



The Spring Maiden

Article by Meghan Peterka

It was late February; the community was at the end of their food stores. They were hungry and waiting for the sun to come again. Along came a maiden, with wild, golden hair, and a dress that was silky green. She was carrying a basket that was full of flowers, greens, and roots. She built a fire, and prepared a meal for the community from her harvest basket. As the meal cooked over the fire, she began to sing a beautiful, lively tune. The tune and the smell of the wonderful food enticed the community to dance and sing together. Once the food was cooked, she served the community, and they ate their fill. They asked her what the name of this food was, and she said, "Dandelion." They asked her where they could find this delicious food. She told them "everywhere."

As the evening continued, the people noticed the maiden's hair turning grey. She got up to dance with the people, and as she spun her hair began to blow away in the wind and she too disappeared. The next day, the sun rose and all around the ground were these beautiful yellow flowers that looked just like the maiden who had visited them. The people stopped, smiled, and began to gather the wild food that they knew would nourish them until harvest

Dandelion is an amazing wild food. Our family harvests Dandelion greens in early Spring to put into our salads, soups, and stir-fry's. We make Dandelion Fritters with the flowers. We also gather and dry the roots of Dandelion to make a wonderful hot, bitter drink. Dandelion is not only available for us to use while we wait for the coming harvest; early pollinators like Bumble Bees love to harvest the nectar. Bumble Bees come out to pollinate earlier than other pollinators and need the food to do their work.



I enjoy seeing Dandelion in the Spring while we continue to wait for the coming Sun here in the Pacific Northwest. I love to pick her and blow the seeds from her stem, reminding me of my playful youth. I also like to go out at night with a lighter and burn the seed heads, which look like mini-fireworks when ignited. This is also a great way to prevent the seeds from blowing around the yard and community.

I invite you to learn more about Dandelion and go out and play with her in the Spring and Fall.



Dandelion Fritter Recipe

2-3 cups freshly picked and fully open Dandelion Flowers

1 cup of flour

1 egg

Oil to cover bottom of pan

Salt and Pepper for savory, powdered sugar, cinnamon and/or honey for sweet!

Cut stems of flower off really close to the flower head.

Soak them for 10- 15 minutes in cold salted water.

Drain and pat dry. Mix egg and milk in one bowl, and the flour, salt and pepper, in another.

Dip Dandelion in egg, dredge in flour, then fry until golden brown.

Remove from oil, drain on a paper towel, salt and pepper (or sweeten) to taste.

Enjoy!

