

Wild Garlic

(Allium Ursinum)



There are many wild garlic varieties, such as *Allium Ursinum*, whose glossy spear-like leaves and white flowers resemble Lily of the Valley, and some others that have more spikey leaves. There are two varieties in the Jubilee Orchard.



These varieties, along with other commonly-found varieties lurking in woods, hedgerows, lanes and fields, are free and very tasty. You will often smell them before you spot them, the unmissable fragrance will reassure you that it is wild garlic.

As the name suggests, it's the wild cousin to the garlic you use in the kitchen. Wild garlic is a leafy green bulbous perennial native to Britain that starts to appear as small shoots in February, flowers in April and goes to seed around June. Also commonly known as ramsons, but not to be confused the other edible wild allium, three-cornered leek, wild garlic grows prolifically in damp woodland.

Wild garlic has one of the longest seasons of the wild plants. The small, tender micro-herb like shoots start to appear from mid-February, with the plant reaching its full, leafy glory in late March. Around mid-April, the beautiful salad-enhancing star-shaped flowers blossom. Then, the flowers go to seed and the leaves become bitter, but the seeds can also be eaten raw or pickled like a caper. **You do not have permission to dig the edible bulbs, yet, but when they become fully established that may be an option.**

One of the most popular options for wild garlic is to turn it into a brilliantly punchy pesto sauce. Blitz the wild garlic leaves with parmesan, garlic, lemon and pine nuts to form a rough paste. This easy homemade pesto will keep in the fridge for two weeks and is delicious stirred through pasta or drizzled over salads, soups and fish dishes.