

Ground Elder Recipes - Eat Your Way to Eradicating a Troublesome Weed

Contributed by Cab

Ground elder (*Aegopodium podagraria*) is all too common in gardens, parks and wild places in the British Isles. It's an almost ineradicable weed, laughing off regular weeding, hoeing, often surviving glyphosate unless it's applied carefully. Many gardeners give up and accept that it will be there for as long as they are. But I've discovered the secret of wiping it out from your garden. Eat it.

It was, after all, introduced to the British Isles by the Romans as a vegetable. Eat every last succulent, tasty shoot it throws up, and it will slowly die off. A foolproof plan, perhaps, but it does, I fear, have one obvious drawback. Ground elder is a superb spring and summer vegetable, and by the time you've finally beaten it, you'll have developed a taste for it. But don't be discouraged, this pernicious weed can be found growing practically anywhere!

This all rather begs the question of how we can best make use of ground elder in the kitchen, and here is a short collection of my favourite recipes for it. The quantity of '1 bunch' of ground elder in the following recipes refers to an amount of ground elder picked so that the stems would be as thick as a bunch of spring onions, Always pick the young, tender greens, ideally before the plant has flowered. Ground Elder Omelette (serves two)

1/2 to 1 bunch of ground elder

4 eggs

A little butter

Salt and pepper to taste

Pick young, bright green shoots of ground elder. Take them home, and wilt them in a frying pan in the butter. Beat the eggs, season them with salt and pepper, and add them to the pan. Cook for a minute or two, before putting the pan under the grill to finish off (or, alternatively, flip the omelette over).

Serve with crusty bread as a light lunch or starter. Ground Elder Quiche

Shortcrust pastry (125g flour, 60g butter, a pinch of salt and enough water to form a pastry)

1 bunch of ground elder

2 eggs

300ml of milk

Salt and pepper

A grating of nutmeg 100g of cheese, cheddar is ideal but a little parmesan added to it would help

Make the pastry (sift the flour and salt, rub in the butter to create a crumb texture, mix in enough water to form a dough). Roll the pastry out, and use it to line a greased flan dish.

Take the leaves from ground elder stems. Beat the eggs with the milk and a little salt, pepper and nutmeg. Mix in the leaves and pour into the flan case. Grate the cheese and sprinkle it over the top, and bake in a moderately hot oven for half an hour to forty minutes. Serve hot or cold. Ground Elder Soup 2 bunches of ground elder

A dessert spoon of butter

A dessertspoon of flour

1 small onion

1 rasher of bacon (optional)

Salt and pepper

500ml chicken stock

250ml single cream

Take the leaves from the ground elder and rinse them. Sweat them off in the water left on the leaves for a minute, then take them off the heat.

Soften the onion in the butter (with the bacon, if using) and add the flour. Slowly add the stock, stirring all the time to make a smooth soup. Mix the leaves in and simmer for five minutes or so, before blending or rubbing through a sieve. Add in the cream and season to taste. Serve with crispy croutons.

Ground Elder Cooked as Asparagus This is perhaps the best way of cooking ground elder... Take young, green shoots and steam them till warm, no more than a minute. Toss them in melted butter and serve immediately. To discuss this article click [here](#).