



THE WILD ROSE HIP

HARVESTING SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER FOR THE
NOVEMBER WILD&SLOW



THE JUST-ABOUT COMPLETE, BEGINNERS GUIDE ON
WHERE TO FIND IT, WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE,
HOW TO PICK IT, HOW TO PREPARE IT,
AND HOW TO PRESERVE IT UNTIL NOVEMBER WITH
SUGGESTED RECIPES FOR ANY STALLHOLDER WISHING
TO PARTAKE IN WILD&SLOW



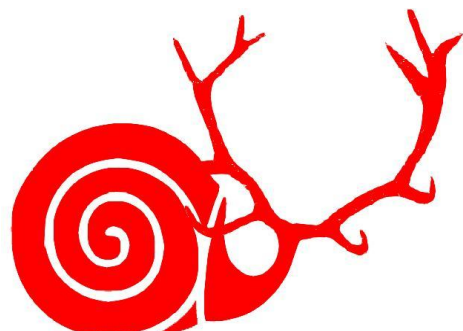
There are two varieties of wild rose that produce a hip; both are members of the *Rosacea* family. *Rosa Canina* (the common rose, dog rose, briar rose, hip tree, itchy backs) and *Rosa Rugosa* (the Japanese rose). The former is the true wild rose of the country while *Rosa Rugosa*, tolerates salt spray and wind and is fully naturalised as a hedgerow plant in coastal areas and, more recently, planted on road embankments. The hips of both types are edible and can be used to make jellies, preserves, sauces and wine.

Rose hips have been eaten since ancient times and in the Irish tree lists it is a 4th class tree alongside brambles and bog myrtles. In the mediaeval times wild roses were grown in monasteries as a medicinal herb. It had the great virtue of being high in a number of nutrients and especially high in vitamin C. Rose hip syrup contains 300mg per 100g. ⁽¹⁾ This is up to four times more than blackcurrant juice and twenty times as much as the juice of an orange, according to Roger Phillips in his book on Wild Food. It was part of the war effort to gather rose hips and turn them into syrup for use as a vitamin drink to prevent scurvy in the population, especially in children, during the Second World War.



Where to find Wild Rose Hips

Hedgerows, wasteland, the edges of woodlands, and abandoned homesteads often growing alongside brambles. *Rosa Rugosa* is common near the seashore, particularly spreading in the hedgerows from houses.

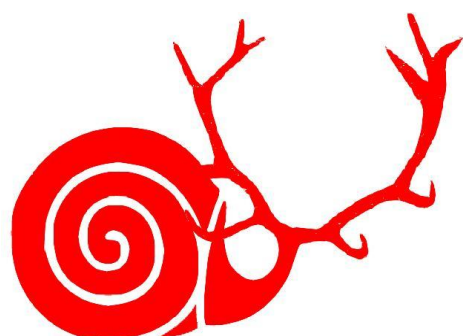


What it looks like



The dog rose is an upright but straggly shrub and can grow up to 3 metres high, often piggy-backing on other hedgerow shrubs and trees for support. Leaves have a single leader and the rest grow opposite each other in either 4 or 6 pairs. They are sharply toothed at the edges and soft to the touch. The flowers, which are white or pale pink, bloom any time between late April and July. In early autumn you see the hips forming. They are like a narrow-topped urn in shape, orange at first then turning towards red. Wait to gather them until October and after the first frosts, which soften them, but before the end of the month. Scientific evidence for this advice cannot be found. It may simply be the folk tradition that, after that date, the Púca breathes, or spits (or worse) on all berries!

Rosa Rugosa is far shorter, tougher in texture, has more abundant leaves, arranged without a leader and in about 4-6 pairs. The flowers are larger and their colour is a striking deep pinkish-purple. The hips are far, far larger and squat, like a flattened sphere in shape, with a little tuft of the base of the flower on the top. They are a repeat flowering rose so you might be tempted to gather them during the summer.



How to pick

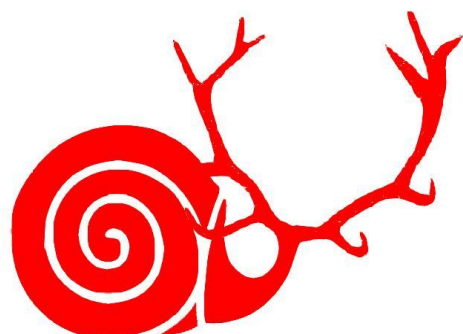
There thorns on the bush but please remember the nickname 'itchy'! Rose hips and seeds are covered with fine hairs than can irritate the skin and cause internal damage. So don't let children eat them raw or shove them inside clothes. Wear gloves and long sleeves. The best berries are at the top of the bush so bring a walking stick or crook and pull down a branch gently. Pick plenty; a kilo of hips will yield about 1¼ litres of syrup.

How to prepare

Remove any stalks and rinse with cold water and drain well. When ready to cook have everything ready as, when crushed, they must be cooked at once to avoid vitamin loss.

Traditional uses

Making them into syrup, is by far the most common use, followed by rose hip wine (which was sometimes made with rose hips preserved in syrup), rosehip and crab-apple jam or jelly, and as one ingredient in a mixed hedgerow jam or jelly. Traditional in Northern Europe especially in Hungary, Germany and the Scandinavian countries are fruit soups, which, in winter, are often made from diluted fruit syrups including rose hip syrup. A preserve made of a purée of rose hips can be used for tarts and other desserts and puddings.



Preserving Wild Rose Hips

Dried, preserved in sugar syrup, in wine and in spirits. You could also use them to flavour vinegar.

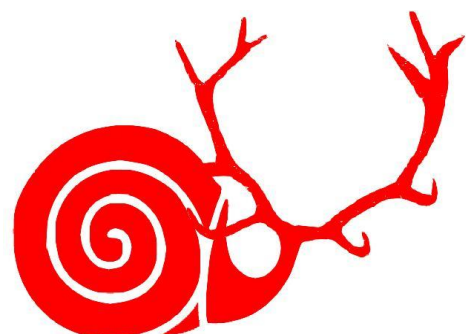
Preserving Wild Rose Hips by Drying

Wash the hips and spread out on rack to dry in a sunny, airy spot indoors. They will take up to two weeks at room temperature. Drying in a dehydrator will take five or six hours. To oven dry spread washed hips on roasting trays. Dry for one hour at 50°C and leave in oven to cool. Repeat this for seven days in a row.

Storing dried rose hips. These are best stored in a cardboard, or wooden box in a cool, dry, dark place.

Preserving Wild Rose Hips by Sugar

Wash and drain well and then follow the individual recipes for jams, jelly, pastes and syrup. No matter what recipe you use it is important that you strain cooked hips through a fine mesh strainer in order to remove the hairs and seeds that cause irritation.





Possible recipes that might be suitable for a stallholder at Wild&Slow

Wild Rose Hip Syrup

Here is a recipe and method decreed in a hedgerow harvest pamphlet published by the UK Ministry for Food during the Second World War.

Curiously, even though sugar was strictly rationed during the war, this recipe uses more sugar than most contemporary recipes. A spoonful of syrup taken once a day will supply a good amount of Vitamin C.

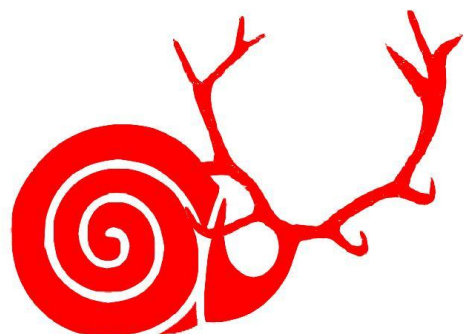
900g **Wild Rose Hips**

1.7 Lt water, boiling

Plus additional 850ml water, boiling

560g Sugar

Boil 1.7 Lt of water. Mince hips through a coarse mincer, if possible directly into the boiling water. As soon as it comes back to the boil turn off the heat. Set aside for 15 minutes. Strain the liquid through a flannel or linen jelly bag until the bulk of the liquid has come through. Return the residue in the jelly bag back into the pan. Add the additional boiling water, stir and allow standing for ten minutes. Pour back into the jelly bag and allow dripping. To make sure that all the sharp hairs are removed put back the first half cupful of juice into the jelly bag and allow to drip through again. Put all the juice back into the saucepan; boil to reduce until the juice measures about one and a half pints. Stir in the sugar and boil for a further five minutes. Bottle in hot sterilized jars and seal at once. Use small bottles as the syrup will not keep for more than a week or two once opened. Store in a dark cupboard.



Wild Rose Hip Soup

A German recipe collected by Theodora Fitzgibbon.

225g dried **Wild Rose Hips**
900ml water
4 cloves
A small piece of cinnamon stick
Strip of lemon peel
2 tbsp roux (1 flour, 1 butter, browned)
Sugar to taste
2-3 Tbsp wine

Soak the rose hips in a little warm water until rehydrated. Boil in the water, with spices and lemon peel until soft. Pass through a fine sieve. Add the roux a little at a time. Sweeten to taste with a little sugar. Stir in the wine and cook for a further minute or two. Serve hot with a little whipped cream. ⁽²⁾

Wild Rose Hip Soup

350g dried **Wild Rose Hips**
1¾ litre water
1 stick cinnamon
3 tbsp lemon juice
1 strip lemon peel
A large glass of white wine
Sugar to taste
A little arrowroot

Re-hydrate and simmer the rose hips in the water until soft. Put through a fine sieve to remove seeds and hairs. Put back into the hot water with the cinnamon, lemon juice and peel, and all but a tablespoon or so of the wine. Add a few tablespoons of sugar and simmer for about five minutes. Taste for sweetness adding as much sugar as desired and stir until dissolved. Slake the arrowroot in the remaining wine and stir into the soup. Bring back to simmering point stirring all the time. If serving hot, serve at once with a little whipped cream, or crème fraîche, or sour cream. If serving cold, chill for a couple of hours before serving as above.



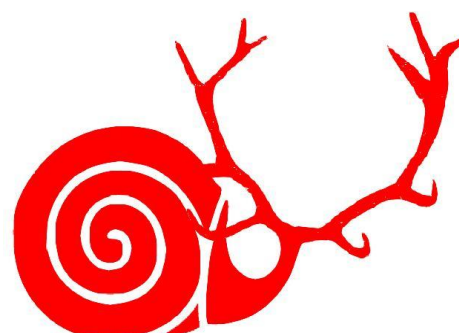
Wild Rose Hip Purée

Dating from the mediaeval period, this is probably one of the oldest recipes for preserving rose hips for festive tarts during the winter months. No doubt honey rather than sugar was used. It is a tad labour intensive.

.5 Kg **Wild Rose Hips**

Sugar or honey (equal to the weight of the prepared flesh)

Cut open the Wild Rose Hips and remove all the seeds, hairs and pith. Place in a wide-necked glass or earthenware jar for several days until they soften. You will hasten this by giving them a stir every so often. Put them through a very fine-meshed sieve. Using an equal weight of the resulting purée and sugar, warm gently, just enough to dissolve the sugar. Pour into a sterilized jar and sterilize as described in the recipe for Wild Rose Hip syrup.





Wild Rose Hip, sweet and sour preserve

A German recipe collected by Theodora Fitzgibbon ⁽²⁾

900g fresh **Wild Rose Hips**

300mls white wine vinegar

300g sugar or sufficient to add two-thirds by weight to 450g purée

Marinate the fresh rose hips in the wine vinegar for three days stirring frequently. On the third day pass through a very fine sieve. Measure the pulp and to every 450g of pulp stir in 300g of warmed sugar. Heat gently until the purée comes to a bare simmer. Do not boil. Pot in sterilized jars.

Wild Rose Hip and Crab Apple Jam

1kg fresh **Wild Rose Hips**

1kg crab apples

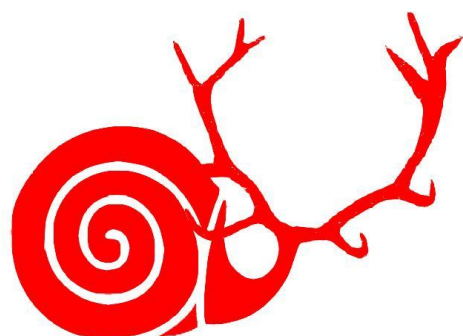
1kg sugar

Water to barely cover each fruit

Place hips in a pot barely covered with water. Cook gently until soft. Sieve through a very fine strainer. Place crab apples in another pot, barely cover with water and cook until soft; sieve through a coarse strainer. Combine crab apple and rose hip purée in a pot. Add warmed sugar. Cook, stirring, until the sugar has dissolved. Taste for sweetness. Boil fast until setting point is reached. Skim and pot in sterilized jars. Store in a cool dry place.

Note:

This recipe may be converted to a clear jelly by straining the cooked fruits through a jelly bag, adding the sugar and boiling until setting point is reached. The jelly is particularly good with game.





Wild Rose Hip tart

- 1 jar of preserved **Wild Rose Hip** purée (see recipe above)
- 1 fully blind baked -shallow rich shortcrust pastry case
- 3-4 tablespoons **Wild Rose Hip** jelly
- Crystallised **Wild Rose Petals** (optional)

Spread the Wild Rose Hip purée over the bottom of the pastry. Melt the jelly and pour over the purée. Allow to set before serving. Decorate with crystallised rose petals.

Wild Rose Hip wine made from Rose Hip syrup

This recipe comes from Cyril and Kit O Ceirin's collection. ⁽³⁾

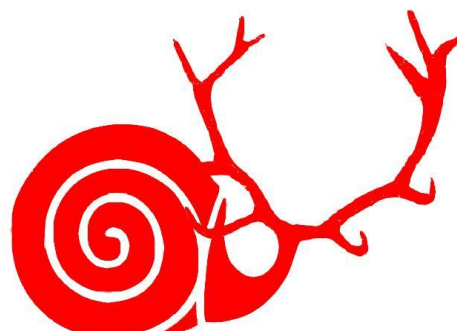
- 200ml **Wild Rose Hip** syrup
- 4½ litres water
- White wine yeast
- Yeast nutrient
- Pectin enzyme

Bring the water to the boil. Add wild rose hip syrup and stir, allow cool until luke-warm. Dissolve the yeast in a little water. When it has activated, add to the liquid with the yeast nutrient and pectin enzyme. Transfer into fermentation demi-john and place in a warm place so that fermentation will be speedy. After a week, top up with cold water to the bottom of the neck of the demi-john and ferment to a finish at a cooler temperature. You may need to add extra sugar to keep the fermentation active for as long as possible.

⁽¹⁾ The New Oxford Book of Food Plants, 1997

⁽²⁾ Food of the Western World by Theodora Fitzgibbon, Hutchinson 1976

⁽³⁾ Wild and Free by Cyril and Kit O'Ceirin, O'Brien Press 1978.





A Wild Rose Hip and Crab Apple Jelly

One recipe, three results, no waste

.5 kg **Wild Rose Hips**, prepared
1.5 kg Wild Crab Apples, prepared
Cinnamon or spices, to taste, if you wish
1kg sugar
Water, just enough to get the juices running

Simmer rosehips in a pot for 2 hours, press through a sieve. Cut apples in half and simmer separately until soft, bring to the boil. Combine rosehip pulp, crab apples and apple liqueur and strain liquid through muslin, without forcing, overnight.

First, taking the clear liquid, place in a pot with warmed sugar on a 50/50 basis (ie 1 Lt. Liquid to 1 Kg sugar) stir and boil rapidly until setting point is reached if you have a thermometer or test for setting on a cold plate. Skim and hot pour into sterilised jars, cover, and store in a cool dry place.

Second, twist the muslin and force the pulpy mixture through, pour into sterilised jars, cover, and store in a cool dry place.

Third, take the pulp, press through a sieve to remove cores and seeds. Spread this on a dehydrator tray or baking tray. Dehydrate or place on baking trays in as low an oven as possible, overnight or until dry.

What you get is Clear Wild Rosehip and Wild Crab Apple Jelly:

That works beautifully and simply toasted with a goat cheese, or as an old-fashioned 'Fruit Butter' accompaniment with a vintage cheese. Also works a treat with pork, turkey or chicken and makes a great accompaniment with a traditional meatloaf or as the sweet ingredient if you're making your own muffins.

Also a Cloudy Wild Rosehip and Wild Crab Apple Cordial:

Perfect as a chilled cordial with water for the kids instead of the mainstream stuff, just add your own 'sugar syrup recipe' to sweeten. Also perfect for the adults as 'a teaspoon of autumn' with a glass of bubbly. Chill well after opening or if needed, freeze.

And finally a Dried Wild Rosehip and Wild Crab Apple Pulp:

Cut into cubes or thin slices, you can use it with your Granola or Muesli in the morning; check it out in your bread or scone recipes.



The Nitty-Gritty

Okay...so here's the nitty-gritty, but don't let it put you off! All twelve or so of these 'Wild Food Templates' for gathering and harvesting Wild Foods have been chosen because they are highly identifiable. It is always desirable for the first time forager to go out with someone who has experience.

However, as always, it is up to you to discern what to pick, how to harvest it and preserve it in a manner that would be in keeping with and fit for our ancestors.

Remember, if in doubt.... don't!

Disclaimer

For countless generations our forefathers/mothers gathered Wild Foods and it seems they did so pretty well...after all we're all still here! However modern protocol demands that we produce a disclaimer like this. So here we go.

The above plant images, although helpful, are not for identifying purposes. It is important to use a good guide, unless you are familiar with these plants. This post is only an introduction to the plants mentioned therein, and should not be relied upon in isolation. Foraging guides of repute should always be used, and one should always err on the conservative side, remembering, that it is important to read any guide together with any caution notes, and ultimately responsibility for your safety and those that you give, serve or sell these foods to, lies with you.

All information contained including various recipes are purely for illustrative and informative purposes only and ultimately it is the user that determines as to how the above mentioned Wild Food, might be used.

