shrub	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	<2'	6'
Baccharis halimifolia	Groundsel-bush	1	Shrub	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	>10'	5-12'
Baptisia tinctoria	False Indigo	1	Per.	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	2-6'	2-3'
Betula populifolia	Gray Birch	2	Tree	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	>10'	10-20'
Carex flaccosperma	Thin Fruit Sedge	2	Grass	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	<2'	6-12"
Carex pensylvanica	Pennsylvania Sedge	1	Grass	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	<2'	6-9"
Carex platyphylla	Broadleaf Sedge	2	Grass	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	<2'	10"
Carex stricta	Tussock Sedge	2	Grass	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	<2'	1.5-2'
Carya ovata	Shagbark Hickory	2	Tree	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	>10'	-
Ceanothus americanus	New Jersey Tea	2	Shrub	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	2-6'	3-5'
Celtis occidentalis	Common Hackberry	2	Tree	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	>10'	40-60'

The *RI Native Plant Guide* (<http://web.uri.edu/rinativeplants>) now does include information on each species' edibility (see the "ED" column below), and the list is sortable by category (i.e., the image below is the beginning of an alphabetical listing of all the edible plants in the database.) Also note the related "Rhody Native" program, which informs people about local nurseries where many of these plants are ethically propagated, and are available for purchase.

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RI NATIVE PLANT GUIDE
COLLEGE OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND LIFE SCIENCES

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About

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Acknowledgements


Resources

Contact

RI Native Plant Guide developed in collaboration with the Rhode Island Natural History Survey and their Rhody Native Initiative.

RHODE ISLAND NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY
Building Ecological Science and Information

RHODY NATIVE
locally sourced | locally grown



Database Search Results:

Latin Name	Common Name	T	PS	SH	ED	MO	RO	PL	DT	WI	CT
<i>Acer rubrum</i>	red maple	T	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	silver maple	T	X	X	X			X		X	
<i>Acer saccharum var. saccharum</i>	sugar maple	T	X	X	X	X	X	X			
<i>Allium canadense</i>	meadow garlic	P		X	X				X	X	
<i>Allium tricoccum var. tricoccum</i>	ramps, wild leek	P		X	X	X					
<i>Amelanchier arborea</i>	common serviceberry, downy shadbush	T	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
<i>Amelanchier canadensis</i>	Canadian serviceberry, eastern shadbush	S	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
<i>Amelanchier laevis</i>	smooth serviceberry, smooth shadbush	S	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Amelanchier spicata</i>	dwarf serviceberry, dwarf shadbush	S	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
<i>Angelica atropurpurea</i>	purple-stemmed angelica	P	X	X	X	X		X		X	X
<i>Apios americana</i>	common groundnut	V	X	X	X	X			X	X	
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	kinnikinnick, red bearberry	P	X		X	X			X		X

► Take-home message from this talk: the “you can eat it too” attribute of many native species offers a powerful incentive for people and organizations to “go native” in their landscaping, that were insufficiently swayed to do so by the ecological rationale alone.



Low-bush
Blueberries,
*Vaccinium
angustifolium*



Beach Plums,
*Prunus
maritima*

► What this presentation is about:

- Extolling the edibility of many of the plant species native to the Northeast, some of which you might want to consider adding to your properties if they aren't already there (NOTE, however, the **Precaution** on a subsequent slide)
- Expounding on the premise that enabling people to connect to nature via their taste buds helps strengthen their support for land conservation, and that owners/managers of parks, open spaces and other conserved lands might consider edible native species as an opportunity to "spice up" (literally as well as figuratively) their properties and make them more attractive to people as well as wildlife
- Learning that many native species edible by people are directly /indirectly edible/useable by wildlife too, and so planting them enhances wildlife habitat and biodiversity as well as people's enjoyment of open spaces
- In other words, we can have our acorn cake and eat it too

- The places to plant natives I'm focusing on in this talk: parks and open space lands where the natural plant communities have been significantly disrupted and native species diversity reduced through past and/or current human activity (e.g., farming, mowing, land clearing)

Precaution regarding introducing new plants to conserved lands

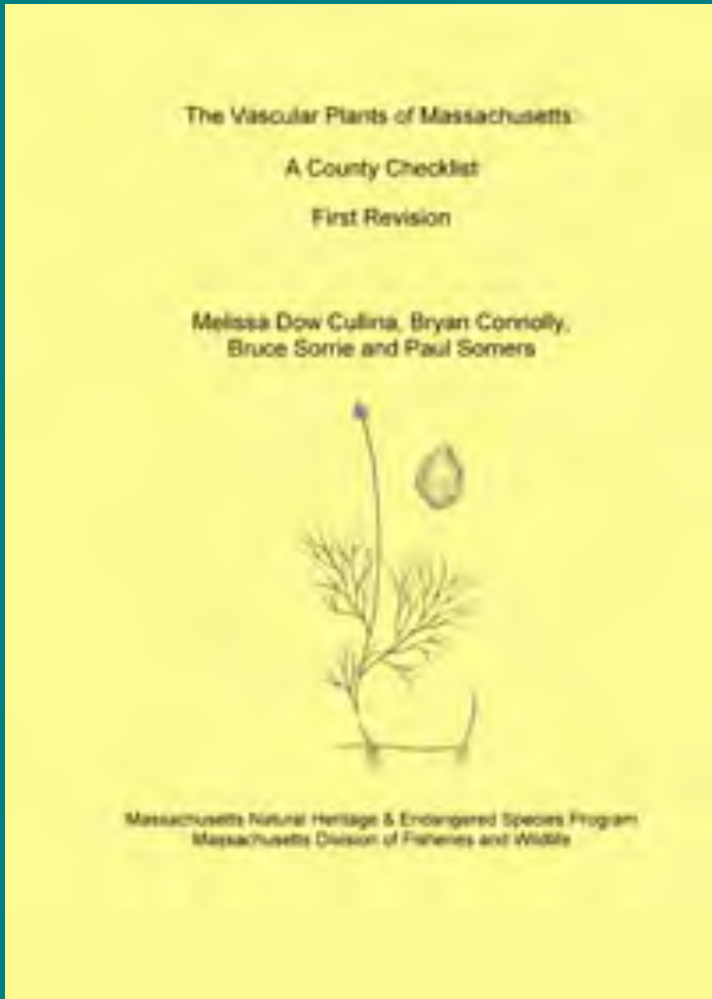
- If you know or suspect that the property in question contains rare species and/or a relatively pristine and intact native plant community, do not add new plants or seeds to those sensitive, ecologically significant sites

That said --

- If you are restoring a disturbed plant community (through, e.g., the removal of invasive plants), it is OK to reintroduce members of that plant community that are missing, or to enhance the numbers of plants of species that are already there (wintergreen and partridgeberry, e.g.)
- It's also OK to introduce native plants to other highly-disturbed, human-influenced sites, such as plantings in gardens and around buildings, parking lots, farms or playing fields

Precaution regarding picking edible plants on conserved properties

- Importance of respecting applicable policies and regulations ("no collecting" policy at Audubon sanctuaries, e.g.)
- Importance of foraging in an environmentally-responsible manner (fruits vs. roots)



► You may want to consult appropriate reference works to determine which plant species are deemed to be native to your area. See, e.g., [The Vascular Plants of Massachusetts: A County Checklist, First Revision](#) (2011) (a.k.a., the “yellow book”). Below is an example of what the info inside the yellow book looks like (the two-letter abbreviations stand for the county names).

Tricolpates		<i>The Vascular Plants of Massachusetts - 2011</i>												173		
Status	S-Rank	BE	FR	HS	HD	WO	MI	ES	SU	NO	BR	PL	BA	DU	NA	
JUGLANDACEAE																
WALNUT FAMILY																
Juglans																
cinerea L.	WL	S4?	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	*	*	*
Butternut																
nigra L.		SNA	I	*	*	I	I	*	*	I	*	*	I	*	*	*
Black Walnut																

See also the MA Natural Heritage Program's info on [Natural Plant Communities](#).

Documents like this exist for other states, so it is advisable to consult them as well to be informed about which plant species are considered to be native to which locations (counties, states, regions).

Two other resources helpful in figuring out which species are/are not native to your region:

- the “Go Botany” website (<http://gobotany.newenglandwild.org>), set up and maintained by the [New England Wild Flower Society \(NEWFS\)](#); and
- the book [Flora Novae Angliae](#), by NEWFS research botanist Arthur Haines.

Go Botany Discover thousands of New England plants


Home Simple Key PlantShare Advanced ID Tools Teaching Tools About Search...

You are here: Simple Key > Woody plants > Woody broad-leaved plants > *Lindera benzoin*


Lindera benzoin (L.) Blume
northern spicebush

New England Distribution
Adapted from BONAP data

present
 absent



North America Distribution
Adapted from BONAP data



Click to enlarge

Native to North America?
Yes

Synonyms:
Benzoin aestivale Nees
Lindera benzoin var. *pubescens* (Palmer & Steyermark) Rehd.

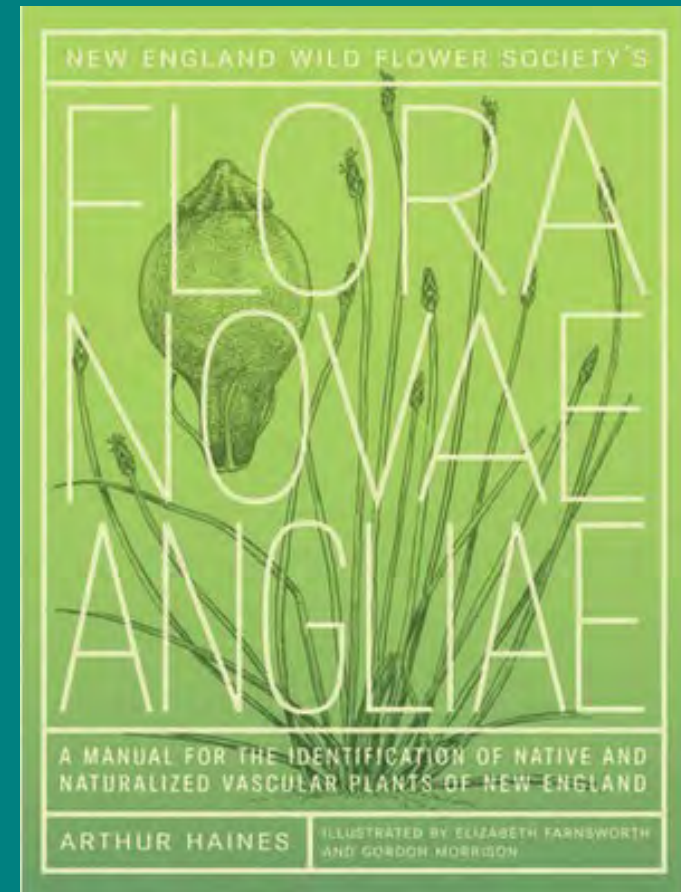
Facts About

Northern spicebush is named for its leaves, which are aromatic when crushed. A denizen of bottomlands and other moist places, this tall shrub produces masses of small green-yellow flowers in spring, before the leaves appear. Male and female flowers are borne on separate plants. Caterpillars of the spicebush swallowtail butterfly (*Papilio troilus*) use this species for food. The green caterpillars have large, black, fake "eye" markings that scare away predators. With sweetly aromatic foliage that turns yellow in the fall, this plant is a good choice for shady, moist or wet places in the garden.

Habitat

River or stream floodplains, shores of rivers or lakes, swamps

Characteristics



Click [here](#) to download [Edible Wild Plants Native to the Northeast U.S. and E. Canada](#), a recently updated compilation of >150 species, that originally accompanied my Native Edible Plants presentation at the 2013 Ecological Landscape Alliance Conference. Below is a sample of the info contained in that document.

Edible Wild Plants Native to the Northeast U.S. and Eastern Canada		Thursday, December 22, 2016 3:38:52 PM			
Compiled and Copyrighted © by Russ Cohen, eatwild@rcn.com http://users.rcn.com/eatwild/bio.htm					
Common Name	Botanical Name	Native to MA	Type of plant	Preferred habitat	Comments
Box Elder	<i>Acer negundo</i>	Yes	small to medium tree	wetlands and other damp areas; floodplains	a species of Maple; sap may be tapped + boiled down for syrup
Maple, Red	<i>Acer rubrum</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	red maple swamps (of course)	can be tapped for sap like Sugar Maple
Maple, Silver	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	forested floodplains and other wet ground	can be tapped for sap like Sugar Maple; seeds are edible raw
Maple, Sugar	<i>Acer saccharum</i>	Yes	medium to large tree	hardwood forests; roadsides	sap is source of maple syrup and sugar
Sweet Flag (Calamus)	<i>Acorus americanus</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	wet fields and meadows; sunny wetlands; along waterways	the similarly-appearing <i>A. calamus</i> is apparently non-native to MA
Wild Leek (Ramps)	<i>Allium tricoccum</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	rich, mesic woods, such as those pref. by maidenhair fern + Dutchman's breeches	over-collecting by commercial diggers is harming ramps + habitat - pick 1 leaf/plant only
Juneberry/Shadbush	<i>Amelanchier spp.</i>	Yes	Shrub/small tree	likes to grow near water, but often planted in parks and other landscaped areas	fruit ripe in late June; flavor is a cross between cherries and almonds
Hog Peanut	<i>Amphicarpaea bracteata</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial vine	damp spots in woods w/ some sun; often on old woods roads	small subterranean seeds are available from late summer onward; tiny peas may be edible too
Angelica	<i>Angelica atropurpurea</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial to 6 ft -large spherical flower cluster	wet ground along rivers and streams, in full or partial sun	tender, emerging leaves are edible raw or cooked, young, boiled stems are sometimes candied
Seacoast Angelica	<i>Angelica lucida</i>	Yes	herbaceous perennial	rocky areas near the ocean	tender, emerging leaves are edible raw or cooked

Seeds of Native Edible species I have collected as of February 10, 2017:
(species I have successfully propagated plants from are in gold type) p. 1 of 2

Angelica atropurpurea

Apios americana

Arctostaphylos uva-ursi

Amelanchier spp.

Aronia melanocarpa

Asclepias syriaca

**Caltha palustris*

Carya ovata

Celtis occidentalis

Chamerion angustifolium

Corylus americana

**Fragaria virginiana*

Hibiscus moscheutos

Gaultheria procumbens

Juglans cinerea

Juglans nigra

Lactuca canadensis

Lathyrus japonicus

Ligusticum scoticum

Lindera benzoin

Maianthemum racemosum

Maianthemum stellatum

Angelica

Groundnut

Bearberry

Juneberry/Shadbush

Black Chokeberry

Common Milkweed

Marsh Marigold

Shagbark Hickory

Hackberry

Fireweed

Common Hazelnut

Wild Strawberry

Swamp Rose Mallow

Wintergreen

Butternut

Black Walnut

Wild Lettuce

Beach Pea

Scotch Lovage

Spicebush

False Solomon's Seal

Starry False Solomon's Seal

**seed obtained from
others*

Seeds of Edible Native species I have collected as of February 10, 2017:
(species I have successfully propagated plants from seed are in gold type)
p. 2 of 2 *seed obtained from others

Medeola virginiana
**Monarda fistulosa*
Nyssa sylvatica
Osmorhiza longistylis
Phytolacca americana
Prunus maritima
Prunus virginiana
Quercus alba
Rhus copallinum
Rhus typhina
Sambucus nigra
Smilax herbacea
Solidago odora
Vaccinium macrocarpon
Vaccinium vitis-idaea
Viburnum edule
Viburnum lentago
Viburnum nudum
Vitis labrusca
Vitis riparia

Indian Cucumber
Wild Bergamot
Tupelo/Black Gum
Sweet Cicely
Pokeweed
Beach Plum
Choke Cherry
White Oak
Winged/Shining Sumac
Staghorn Sumac
Black Elderberry
Carrion Flower
Sweet Goldenrod
Bog Cranberry
Mountain Cranberry
Squashberry
Nannyberry
Wild Raisin
Fox Grape
Riverside Grape

So far, since I began my "Johnny Appleseed for edible natives" initiative in the summer of 2015, I have collected the seed of **39** species, and successfully propagated **18** species from seed.

One of the main reasons I have not successfully propagated more than **18** species from seed is that it is simply too early to tell; many of the woodland species go through a "double dormancy", and their seed does not germinate until more than a year after sowing.



A couple of peeks inside the stratification fridge in our basement, where I store seeds that need a prolonged cold period in order to break their dormancy. I check the contents periodically to look for seeds that have "woken up" (more about that later).



View of a section of the nursery I have established to grow edible native plants I have propagated from seed (see, e.g., the Beach Plum seedlings in the milk cartons) as well as plants I have obtained from elsewhere, such as from the New England Wild Flower Society.



The following slides cover some of the 150+ species of edible plants native to New England for which I have been collecting seed, for propagation by myself or sharing with others, and then partnering with others to add to their properties.

Groundnut (*Apios americana*), a tuber-bearing member of the Pea Family (Fabaceae)



Groundnut tubers (see below) are harvestable and edible year-round. One fun and easy way to cook/eat Groundnuts is to slice the tubers thinly crosswise and then pan fry in oil until golden to make Groundnut Chips.



Groundnut (Apios americana) - ripe seedpods (see right) collected in Leominster, MA. This species can be propagated by seed or from the tubers.





Carrion Flower (*Smilax herbacea*) -
fruits/seed collected in Ipswich, MA



Carrion Flower shoots at the right
stage for eating, in the spring



Steamed Carrion Flower shoots, ready to be folded into an omelet

Juneberry/Shadbush/Serviceberry, *Amelanchier* spp. - an early-blossoming tree (a week or two before apples/crabapples) - flowering time is also a good time to spot (and remember) the trees for later fruit-picking opportunities



Juneberry (Shadbush/Serviceberry) - *Amelanchier canadensis* and other species - fruit is purple when ripe and tastes like a cross between a cherry and an almond





Juneberry -
Mulberry
Strudel

Beach Plum
Strudel

One of the fun (and yummy) items to make from, Juneberries, Beach Plums and other wild fruit - strudel

Juneberry (*Amelanchier* spp.) seed, obtained via the "extraction by mouth" method (i.e., I ate the sweet pulp surrounding the seeds), after collecting the ripe fruit the last week of June.



Following this process, the seeds were stored in small plastic bags, mixed with a little moist vermiculite, and then placed in my stratification fridge. At least half of the seed "woke up" (i.e., radicles emerged) in January, though, so I had to sow those seeds right away. As of early February, the first true leaves had emerged.



Wild Strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*) - while the berries are small, they are exceptionally tasty. The leaves (when fresh or thoroughly dried) can be used for tea. While wild strawberry plants can tolerate some shade, the fruit production will be better in sunny, grassy areas. This species certainly has great potential for adding to many home and other landscapes, including (natural) lawns.

Wild strawberries propagate easily from seed, sown indoors or outdoors.



Photo by Donald Cameron



Photo by Arthur Haines

On 3/31/16, I brought the seeds of Wild Strawberry and several other edible native species to Miss Hall's School in Pittsfield, MA, and worked with Greenhouse manager Marian Rutledge and her students to sow them (into used produce containers, such as the one at right). The Wild Strawberries germinated and grew well, and the plants were big enough for the students to sell them at their May plant sale. Marian says the plants were a "bit hit" with their customers.



Wild Bergamot or Bee-Balm (*Monarda fistulosa*) - A savory-flavored (sage or thyme-like) native wild mint, popular with bees and other pollinators. Like most mints, this species can spread assertively, a desirable trait when you are reclaiming a site from invasive species. This species also grows readily from seed.



Sweet Goldenrod (*Solidago odora*) - the leaves and flowers have a licorice-like flavor . This is one of the native species the American Colonists made tea from when they were boycotting the British tea during the Revolutionary War era.



Sweet Goldenrod (*Solidago odora*) grows readily from seed; no stratification is required. Here I have just transplanted baby *S. odora* plants that self-sowed in the summer, from a plug I obtained and potted up from the New England Wild Flower Society.





Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) - yet another of the "Revolutionary tea" plants - the dried berries make a fine Black or Szechuan Pepper-like substitute

- Migrating birds like these high-energy berries, though, so be sure to leave some on the plant
- Spicebush likes to grow as an understory plant in hardwood forests, often near streams

As Spicebush is dioecious (male and female flowers are borne on separate plants), make sure you plant at least one female if you want to get berries

Spicebush (along with *Sassafras*) also serves a host plant for the cool-looking Spicebush Swallowtail caterpillar (i.e., another reason why you might want to consider adding this species to your property if it isn't already there)





Beach Plum - *Prunus maritima*



Beach Plum -
Prunus maritima



Beach Plums, gathered many miles inland from the ocean



Beach Plum (*Prunus maritima*) - the yellow-fleshed variety - collected in Dennis, MA, September, 2015

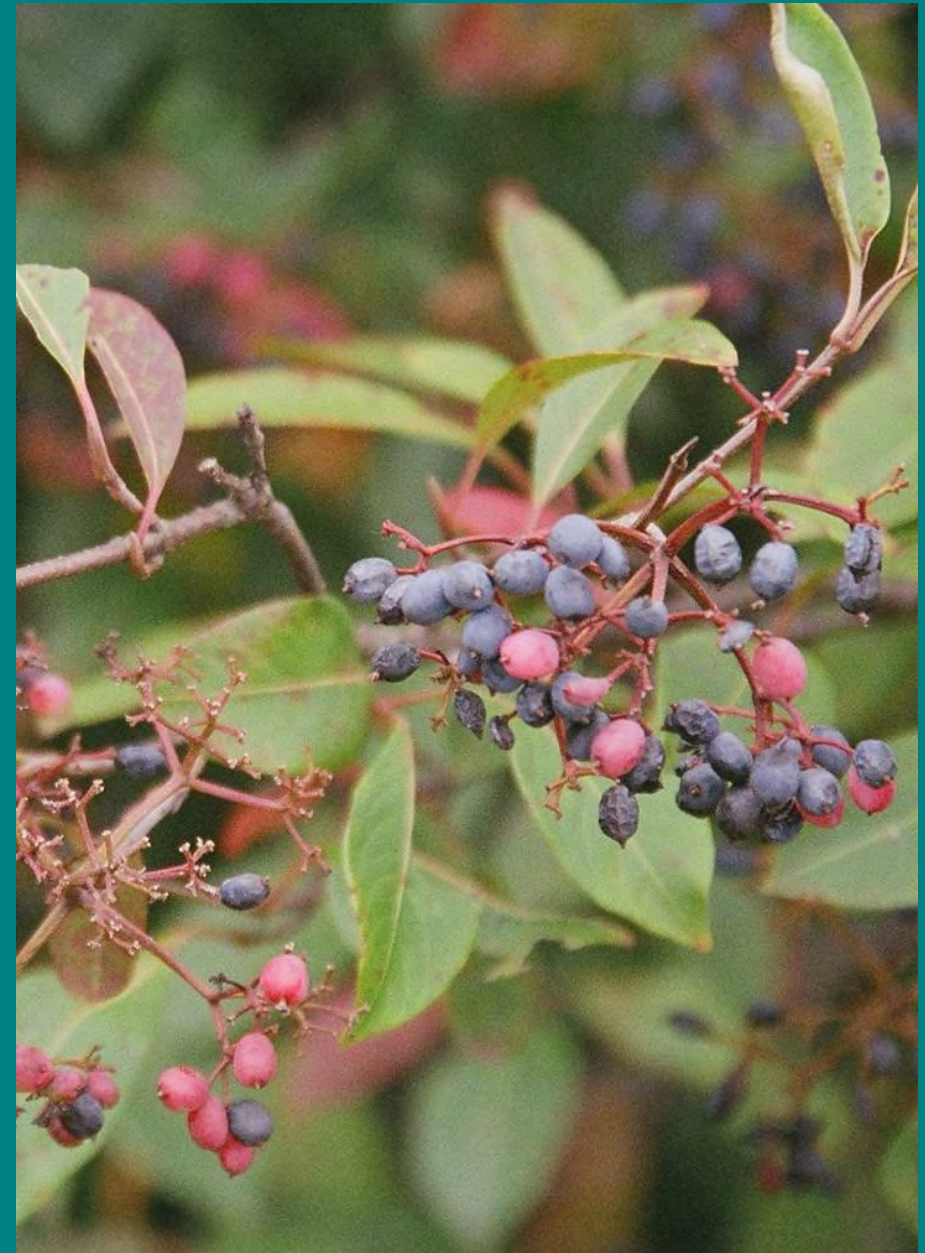
Some of the Beach Plum pits I had stored in my stratification fridge since having collected them in September, 2015 "woke up" (i.e., the radicles emerged) in February, so I had to sow them right away. Here they are, about a month later, growing up on a window sill in my basement.



One of the places where Beach Plums I propagated from seed were planted: Bassing Beach, Scituate MA, a barrier beach owned by the Cohasset Conservation Trust. Here I am with volunteers from the Trust, just after a lobster boat had ferried us, the beach plums and other edible native species out to the island.



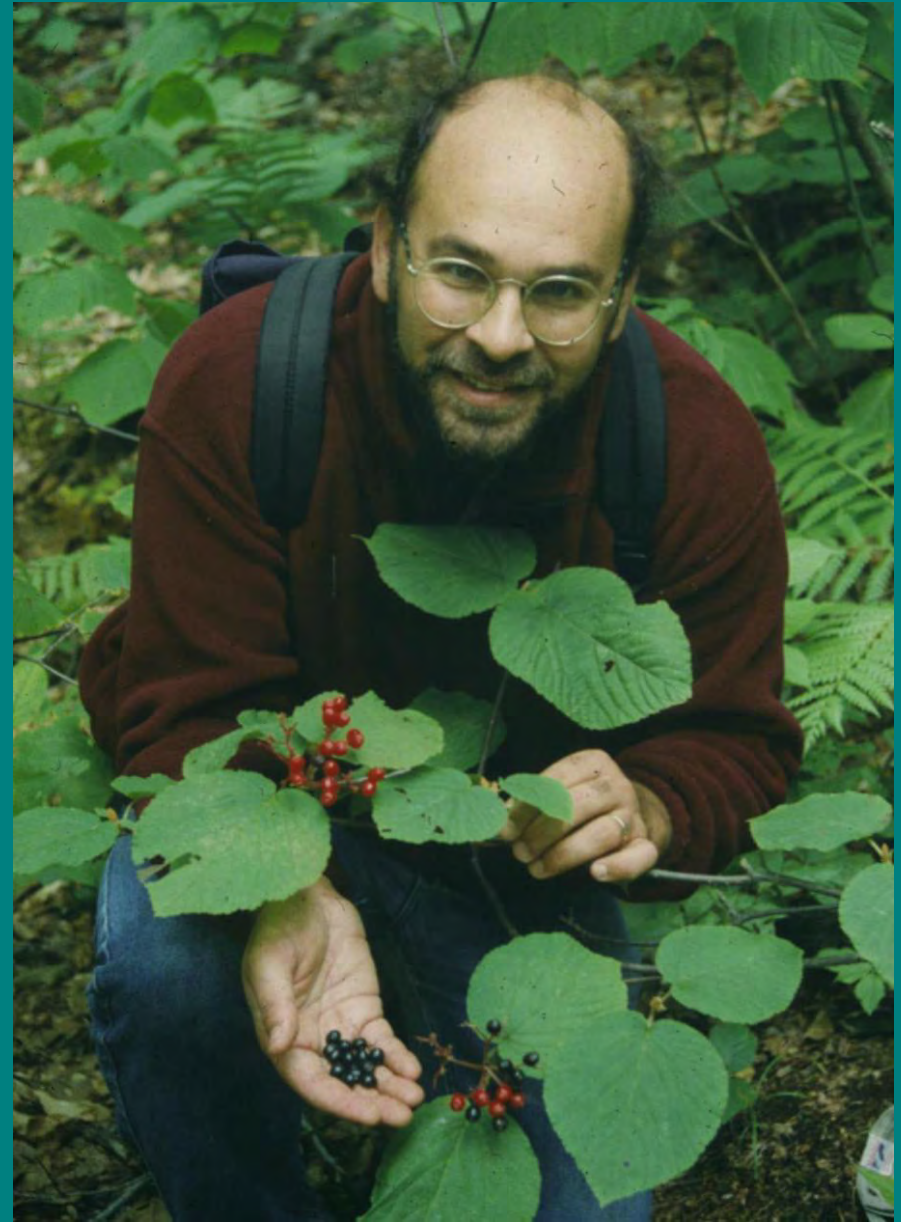
Wild Raisin (*Viburnum cassinoides*) - can tolerate drier, rockier soils (still likes sun) - produces pretty clusters of edible fruit (ripe when purple)



Nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*) - a shrub that likes damp, meadowy areas - the fruit ripens in September and resembles stewed prunes in flavor and texture



Hobblebush or Moosewood (*Viburnum alnifolium*, aka *V. lantanoides*) - a common understory plant in cool, northern hardwood forests - pretty spring flowers, and fruit with prune, clove-spiced flavor ripe (when black) in late summer





... and Hobblebush leaves can put on quite a colorful show in the fall





Squashberry (*Viburnum edule*), collected in Hartland, VT in Oct. 2015 - made a very yummy sauce (with sugar added, of course) - seeds saved for propagating

Staghorn Sumac - Rhus typhina

All red-berried Sumacs native to New England are edible - that includes *Smooth Sumac*, *Rhus glabra*, and *Winged (aka Shining) Sumac*, *Rhus copallinum*.



Ripe Staghorn Sumac berry clusters, ready to be made into Sumacade



To make Sumacade:

- (1) Place berry clusters in a bowl;
- (2) Add 1-2 quarts lukewarm or colder water;
- (3) Knead /rub the berry clusters in the water for 4-5 minutes (see how the water takes on a pinkish-orange color);
- (4) remove and discard the spent berries;
- (5) pour the liquid through a paper towel or equivalent filter; and
- (6) Serve the Sumacade hot or cold, sweetened or unsweetened (I usually serve it cold and sweetened, like lemonade).



Sumacade (aka
"Rhus Juice" or
Indian
Lemonade) .

Staghorn Sumac propagates easily from seed - perhaps too easily. About six years ago, I made the mistake of putting some spent *R. typhina* berries in my compost pile. I am still getting sumac plants sprouting from that seed in my raised beds where I use my "finished" compost. So now I just pot those Sumac babies up, and grow them out for planting elsewhere.



Staghorn Sumac produces brilliant autumn plumage



Wild Grapes - Riverside and Fox (Concord) Grape, *Vitis riparia* and *V. labrusca*



This photo is of a **Fox Grape** vine laden with ripe fruit, which are often first detected by smell



A basket of Fox Grapes, *Vitis labrusca*

Wild Grape Cheesecake with a Wild Hazelnut Crust and a Wild Grape Glaze



Riverside Grape (*Vitis riparia*) leaves (note smooth, green undersides) at the right stage for stuffing



Stuffed Riverside Grape Leaves





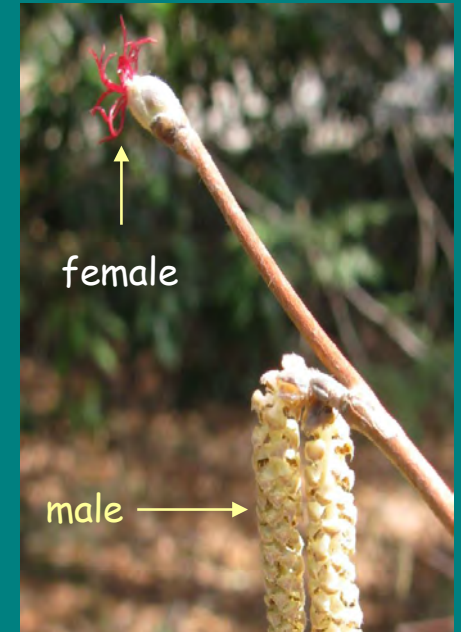
Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*) -
collected in Hingham, MA



Starry False Solomon's Seal
(*Maianthemum stellatum*) -
collected in Ipswich, MA



Common Hazelnut (*Corylus americanus*) flowers, husks and nuts



Beaked Hazelnut - *Corylus cornuta*



While Hazelnuts (*C. americana* or *cornuta*) readily grow from seed, the nuts are "hydrophilic", meaning they will lose their viability if allowed to dry out. They should be sown outdoors soon after collecting, or may be cold moist stratified for up to a year, or possibly longer, and then sown in the spring. Do not forget to protect sown nuts from rodents. I use a half-inch mesh metal hardware cloth for this purpose; the sprouts can grow through the mesh. Leave the mesh on until the nut has been completely used up by the developing tree.

Oaks/Acorns (*Quercus alba* and other spp.) - note the rounded lobes on the White Oak leaves on the left, versus the pointy lobes of the other oak leaf, which produces more bitter acorns due to higher tannic acid levels



White Oak (*Quercus alba*) acorns start sprouting soon after falling off the trees in late September, so they can't be stored in a stratification fridge for longer than a month without their radicles rotting. So better to sow them soon after collecting them in the fall, and protect the sown nuts from rodents and other critters.



Shagbark Hickory - *Carya ovata*



A basketful of freshly-gathered Shagbark Hickory Nuts, some still in their husks, and one still attached to the tree (see photo at right) - and a close-up (below), showing the four-parted husks, the de-husked shells, and a pair of nut meat halves extracted from a shelled nut (note the penny for scale).





Maple Hickory Nut Pie

Examples of three cookie recipes utilizing Shagbark Hickory Nuts:



Thumbprint Cookies, filled with Wild Fruit Jelly (left)
Hickory Nut Wafer Cookies (center)
Triple Maple Hickory Nut Sandwich Cookies (right)

While Shagbark Hickory readily grows from seed (I have been getting about an 80% germination rate on the nuts I have planted), the nuts are "hydrophilic", meaning they will lose their viability if allowed to dry out. They should be sown outdoors soon after collecting, or may be cold moist stratified for up to a year, or possibly longer, and then sown in the spring. Do not forget to protect sown nuts from rodents. I use a half-inch mesh metal hardware cloth for this purpose; the sprouts can grow through the mesh (see below). Leave the mesh on until the nut has been completely used up by the developing tree.



I sow *C. ovata* nuts in 14"-deep "Treepots", to accommodate the species' notoriously-long taproots. Four of these otherwise very tippy Treepots fit very snugly into a standard milk crate.

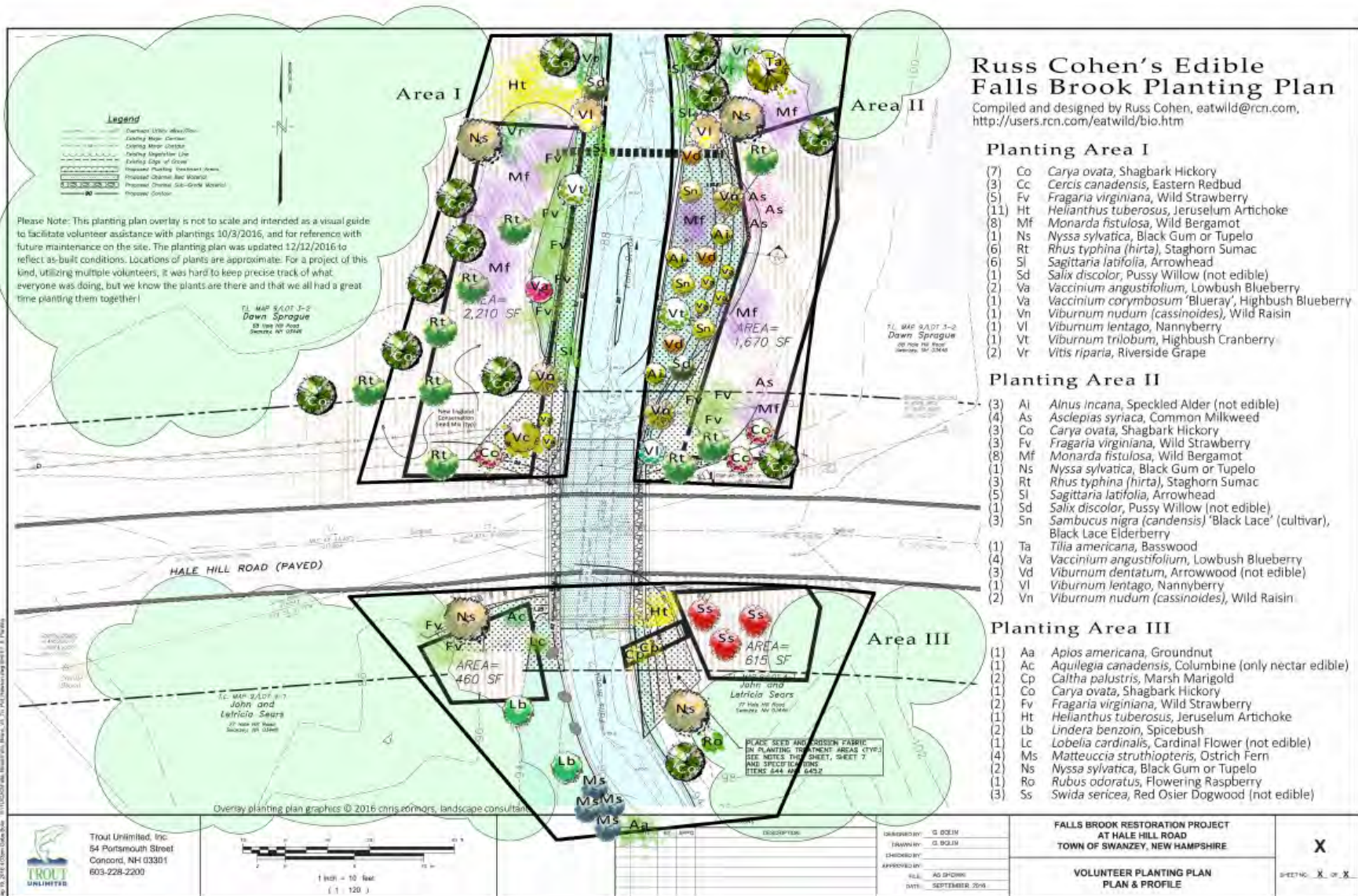


C. Ovata nuts begin to sprout within a week after being moved from cold to warm moist stratification.

I have also passed along many *C. ovata* nuts to others for them to propagate into trees. In the photo below, Keene State (NH) greenhouse manager Katie Featherston shows off Shagbark Hickory tree seedlings she grew from nuts I supplied her. Some of these trees were later deployed (along with many other edible native species supplied by Katie and myself) to revegetate a site along Falls Brook in Swanzey, NH following a culvert replacement project (see next slide).



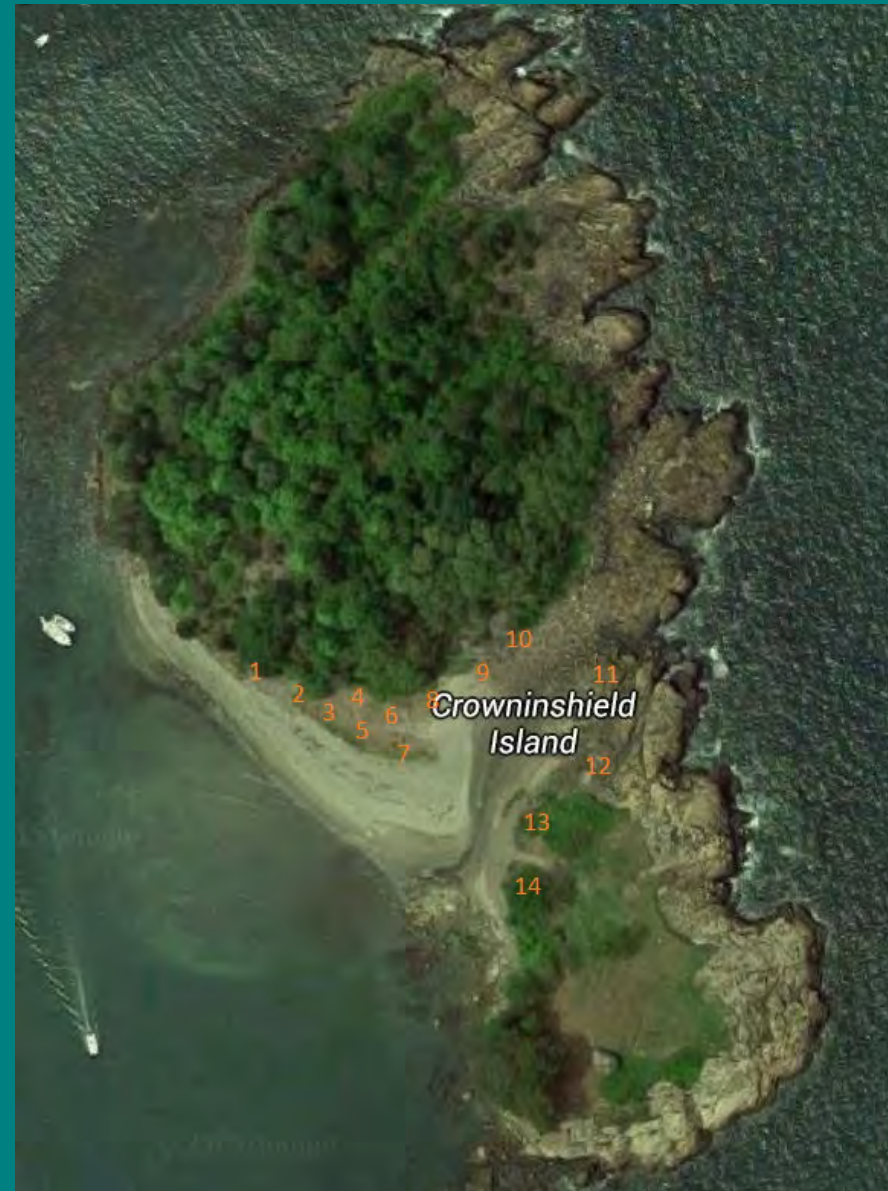
"As Planted" Schematic for the Falls Brook Culvert Replacement Project, Swanzey, NH, October 3, 2016, listing and showing the location of the edible native species used in the revegetation of the project area post-construction.



A list of where I have been planting edible native plants at various sites in New England over the past year:

- Planted Beach Plums on Crowninshield Island, **Marblehead, MA**
- Planted a variety of edible native species on Bakers Island, **Salem, MA**
- Planted beach plums, persimmons and shagbark hickories at a new paddler access campsite on the Connecticut River in **Whately, MA**
- Planted a variety of edible native species at Graylag Ccabins, **Pittsfield, NH**
- Planted a variety of edible native species in conjunction with the Falls Brook culvert replacement project, **Swanzey, NH**
- Planted Beach Plums, Sweet Goldenrod, Wild Strawberry, Rose Mallow and Milkweed at Bassing Beach in **Scituate, MA**
- Planted 10 species of edible natives at the Mill Pond Conservation Area in **Westport, MA**
- Planted a variety of native edible plants at Strawberry Hill, **Ipswich, MA**; and
- Planted a variety of edible native plants at the Acton Arboretum, **Acton, MA**

Planting Beach Plums on Crowninshield (aka Brown's) Island, Marblehead, MA, a 10-acre island owned by The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR). The numbers indicate the approximate location of where the plums were eventually planted.





A [reconnaissance trip to the island on 8/28/15](#) revealed several locations which appeared to be suitable habitat for Beach Plums.



After getting the OK from TTOR, I purchased fourteen local ecotype, wild-seed-propagated Beach Plum plants from the New England Wild Flower Society, then headed out to the island on November 10 to locate and pre-dig the holes into which the Beach Plums will be planted.





Volunteer Jonathan Gawrys (of SumCo Engineering of Salem, MA) carting out some of the fourteen Beach Plum bushes over to Crowninshield Island across the mud flat at low tide on November 18



Volunteers from the Marblehead Conservancy planting the Beach Plums, and trimming back invasive buckthorn and bittersweet to help make room for them



Posing for photo at the end of the planting project (see one of the new beach plum bushes at arrow).



Checking in on one of the beach plum plants the following spring, at blooming time

► *I helped to initiate and implement eight other similar edible native species planting projects by the end of 2016, and anticipate undertaking a similar number in 2017, as well as checking on the plantings at the previous projects.*



☺ The End ☺

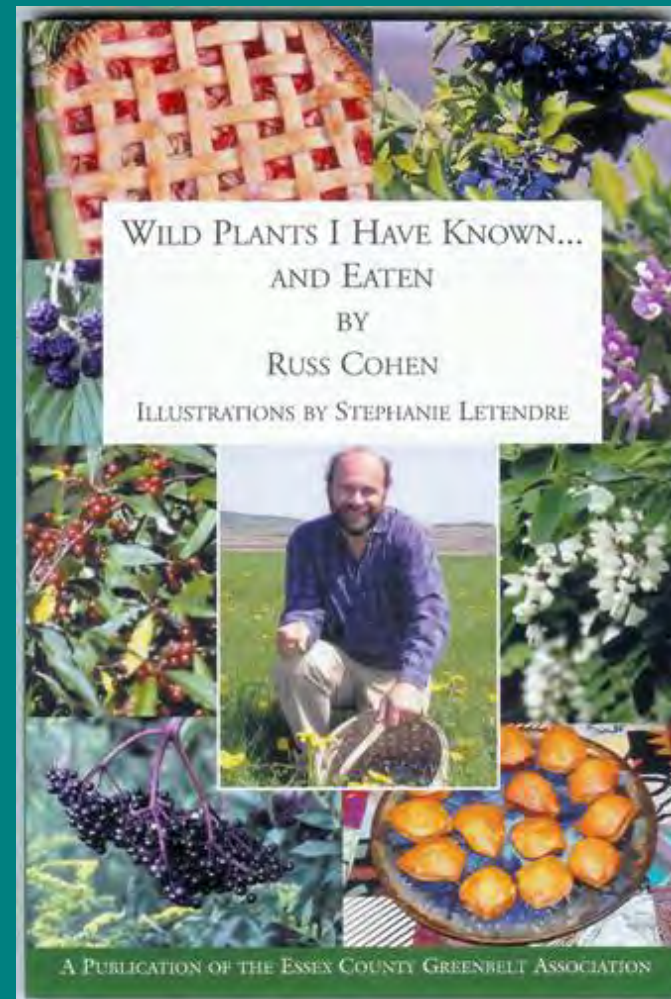
-- Questions? --

More information on Russ' wild edibles programs, recipes, book/articles, etc.: <http://users.rcn.com/eatwild/sched.htm>

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"Encore" slide

(1) *"Man vs. Wild"/Wolfeboro NH story*

A hand-drawn sign is attached to a tree trunk in a forest. The sign is divided into three horizontal sections by thin black lines. The text is written in black, hand-drawn capital letters. The background shows a dense forest of green trees and foliage.

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The preceding presentation was delivered at the

2017 National Native Seed Conference

Washington, D.C. February 13-16, 2017

This and additional presentations available at <http://nativeseed.info>

