

# Dandelion

*Taraxacum officinale*

**Region of Origin:** Eurasia  
**Habitat:** Perennial forb  
**Current Range:** Throughout most of the northern hemisphere  
**Life Span:** Year round



Dandelion seeds can float for several miles, and often land in someone's lawn where they burst into hundreds. Named for their leaf shape after the French for "lion's tooth", dandelions are pests and can out-compete native plants in natural settings, and vehemently hated by many gardeners. Dandelion is one of the first flowers of spring, and the last flowers of autumn, which is good news for bees. All parts of the plant will emit a milky sap when broken. But the delicious news is that all parts of this plant are edible too! The most common use is of young leaves in a variety of lovely green dishes. But dandelions make an exquisite golden jelly too! Older leaves can be used too – simply blanch them to remove some of the bitter flavor, and sauté. Dandelions are also drinkable. The roots can be used to make root beer and tea, and the flowers are used in dandelion wine (what a great way to prevent the plants from going to seed!). Dandelions are high in nutrition, filled with vitamins A, C, K and B complex. They are used in herbal medicine, especially as a tonic for the liver. A special thank you to author and ecologist Corinne Duncan for her content contributions to this Dandelion Introduction.

## Dandelion Jelly

Recipe by [The 3 Foragers](#)

4 cups	Dandelion flower petals	1 Tbsp	Lemon Juice
4 cups	Water	1 box	Sure-Jell Powdered Pectin
3 cups	Dandelion Infusion	4½ cups	Sugar

- Place the dandelion flower petals in a pot and add the water.
- Bring to a boil and reduce to a simmer.
- Simmer 10 minutes, then turn off heat and allow the pot to cool.
- Use a jelly bag or coffee filter to strain the flowers out of the water, you need 3 c. of dandelion infusion, but may have extra.
- Place dandelion infusion, lemon juice, and pectin powder in a large pot.
- Whisk together and bring this mixture to a rolling boil.
- Add all of the sugar at once, stirring constantly, and return the mixture to a rolling boil.
- Boil 1 minute.
- Remove the jelly from the heat, skim the foam from the top and ladle into sterilized hot jars.
- Cover, and process in a water bath for 10 minutes. Makes about five 8 oz jars.



Photo courtesy of [The 3 Foragers](#)